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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

July 31, 2026

The Honorable Rand Paul
Chairman
Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Paul,

We commend you for calling the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) oversight hearing that was held on February 12 following the deaths of two U.S. citizens in Minneapolis at the hands of federal officials, and for convening a member-level briefing with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) leadership this week after the most recent fatal shootings involving ICE officers in Biddeford, Maine, and Houston, Texas. However, we were disappointed by the lack of information ICE provided at that briefing, and we believe additional steps must be taken to ensure sufficient oversight of DHS. Secretary Mullin and other Administration officials suggested there would be changes following the fatal shootings in January of Renee Good and Alex Pretti in Minneapolis, but those statements have fallen flat: two more individuals have been needlessly killed within a single week. We therefore request that you build on the Committee's oversight work by convening a follow-up hearing with DHS leadership to continue holding agents who take the lives of innocent individuals accountable.

During the oversight hearing in February, you argued that "to restore trust in ICE and Border Patrol, [DHS] must admit their mistakes, be honest and forthright with their rules of engagement and pledge to reform."¹ It is clear that this call has not been heeded. Secretary Mullin has now had sufficient time in office to enact meaningful policy change, yet once again we are having to discuss fatal shootings and escalatory behavior at the hands of DHS. Furthermore, DHS has still not been forthcoming about what, if any, corrective actions have been taken related to the killings of Mr. Pretti and Ms. Good. In light of these facts, we call on you to immediately

¹ Sen. Rand Paul, opening remarks, Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Oversight Hearing, Feb. 12, 2026, <https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/hearings/oversight-hearing/>.

conduct oversight of DHS, including, as necessary, to issue a subpoena for records and information regarding their tactics and excessive use of force.

Following the fatal shootings in Minneapolis, Democrats pushed for commonsense reforms based upon standards already applicable to virtually every law enforcement agency in the country in order to prevent further violence, such as requiring clear identification, prohibiting warrantless entries and arrests, and requiring real accountability.² However, since then, the Administration has ramped up immigration enforcement, aiming for 2,000 arrests per day,³ during which federal agents needlessly shot and killed two individuals, Lorenzo Salgado Araujo and Joan Sebastian Guerrero.

The shootings of Mr. Salgado Araujo and Mr. Guerrero highlight a concerning nationwide pattern. They demonstrate the repeated violation of DHS's use of force policy, violations which have been the source of dozens of documented use of force incidents by federal immigration officers including those that resulted in the deaths of Ms. Good and Mr. Pretti.

- On July 7, federal agents shot and killed Mr. Salgado Araujo in Houston, Texas, as he was on his way to work. That same day, DHS released a statement claiming that the shooting was an act of “self-defense” in response to Mr. Salgado Araujo “weaponiz[ing] his vehicle in an attempt to run over an ICE law enforcement officer.”⁴
- On July 13, federal immigration officers fatally shot Mr. Guerrero in Biddeford, Maine. DHS immediately responded with a similar statement claiming that Mr. Guerrero attempted to flee using his vehicle and, that fearing for public safety, the federal agent fired his weapon.⁵

In both instances, the federal agents were not wearing body-worn cameras as required by DHS policy and ICE-issued directive, the shootings occurred during vehicle stops, DHS's claims have yet to be supported by video or non-government witness accounts, and neither person was the intended target of the operation.⁶

² Letter from Sen. Charles E. Schumer, Senate Democratic Leader, and Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, House Democratic Leader, to Speaker Mike Johnson and Senate Majority Leader John Thune, Feb. 4, 2026, https://www.democrats.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/leaders_jeffries_and_schumer_to_speaker_johnson_and_leader_thune_2.pdf.

³ Hamed Aleaziz, “Immigrant Arrests Surge to 10,000 in Five Days as ICE Clamps Down,” *New York Times*, July 1, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/01/us/politics/ice-immigrant-arrests-surge.html>.

⁴ Josh Campbell, “Lorenzo Salgado Araujo: After His Fatal Shooting in Houston, ICE Faces a Familiar Test of Credibility,” *CNN*, July 13, 2026, <https://www.cnn.com/2026/07/13/us/salgado-araujo-ice-shooting-investigation>.

⁵ Patrick Whittle, Leah Willingham, and Jack Brook, “ICE officer who fatally shot driver in Maine was ‘fearing for public safety,’ agency says,” *The Associated Press*, July 14, 2026, <https://apnews.com/article/ice-shooting-maine-immigration-dhs-f26f8c2256aa6f0748582ea4adbb515c>.

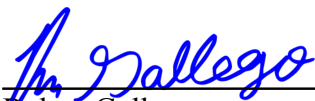
⁶ Whittle, Willingham, et al., “ICE officer who fatally shot driver in Maine was ‘fearing for public safety,’ agency says”; Christina Morales and Jacey Fortin, “What We Know About the ICE Shooting of Lorenzo Salgado Araujo,” *New York Times*, July 9, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/09/us/houston-ice-shooting-lorenzo-salgado-araujo.html>.

DHS's public responses to these shootings also reflect an ongoing pattern. The department will immediately put out a statement claiming the vehicle was weaponized against the agent and that the agent fired in self-defense. Yet, in case after case, the government's public description of the threat is contradicted by video footage, body camera audio, or witness testimony. DHS's record of inaccurately characterizing these shootings demonstrates that the agency cannot be trusted to police itself.

While fatal encounters most clearly illustrate the urgent need for greater oversight, they represent a fraction of the abuse Americans have witnessed across the country during immigration enforcement operations. The Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is the U.S. Senate's chief oversight committee and has jurisdiction over DHS. This committee has a strong tradition, under both Republican and Democratic leadership, of holding the Executive Branch accountable to the law and the American people. It is our duty to keep Americans safe while providing necessary transparency.

We call on you to hold a hearing with Administration officials, including Secretary Markwayne Mullin, White House Border Czar Tom Homan, ICE Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Director David J. Venturella, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Rodney S. Scott to explain why DHS has failed to implement meaningful reforms that could have prevented incidents like fatal shootings and reined in abusive and rampant immigration enforcement tactics.

Sincerely,



Ruben Gallego
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee
on Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs



Andy Kim
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Permanent
Subcommittee on
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Elissa Slotkin
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



John Fetterman
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