

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

June 6, 2025

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Secretary of Homeland Security
Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Noem:

We are deeply concerned by recent reports that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents are deliberately targeting immigration courts, such as the San Diego Immigration Court located in the Edward J. Schwartz Federal Building¹, to arrest and detain immigrants. These reports further state that those detained during recent operations were attending legally required hearings tied to their asylum claims.²

We are also concerned that ICE is executing these arrests in a reckless manner, which has the potential to jeopardize the health and well-being of those detained and others within close proximity. Witnesses to the arrests, which took place at the Edward J. Schwartz Federal Building, told us that ICE incorrectly targeted numerous individuals, including one man who had a medical emergency following his arrest.³ It is imperative that ICE conduct its enforcement actions with consideration for everyone's health and safety.

All law enforcement officers, including ICE agents, exercise discretion to ensure national security and deter public safety threats. We support enforcement actions targeting dangerous convicted criminals who pose an imminent national security or public safety threat. However, arresting immigrants who do not pose a public safety threat, are following the proper procedures to seek relief from deportation, or are cooperating with the justice system deters other immigrants from safely engaging with the legal proceedings. Enforcement actions such as these discourage immigrants from collaborating with law enforcement, which makes all of us less safe.

The arrests also come at a time when the Administration has denied basic constitutional rights to asylum seekers and disregarded Supreme Court rulings, putting detained immigrants at extreme risk. ICE cannot circumvent immigrants' right to due process, regardless of their immigration status.

¹ <https://www.kpbs.org/news/border-immigration/2025/05/22/ice-agents-swarm-san-diego-immigration-court-arresting-people-after-their-hearings>

² <https://fox5sandiego.com/news/local-news/immigrants-arrested-outside-courtrooms-in-san-diego-after-attending-hearings/>

³ <https://fox5sandiego.com/news/local-news/san-diego/immigration-arrests-san-diego-federal-courthouse/>

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Many studies have shown that public safety relies on law enforcement maintaining the trust of the communities they protect so that everyone, regardless of immigration status, will report crimes, act as witnesses, and appear in court without the threat of detention or deportation. A 2018 American Civil Liberties Union report found that law enforcement officers saw a decreased willingness of immigrants to report crimes, assist in investigations, and work with prosecutors after ICE conducted enforcement activity in and around courthouses.⁴

As members of the delegation representing San Diego, California, we request a prompt reply to the following questions:

1. Were any directives or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) recently issued to ICE calling for additional enforcement actions inside or immediately outside Federal courthouses?
 - a. If yes, can you provide a copy of such directive or MOU?
 - b. If no, then why are these actions taking place now across the country?
2. How many immigrants have been arrested or detained by ICE while inside or immediately outside Federal courthouses since January 20, 2025?
 - a. How many of the detained immigrants had prior criminal convictions in the United States?
 - b. How many United States citizens or lawful permanent residents were detained during these enforcement actions?
 - c. Please provide the related evidence detailing which detained immigrants posed a threat to national security or an imminent threat to public safety.
3. How many immigrants have been arrested or detained by ICE while inside or immediately outside the Edward J. Schwartz Federal Building since May 18, 2025?
 - a. How many of the detained immigrants had prior criminal convictions in the United States?
 - b. How many United States citizens or lawful permanent residents were detained during these enforcement actions?
 - c. Please provide the related evidence detailing which detained immigrants posed a threat to national security or an imminent threat to public safety.
4. What criteria does ICE rely upon to determine which immigrants will be subjected to enforcement actions inside or immediately outside the courthouses?
5. Have ICE officers received training on how to safely conduct enforcement actions inside and immediately around courthouses?
 - a. If yes, please provide a copy of the training information.

⁴ <https://www.aclu.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/rep18-icecourthouse-combined-rel01.pdf>

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We request a prompt reply, as this matter is of great concern to our delegation, the community, and the rule of law. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



Mike Levin
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress