

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 6, 2026

The Honorable Kristi Noem  
Secretary of Homeland Security  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave SE  
Washington, DC 20032

Dear Secretary Noem:

I am writing with serious concerns about how the Department of Homeland Security carried out Operation Midway Blitz in Illinois. DHS has said this operation focused on dangerous criminals, but the facts suggest that many people with no criminal convictions were arrested instead.

On December 19, 2025, I visited the Broadview Processing Center to conduct Congressional oversight of a facility used to process and hold detainees during Operation Midway Blitz. I left the visit alarmed. I learned that many individuals have been targeted and held not because they have been convicted of a crime, but merely because they have been charged with an offense in the past, a pattern that your agency has applied throughout this entire operation.

Public reporting supports what I observed. DHS has stated that roughly 4,500 people were detained during Operation Midway Blitz in Illinois.<sup>1</sup> News reports show that only about 15 percent of those detained had prior criminal convictions. During Operation Midway Blitz the detentions of individuals without criminal convictions increased sharply, suggesting that enforcement was rooted in factors other than public safety.

These practices raise serious questions about DHS's priorities and the impact of these operations on public safety and community trust. When enforcement actions primarily affect people without criminal convictions, it undermines DHS's stated focus on targeting the most dangerous individuals.

Most troubling, these enforcement actions have had real human consequences. One individual, Nenko Gantchev, died in DHS's custody, after being arrested when he voluntarily appeared for a scheduled immigration interview.<sup>2</sup> He was not detained because of a criminal conviction, but because of enforcement practices that prioritized increasing the number of immigrants detained during this operation rather than focusing on genuine public safety threats. His case underscores the human cost of enforcement actions that do not center on individuals with criminal convictions. More than 30 individuals have died in DHS custody under your leadership.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Pratt, Gregory Royal. "Operation Midway Blitz: How Immigration Raids Changed Chicago." *Chicago Tribune*, 28 Dec. 2025, [www.chicagotribune.com/2025/12/28/chicago-immigration-operation-midway-blitz-2/?share=trh0hloibide1yicogi](https://www.chicagotribune.com/2025/12/28/chicago-immigration-operation-midway-blitz-2/?share=trh0hloibide1yicogi)

<sup>2</sup> Rivera, Mark, Barb Markoff, Christine Tressel, and Tom Jones. "Bulgarian Chicago Business Owner Nenko Gantchev Dies in ICE Custody; Family and Congresswoman Call for 'Immediate Investigation'." *ABC7 Chicago*, 19 Dec. 2025, <https://abc7chicago.com/post/bulgarian-chicago-business-owner-nenko-gantchev-dies-ice-custody-family-congresswoman-call-immediate-investigation/18301520/>

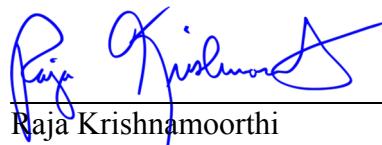
<sup>3</sup> LeVine, Marianne, and Douglas MacMillan. "Deaths of Four ICE Detainees in Four Days Spark Alarm among Lawmakers." *The Washington Post*, 20 Dec. 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/immigration/2025/12/20/ice-detainee-deaths/>

Given these facts, I request that you provide written responses to the following questions by January 15, 2026:

1. How many people detained during Operation Midway Blitz had criminal convictions?
2. How many detainees with no prior criminal convictions were charged with a crime by DHS at the time of their arrest?
3. Please provide body-camera footage for any arrests of individuals without prior convictions or active charges.
4. To which facilities were individuals detained in Illinois transferred, and how many of those transferred experienced serious health deterioration while in DHS custody?
5. How will DHS ensure that future enforcement actions target individuals with serious criminal convictions or active warrants?

Immigration enforcement should focus on individuals who pose real public safety risks, not on families, workers, or bystanders caught in a dragnet. Until DHS can provide transparency and assurance that these operations are conducted lawfully and effectively, similar enforcement actions should be suspended.

Sincerely,



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Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress