

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 10, 2025

The Honorable Todd M. Lyons
Acting Director
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
500 12th St. SW
Washington, DC 20536

Dear Acting Director Lyons:

I write regarding troubling reports that ICE personnel deployed tear gas and a flash-bang grenade during an enforcement operation in a residential neighborhood in Elgin, Illinois on December 6th, 2025. According to multiple news outlets, ICE agents responding to a traffic crash and subsequent standoff released tear gas or similar irritants near homes and bystanders, and several individuals were evaluated by emergency medical personnel for possible exposure.¹

The proximity of families, children, elderly residents, and individuals with respiratory conditions to the incident raises serious concerns about public safety and the safeguards ICE employs to prevent unintended civilian exposure.² DHS's updated 2023 Use of Force Policy establishes that all DHS law-enforcement officers must employ force consistent with constitutional standards and implement those requirements through component-specific policies, procedures, and training.³ ICE is accordingly governed by its own Firearms and Use of Force Directive which implements DHS's framework for ICE personnel. While publicly available policy does not detail specific procedures for the deployment of chemical irritants in residential settings, the potential for unintended harm in such environments underscores the importance of understanding what guidance, risk assessments, and safeguards were considered in this case.

This troubling event in Elgin appears to be part of a broader pattern of ICE's use of chemical irritants during enforcement operations, including those conducted under Operation Midway Blitz. Reports and court filings, including a 233-page order issued by the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, have documented multiple recent instances in which chemical munitions were used by DHS personnel during immigration enforcement.⁴ Unfortunately, these deployments have increasingly taken place in residential and community settings across Illinois, placing families and children at risk. In Chicago's Old Irving Park neighborhood, for example, the use of tear gas prompted the cancellation of a long-standing Halloween parade.⁵ Federal agents have also been recorded deploying tear gas in Albany Park on October 12th, 2025, as residents protested agents who were trying to detain a neighbor.⁶

In another case, tear gas was reportedly released outside Funston Elementary School while children played nearby.⁷ In yet another instance, a mother described to the Associated Press how she and her two young

¹ [ABC 7 Chicago: "7 evaluated for possible exposure to chemical irritants after ICE operation and crash in Elgin," Dec. 7, 2025.](#)

² [CBS News Chicago: "Questions surround Elgin crash, clash involving ICE agents Saturday," Dec. 7, 2025.](#)

³ [U.S. Department of Homeland Security, "DHS Use of Force Policy \(2023 Update\)".](#)

⁴ [CHICAGO HEADLINE CLUB, et al., v KRISTI NOEM, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, in her official capacity, et al., - No. 25 C 12173, Judge Sara L. Ellis](#)

⁵ [Outrage after federal agents use tear gas just before Halloween parade in Old Irving Park- Fox 32 Chicago, October 2025](#)

⁶ [Federal Agents Deploy Tear Gas In Albany Park As Neighbors Block Immigration Arrest- Block Club Chicago, October 2025](#)

⁷ ['Sanctuary' mission of Logan Square grade school tested by fed's use of tear gas, teacher says- Chicago Sun Times, October 2025](#)

children had to flee a parking lot after being exposed to chemical agents during a shopping trip.⁸ A toddler should never have to know what a tear-gas canister looks like. Incidents like these, and now the one in Elgin, underscore the urgent need for oversight to ensure that federal enforcement actions do not endanger the safety or trust of the communities they are meant to serve. Congress has a responsibility to ensure that federal law-enforcement actions in residential areas protect the safety of all affected community members.

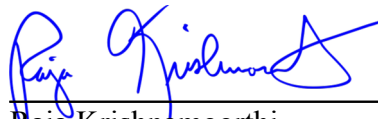
To better understand whether ICE adhered to applicable policies and procedures in Elgin, and to ensure future operations do not place communities at unnecessary risk, I respectfully request the following information by December 24, 2025:

1. What public-safety protocols and risk-assessment procedures were followed before chemical irritants were deployed in this residential neighborhood, and what criteria guide these decisions when bystanders may be present?
2. What specific steps did ICE personnel take before, during, and after deployment to limit the risk of exposure to nearby residents, including families in surrounding homes and individuals on adjacent streets?
3. How does ICE evaluate environmental and public health risks prior to using chemical agents, particularly in densely populated areas where vulnerable individuals may be present?
4. What coordination occurred with local police, fire departments, EMS personnel, or public-health authorities before or after the deployment of chemical irritants? Please describe any notifications, joint planning, or post-incident communication.
5. What follow-up procedures does ICE implement after deploying chemical agents?

My office stands ready to coordinate at your convenience. Depending on the information provided, I may pursue additional oversight to ensure that ICE operations in residential communities are conducted safely and in compliance with DHS policies.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress

⁸ [Chicago's children are getting caught in the chaos of immigration crackdowns- AP News, October 2025](#)