United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 18, 2026

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther Jr. Avenue SE 5
Washington, DC 20528

The Honorable David Venturella
Acting Director
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
500 12th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20536

The Honorable David Cummins
Administrator
Transportation Security Administration
6595 Springfield Center Dr.
Springfield, VA 22150

Dear Secretary Mullin, Administrator Cummins, and Acting Director Venturella:

We write to express our serious concerns regarding recent immigration enforcement actions at airports across the nation conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), with the apparent assistance and support of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). Such actions create fear in our communities and cause disruption and distress to the traveling public. It is further alarming to read recent reports that ICE and TSA have a formal agreement to share passenger information with each other, which could be used in immigration enforcement at airports. We therefore request that you provide Congress and the American people details about any information sharing agreements that are in place between ICE and TSA and ask the Department of Homeland Security and its component agencies, ICE and TSA, to let us know what concrete steps you are taking to ensure all immigration enforcement agents conducting operations at airports operate solely based on active judicial warrants, wear and utilize body cameras, wear and display clear identifying information, and refrain from wearing masks, which shield ICE from accountability for abuses and instill fear in travelers.

Just a few weeks ago, masked and plain-clothed ICE officers attempted to violently arrest an elderly man at the Harry Reid International Airport in Las Vegas (LAS), without any identification, before running off following public intervention. Even more recently, ICE arrested a pregnant woman at the same airport, separating her from her fiancé. News reports indicate similar enforcement operations are taking place at Reno-Tahoe International Airport (RNO), Denver International Airport (DEN), and San Francisco International Airport (SFO) as well. Additionally, the recent detention of several Marylanders, including a medical researcher and former Fulbright scholar and a pharmacy professor, both asylum-seekers traveling domestically with lawful documentation, raises serious concerns that ICE's expanded presence at airports is subjecting law-abiding individuals to detention

Unfortunately, recent reporting by the New York Times indicates that troubling events like these are occurring frequently across the nation at America's airports[1]. Such actions have only served to disrupt local communities, create fear among immigrant families, and undermine the travel and tourism sector by actively discouraging travelers from visiting the United States. They hurt our nation's travel and tourism industry at a time when it is trying to rebound from a 5.5%[2] decline in international tourism in 2025 that occurred due to President Trump's misguided tariff, immigration, and foreign policies. Additionally, these actions are increasingly targeting individuals who have expired visas, even though many such individuals often have a legitimate pending application for a visa extension or renewal with USCIS.[3] With a backlog of nearly 12 million visa applications at USCIS, [4] visa processing delays are impacting the ability for USCIS to process a variety of visas, employment authorization documents (EAD) applications, and renewals in a timely manner, meaning that a person can have an expired visa with a legitimate pending application yet still be detained by ICE at an airport due to visa processing delays that are out of their control.

News reports also indicate that according to a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) [5] recently obtained through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request,[6] ICE and TSA have a formal framework to coordinate the sharing, storage, and management of passengers' sensitive information. This is particularly concerning because Acting TSA Administrator Ha Nguyen McNeill claimed during congressional testimony[7] she gave in January 2026 that TSA does not send information to ICE; however, the MOA appears to directly contradict that statement. Of similar concern, when just last month then TSA Administrator nominee David Cummins was asked about the conduct of ICE agents at America's airports in questions for his nomination hearing, he did not even attempt to answer how he would or would not work with ICE if confirmed to the role.

With all this in mind, we request your response to several questions regarding the operating relationship between ICE and TSA and the type of information that is being shared between the agencies. We look forward to a prompt response to this inquiry.

- Is there an official process in place to ensure that local airports are aware of an impending immigration enforcement operation?

- Does the information-sharing agreement between ICE and TSA require ICE to provide proof that the individuals they are requesting information about have active warrants for their arrest? Does this information-sharing agreement distinguish between judicial and administrative warrants, and is such a warrant a requirement for TSA to cooperate with ICE in enforcement actions at airports? If this information is sensitive, then we ask for a member or staff level briefing to receive this information in a classified or secure setting.

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[1] https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/28/us/ice-arrests-airports-visa-overstay.html
[2] https://www.ustravel.org/research/travel-forecasts
[3] https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/28/us/ice-arrests-airports-visa-overstay.html
[4] https://www.npr.org/2026/04/17/nx-s1-5777632/us-trump-immigration-delay-applications-citizenship-deportation
[5] https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/28519762-ice-tsa-data-sharing-moa/
[6] https://americanoversight.org/ice-tsa-data-sharing-agreement-lawsuit-foia-07282026/
[7] https://homeland.house.gov/hearing/oversight-of-the-department-of-homeland-security-cisa-tsa-st/

- According to the MOA, TSA shares data with ICE that ICE then stores in its own repository. What specific data is shared between the two agencies? What criteria is being used, either with or without this data, to determine when to conduct an immigration enforcement operation at an airport?

- Reporting indicates TSA shared information[8] on more than 31,000 travelers, leading to more than 800 immigration-related arrests. Please provide a breakdown of what information caused the 800 individuals to be arrested, and how many people were detained for an expired visa that had an application pending with USCIS, including information on how many of these arrests led to a deportation? Additionally, if a warrant was issued for those arrested, please also provide a breakdown of how many arrests were based on ICE having a judicial versus administrative warrant.

- What safeguards are in place to protect passenger privacy and ensure that the individuals being targeted in enforcement operations at airports are dangerous or violent criminals and not merely immigrants who have followed the law and have had a temporary lapse in status solely due to USCIS processing delays?

- Does TSA have any policy regarding how law enforcement agencies such as ICE are to identify themselves when they are in an airport or when they are attempting to take an enforcement action in an airport?

- Do DHS, ICE, or TSA factor in the impact on domestic and international travel that enforcement operations could have when planning their execution? Have DHS, ICE, TSA, or any other agency or official in this administration been in contact with travel and tourism industry leaders and experts to ensure that such actions do not negatively harm our travel and tourism industry?

We look forward to your prompt response to these questions. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Jacky Rosen
United States Senator

John Hickenlooper
United States Senator

[8] https://www.reuters.com/world/ice-arrested-more-than-800-people-after-tips-us-airport-security-agency-2026-04-07/

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