

JOSH HARDER
9TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,
EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES
INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES

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Washington, DC 20515

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March 17, 2026

The Honorable Rand Paul
Chair
Senate Committee on Homeland
Security and Governmental Affairs
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Gary Peters
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Homeland
Security and Governmental Affairs
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Paul and Ranking Member Peters,

I write regarding the nomination of Senator Markwayne Mullin to serve as Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Given serious concerns raised by the Trump Administration's immigration enforcement practices in communities across the country, the Senate should not confirm Senator Mullin, or any nominee, unless they credibly commit to implementing key reforms to ensure that DHS and its component agencies operate transparently, lawfully, and responsibly.

Over the past several months, Americans have watched troubling reports from communities like Minneapolis and the broader Twin Cities, where large-scale operations conducted by masked Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents led to thousands of arrests, multiple deaths, widespread fear, and profound outrage over the aggressiveness of federal enforcement tactics. These incidents have raised serious questions about transparency, use of force, and respect for civil liberties in federal immigration enforcement.

These concerns are not limited to communities that attract national attention. Similar concerns have also been raised in communities like my own, in California's Central Valley. Since DHS immigration enforcement operations expanded last year, I have received numerous reports from constituents regarding enforcement activity conducted by ICE in Stockton. According to witnesses and community members, individuals were instructed to appear for routine compliance appointments and were then unexpectedly detained. Attorneys reported difficulty obtaining access to their clients, and observers outside the facility described the violent use of force against individuals gathered near the site. Families also reported uncertainty about where detained individuals had been transferred and what procedures governed those decisions.

In response to these reports, I sent a formal letter to ICE requesting information regarding operations in Stockton, including the agency's policies governing use of force, attorney access, detention decisions, and procedures for informing families about the whereabouts of detained individuals. In January, I also conducted an oversight visit to the ICE detention

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facility serving Stockton, to better understand the conditions and operational practices affecting my constituents.

These experiences only underscored the necessity of fundamental reforms at DHS that prioritize transparency, accountability, and responsible law enforcement. At a minimum, DHS leadership should commit to implementing and adhering to clear standards governing enforcement operations, including a prohibition on the use of face coverings by federal immigration agents, requirements that officers conducting immigration enforcement display visible identification, reasonable use-of-force policies, and prohibitions on officers conducting stops, questioning, and searches based on an individual's race and ethnicity.

Transparency and accountability in federal law enforcement are not partisan concerns. Communities across the country—including those in California's Central Valley—deserve confidence that federal agencies are exercising their authority responsibly, transparently, and consistent with the basic requirements of fairness and due process. The Senate should insist that the next Secretary of Homeland Security uphold these basic standards.

Accordingly, during his confirmation hearing, I encourage the Committee to secure Senator Mullin's commitment to implementing common sense reforms at DHS that protect fundamental rights and ensure responsible law enforcement. Unless Senator Mullin credibly agrees, the Committee should not advance his nomination, and the Senate should not confirm him to lead the Department of Homeland Security.

Sincerely,



Josh Harder
Member of Congress

Attachment: October 28, 2025 letter to Acting Director Todd Lyons, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement