

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6275

June 17, 2025

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Grassley:

We request that you immediately convene a Judiciary Committee oversight hearing with Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem to discuss the Department of Homeland Security's escalating use of alarming immigration enforcement practices.

We are at a pivotal moment in our country's history.

Federal agents' conduct during the incident last week with Senator Padilla has become all too common. We increasingly are seeing masked agents, acting with unnecessary force and failing to identify themselves, arresting noncitizens in raids that terrify communities and needlessly separate families.¹

The treatment of Senator Padilla is the latest in a string of attacks on our constitutional order. Earlier this year, President Trump invoked the Alien Enemies Act,² a wartime authority that was last used during World War II to detain Japanese, Italian, and German immigrants.³ He has sent nearly 300 people to a dangerous and brutal prison in El Salvador without due process.⁴ He has consistently failed to comply with court orders.⁵ In recent days, he deployed the National Guard to California in response to protests of his Administration's mass deportations over the objections of state officials.⁶

¹ See e.g., Austin Mirmina & Mary Ellen Godin, *New Details Emerge in High-Profile CT ICE Arrests as Video Shows New Haven Mother's Arrest in Front of Children*, NEW HAVEN REGISTER (June 12, 2025),

<https://www.nhregister.com/news/article/ct-ice-immigration-arrests-raids-meriden-new-haven-20373790.php>.

² See Invocation of the Alien Enemies Act Regarding the Invasion of The United States by Tren De Aragua, Proclamation No. 10903, 90 Fed. Reg. 13033 (March 14, 2025), available at

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/invocation-of-the-alien-enemies-act-regarding-the-invasion-of-the-united-states-by-tren-de-aragua/>.

³ See Tim Balk, *A History of the Alien Enemies Act of 1798*, N.Y. TIMES (March 21, 2025),

<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/03/21/us/politics/trump-alien-enemies-act-history.html>.

⁴ See Celia Vega, *U.S. Sent 238 Migrants to Salvadoran Mega-Prison; Documents Indicate Most Have No Apparent Criminal Records*, CBS NEWS (Apr. 6, 2025), <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/what-records-show-about-migrants-sent-to-salvadoran-prison-60-minutes-transcript/>; and Daniella Silva, *Why Experts Fear the Men Who Were Sent to El Salvador's Megaprison May Never Make It Out*, NBC NEWS (Mar. 20, 2025),

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/venezuelans-deported-el-salvador-detention-abuses-rcna197125>.

⁵ See e.g., Peter Charalambous, *Six Times the Trump Administration has Clashed with Opponents over Court Orders*, ABC NEWS (April 15, 2025), <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/6-times-trump-administration-clashed-opponents-court-orders/story?id=120846599>.

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We must ensure violent criminals are held accountable. The Administration, however, has abandoned its commitment to arresting and deporting dangerous immigrants, sweeping up hardworking, longstanding members of our communities in disorganized and dangerous raids in a misguided effort to meet arrest quotas.⁷ One Administration official reports that White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller admonished U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials not to focus deportation efforts on criminals: “Stephen Miller wants everybody arrested. ‘Why aren’t you at Home Depot? Why aren’t you at 7-Eleven? ... Miller said, ‘What do you mean you’re going after criminals.’”⁸

As even President Trump admitted, “our very aggressive policy on immigration is taking very good, long-time workers away from them, with those jobs being almost impossible to replace”⁹ and “[t]hey’re not citizens, but they’ve turned out to be, you know, great. And we’re going to have to do something about that. We can’t take farmers and take all their people and send them back because they don’t have maybe what they’re supposed to have.”¹⁰

This Committee has a constitutional responsibility to conduct oversight of Executive Branch agencies under our jurisdiction, regardless of the party in charge of the White House or Congress. During the Biden Administration, then-Chair Durbin held a DHS oversight hearing months into then-Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas’ tenure.¹¹ As you made clear in your letter to President Trump during his first Administration:

Every member of Congress is a Constitutional officer, duly elected to represent and cast votes in the interests of their constituents. This applies obviously regardless of whether they are in the majority or the minority at the moment and regardless of whether they are in a leadership position on a particular committee. Thus, all members need accurate information from the Executive Branch in order to carry out their Constitutional function to make informed decisions on all sorts of legislative issues covering a vast array of complex matters across our massive federal government.¹²

⁶ See Governor Gavin Newsom, *Governor Newsom Suing President Trump and Department of Defense for Illegal Takeover of Calguard Unit* (June 9, 2025), <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2025/06/09/governor-newsom-suing-president-trump-and-department-of-defense-for-illegal-takeover-of-calguard-unit/>.

⁷ See Lauren Kaori Gurley, Marianne LeVine & Rachel Siegel, *ICE Sets Quotas to Deliver on Immigration Crackdown on Employers*, WASH. POST (June 11, 2025), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2025/06/11/trump-immigration-ice-crackdown-employers/>; and see also Arelis R. Hernández, *‘La Migra!’: Day Laborers Recount ICE Raid Outside Los Angeles Home Depot*, WASH. POST (June 8, 2025), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/immigration/2025/06/08/ice-los-angeles-home-depot-raid-trump/>.

⁸ Anna Giaritelli, *Stephen Miller ‘Eviscerated’ ICE Officials in Private Meeting for Low Deportation Numbers*, WASH. EXAMINER (May 30, 2025), <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/white-house/3425297/stephen-miller-eviscerated-ice-officials-deportation-numbers/>.

⁹ Donald Trump (@realDonaldTrump), Truth Social (June 12, 2025, 9:43am), <https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/114670684664650262>.

¹⁰ Hamed Aleaziz, *Trump Tells Farmers ‘Changes Are Coming’ to Immigration Crackdown*, N.Y. TIMES (June 12, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/12/us/politics/trump-farmers-hotels-immigration.html>.

¹¹ Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Oversight Hearing of the Department of Homeland Security (Nov. 16, 2021), <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/committee-activity/hearings/10/20/2021/oversight-of-the-department-of-homeland-security>.

¹² Letter from Senator Grassley to President Trump (June 7, 2017), at p. 1, [https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/2017-06-07%20CEG%20to%20DJT%20\(oversight](https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/2017-06-07%20CEG%20to%20DJT%20(oversight)

This Administration, however, has dismissed Congress’s critical role in “seek[ing] information to help inform Members as they perform their Constitutional duty to legislate and fix real problems for the American people.”¹³ Ranking Member Durbin alone has eight outstanding letters and briefing requests that have gone unanswered by DHS. To quote you once more, Mr. Chairman, “oversight brings transparency, and transparency brings accountability. And, the opposite is true. Shutting down oversight requests doesn’t drain the swamp It floods the swamp.”¹⁴

The President should not be allowed to bypass constitutional principles like due process, separation of powers, and federalism. Senator Padilla’s mistreatment by federal agents should be a warning to us all. We urge you to quickly schedule a hearing to ensure we have an opportunity to question Secretary Noem regarding Committee members’ many unanswered requests for information from DHS, and the cruel and un-American steps this Administration has taken to carry out its mass deportation agenda.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
Ranking Member



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator

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¹³ *Id* at p. 6.

¹⁴ *Id*.



Peter Welch
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator