

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 16, 2026

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Mullin:

We write with serious concern about recent reports of increased immigration enforcement activity in San Diego and elsewhere in California. News reports describe a purported “Operation Safe California,” which your Department has yet to comment on publicly even though videos posted online by community members show a growing presence of officers and agents detaining people in our neighborhoods, including near schools. We demand a prompt explanation of any recent changes to local operations.¹

We are concerned about reports of increased immigration enforcement near sensitive locations in California, including schools, daycares, places of worship, and courthouses. San Diego in particular has witnessed a sharp increase in dangerous enforcement operations near schools. In September alone, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers detained parents and students near Edison Elementary School, John Marshall Elementary School, and San Diego City College. As a result, we have received concerning reports from officials and families that students are now afraid to attend school.

Preserving a sense of safety for children and families is precisely why long-standing DHS policy limited enforcement action near protected areas, including schools. Yet, DHS rescinded that policy in 2025.² These activities have had an impact on all students and families in our community regardless of immigration status. The presence of ICE officers destabilizes the sense of safety schools offer and places an additional burden on school staff and local communities. The fear among students and families that these incidents cause can also negatively impact a student’s educational engagement, mental and physical health, academic performance, and developmental trajectories. Parents should be able to bring their children to class and return to pick them up without fearing that a routine school day could end in family separation. Teachers should be able to focus on teaching and students on learning. In the context of widespread reports of DHS officers and agents using excessive force in immigration operations in Minneapolis, Chicago, New York City, and Portland, communities targeted by such operations now fear simply attending school.

The same concerns extend to hospitals, places of worship, and courthouses. When people are afraid to seek medical care, attend religious services, or appear in court, the consequences reach well beyond any individual arrest. These are places where people turn for help, and enforcement practices that discourage access leave entire communities less safe.

To clarify the scope of any enhanced enforcement, please address the following questions:

¹ Giaritelli, Anna, *Major ICE Operation Underway Across California: 'Go after Anybody'* (Oct. 7, 2026), <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/infrastructure/4757848/ice-operation-underway-california-go-after-anybody/>.

² Department of Homeland Security, *Memorandum: Enforcement Actions in or Near Protected Areas* (Jan. 20, 2025), https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/2025-03/25_0120_S1_enforcement-actions-in-near-protected-areas.pdf.

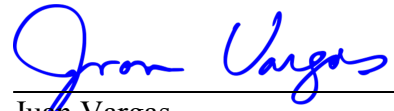
1. Has DHS authorized an “Operation Safe California” or similar immigration enforcement operation for California? If so, what is the scope of the operation? Who authorized it? And when was it authorized?
2. Has DHS authorized enhanced immigration enforcement in San Diego, and, if so, how long is it expected to last? How many agents are involved?
3. Who are the intended targets, and what criteria govern whom officers or agents stop or detain?
4. Have officers or agents been directed or authorized to conduct enforcement at or near schools or other sensitive locations?

San Diegans deserve a clear explanation of the federal activity being reported in our communities. We look forward to your substantive response by October 23, 2026.

Sincerely,



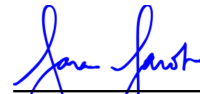
Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Mike Levin
Member of Congress



Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator