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**United States Senate**

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6275

KOLAN L. DAVIS, *Chief Counsel and Staff Director*  
JENNIFER DUCK, *Democratic Chief Counsel and Staff Director*

August 22, 2018

**VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION**

The Honorable Kirstjen Nielsen  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Nielsen:

Yesterday, officials charged a 24-year-old undocumented immigrant from Mexico with the murder of missing Iowan, Mollie Tibbetts.<sup>1</sup> Tibbetts, a 20-year-old rising sophomore at the University of Iowa had been missing from the rural and close knit farming town of Brooklyn, Iowa for more than a month after going on a jog and never returning.<sup>2</sup> According to reports, Christian Bahena-Rivera, a Mexican national who allegedly entered the United States illegally, followed Tibbetts while she was running and abducted her.<sup>3</sup> Tibbetts then unsuccessfully attempted to call the police.<sup>4</sup> Private security cameras recorded Tibbetts' and then the suspect's vehicle, which led to the identification of Christian Rivera.<sup>5</sup> Rivera has apparently resided in the Brooklyn area for the last four to seven years, yet little information is known about the man's immigration and criminal history, or employment details.<sup>6</sup> Reports claim Rivera led officials to the body, which was found in a cornfield just outside of town.<sup>7</sup>

It is crucial we understand the circumstances surrounding the tragic death of this young Iowan so that we can address any vulnerabilities in our border security apparatus, existing laws,

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<sup>1</sup> Emily Shapiro, *Mollie Tibbetts case: Body Found Believed to be Missing Iowa Jogger; Murder Charge Filed*, ABC News (Aug. 21, 2018), available at <https://abcnews.go.com/US/mollie-tibbetts-case-body-found-search-missing-iowa/story?id=57306476>

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Linh Ta, *Murder Charge Filed in Mollie Tibbetts Case*, Des Moines Register (Aug 21, 2018), available at <https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/2018/08/21/mollie-tibbetts-missing-iowa-student-body-found-brooklyn-iowa-city-poweshiek-county-press-conference/1051131002/>

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

enforcement practices, and resource allocation. We must prevent murders such as Tibbetts' from ever occurring again. At a minimum, Congress must increase law enforcement personnel at the border, aggressively modernize relevant technology and infrastructure, and eliminate the potential for fraud and abuse in our E-verify system. Therefore, please provide any information on the suspect, including the Homeland Security Investigations Executive Summary on Rivera, and provide a briefing to Committee staff as soon as possible but no later than August 24, 2018.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Aakash Singh or Katherine Nikas of my Committee staff at (202) 224-5225.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on the Judiciary

cc:

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on the Judiciary