

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 10, 2025

The Honorable Kristi Noem  
Secretary of Homeland Security  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
3801 Nebraska Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Noem:

I write to express grave concern over your department's recent initiatives that would invite private contractors to locate, surveil, and report on individuals within immigrant communities for profit.<sup>1</sup> Such a proposal raises questions about oversight, accountability, and the appropriate limits on government authority.

Allowing private contractors to perform enforcement activities under a system of performance-based financial incentives, essentially bounty hunting, outsources one of the government's most coercive powers to actors who operate with little oversight and limited public accountability. These contractors are not subject to the same scrutiny, discipline, or transparency that restrains federal officers, and entrusting them with powers of investigation and surveillance risks creating an enforcement apparatus that functions beyond the reach of ordinary checks and balances<sup>2</sup>.

Once the state begins contracting out its power to police, it invites the very abuses, secrecy, and corruption our founders sought to prevent. This danger is not hypothetical. Reports of individuals impersonating immigration officers are rising, and DHS's reliance on masked or plainclothes agents has already blurred the public's ability to distinguish lawful authority from rogue activity<sup>3</sup>. When citizens can no longer discern who acts in the name of government, trust gives way to fear. A government that rules through confusion and coercion rather than law and consent erodes its own legitimacy and the freedoms it exists to protect.

When the government pays private contractors based on how many people they can find, detain, or deliver, it turns them into bounty hunters. In such a system built on quotas and cash rewards with minimal oversight, mistakes are not just possible—they are certain. The pressure to hit numbers replaces the judgment, training, and accountability that should define real law enforcement. When that happens, it is not a paperwork error but an entirely predictable violation of rights with real human costs. This approach does not invite abuse; it guarantees it, putting the liberty and well-being of the American public at risk.

We have already seen numerous instances of apparent racial profiling and discriminatory enforcement in our communities. For example, in Illinois, a U.S. citizen was zip-tied and detained by DHS officers who refused to believe her U.S. passport was real - because her appearance did not fit their assumptions about what someone with her last name ought to look like.<sup>4</sup> Given incidents such as this, the idea of authorizing unknown private individuals to walk through neighborhoods, observing, photographing, and verifying the whereabouts of those they believe to be undocumented, is deeply troubling. Without clear, public limitations on the authorities

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<sup>1</sup> [ICE Request for Information with Bounties for Successfully Locating Immigrants- DHS, 2025](#)

<sup>2</sup> [IDs are mismatched, illegible or still missing 3 weeks after judge's order to immigration officers – Chicago Sun Times, October 31, 2025.](#)

<sup>3</sup> [ICE Impersonators incidents rise during Trump's second term – CNN, October 2, 2025](#)

<sup>4</sup> [ICE tickets Chicago man with legal residency \\$130 for not having his papers on him: 'It's not fair...I'm a resident' - Chicago Tribune, 2025](#)

provided to private contractors engaged in skip-tracing, there is a serious risk that such a contract will inevitably chill civic participation and deepen fear among law-abiding residents who already feel watched and vulnerable.

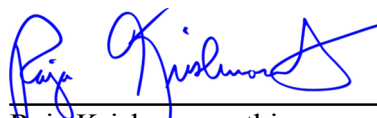
History offers a cautionary lesson. When governments blur the line between official authority and private surveillance, societies inevitably pay a steep price in lost trust and personal freedom. In Eastern Europe during the Cold War – secret-police systems like the Stasi enlisted ordinary citizens and paid informants to monitor their neighbors, creating an atmosphere of fear and suspicion that took generations to undo.<sup>5</sup> While today's circumstances are different, any system that rewards private actors for reporting on one another risks repeating those same mistakes—undermining community cohesion, eroding the rule of law, and betraying American values.

In light of these concerns, I respectfully request answers to the following questions:

1. What statutory or regulatory authority does the Department intend to rely upon in delegating investigatory or surveillance functions to private contractors?
2. Will these contractors have access to personal or location data for all immigrants, or potentially for all Americans?
3. What guidance, rules of engagement, and oversight mechanisms will DHS and ICE put in place to ensure contractors do not engage in harassment, trespass, or unlawful surveillance?
4. Will contractors be required to publicly identify themselves as agents of the federal government if conducting surveillance in immigrant communities?
5. If a contractor locates an individual, will they be authorized, or incentivized, to physically confront, detain, arrest, or pursue that person?
6. Why is ICE outsourcing the verification of addresses and document delivery to private entities rather than relying on trained federal agents with established accountability mechanisms?

Outsourcing immigration enforcement to profit-driven contractors undermines the very trust between government and the people it serves, and risks normalizing a system of private bounty hunting incompatible with American values and due process. Congress and the American people need clear assurances that these programs will not devolve into a system of private bounty hunting, nor set a precedent for surveilling individuals without due process or oversight.

Sincerely,



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Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress

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<sup>5</sup> [A State of Secrecy: Stasi Informers and the Culture of Surveillance- Alison Lewis, 2021](#)