



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hearing Statement of Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)

DHS Budget Request Hearing for FY 2026

May 14, 2025

I am glad that Secretary Noem is finally testifying before the Committee. After all, it's been three months since I sent you a letter asking for her to testify on the Trump administration's dismantling of the Department of Homeland Security and its harmful effects on communities across the country.

Secretary Noem, I guess the Chairman didn't think that systematically dismantling the Department of Homeland Security, firing the Federal workers who keep us safe, and violating the Constitution of the United States justified your timely appearance before this Committee.

But when Donald Trump demanded that Congress hand him money to do more damage to our homeland security, Republicans bent over backward to help him and his billionaire friends at the expense of the American people.

Whatever got you here, Secretary Noem, I am glad you found time among your many photo ops and costume changes to testify about why President Trump is seeking more taxpayer dollars and what you plan to do with that money if you get it.

And it is A LOT of money. We are talking about **\$176 billion**. That's how much President Trump has demanded that Congress give you to spend next year. Never mind the fact that your Department is spending taxpayer money so fast this year you're about to be broke. Now you're saying you need **\$44 billion MORE**, but all you've done is **slash, burn, cut, dismantle, and tear apart** DHS since you got there.

- You cut programs at the Federal Emergency Management Agency that help Americans prepare for and recover from disasters.
- You are unlawfully withholding grant money meant to prevent terrorism and respond to emergencies from local communities across the country.
- You cut programs at the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, which prevents attacks on power lines, water treatment plants, schools, hospitals, and other critical infrastructure.
- You cut the number of Transportation Security Officers who protect our airports and airplanes.
- You cut the Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, which keeps DHS from digging into Americans' private lives and violating people's constitutional rights.

You are making Americans LESS SAFE. If you are CUTTING the things that help keep America safe, why should we give you an EXTRA \$44 billion?

- Is it to deport more American citizen children with cancer?
- Is it to deport more veterans of the United States military?
- Is it to ignore the Supreme Court's order to facilitate the release of a lawful permanent resident you mistakenly shipped off to a foreign prison?
- Is it to punish people for exercising their First Amendment rights?

- Is it to “disappear” more people off our streets with no due process and ship them to foreign dictators’ prisons?
- Is it to fire more military veterans who were continuing to serve their country by working at DHS?
- Is it to slash efforts to fight persistent threats from foreign terrorist organizations and domestic terrorists?
- Is it to dismantle FEMA as hurricane season is about to get underway?
- Is it to decimate CISA and invite China, Russia, Iran, and other adversaries into our cyber networks?
- Is it to just be mean, threaten, and deny due process to vulnerable people?

These are not hypotheticals. These are things that DHS has ALREADY done under your leadership—or is trying to do, Secretary Noem. Your policies and actions are so bad that Republican Members have been running and hiding from their own constituents, refusing to hold town halls—because they know they cannot defend this administration.

Republicans are unwilling to defend the Trump administration with the folks back home, so I guess it is down to you to try here today. But you can’t defend the indefensible, Secretary Noem.

Your Department is out of control. On your watch, the Department is breaking the law, it’s hurting people, and it’s making America less safe. The Trump administration is outright lying to the courts and the American people.

Just last week, three Members from New Jersey—all current or former Members of this Committee—tried to visit an ICE detention center, which they are permitted to do by law without notice, to conduct oversight after reports of issues at the facility. Instead of following the law, masked ICE personnel stopped and assaulted the Members.

Then, to make matters worse, instead of launching an investigation into the incident, your Department lied to the press about the situation and threatened to arrest Members of Congress **for doing their jobs**. Absolutely outrageous. It’s a sad day for the Department of Homeland Security. Frankly, I’ve never seen anything like it, and I have served as the lead Democrat on this Committee from its start.

Even when the Secretary, my Republican colleagues, and I had strong disagreements, we still had productive conversations and did our duty to keep Americans safe. But that’s not the case any longer. My colleagues across the aisle have sold their souls — or at least their spines — to Donald Trump.

They try to cover for the administration’s lies and blame Democrats for doing the job our constituents sent us here to do. Republicans have forgotten that Congress is a coequal branch of government and that their oaths are to the U.S. Constitution, not the President.

Republicans even want to cut Medicaid to fund tax breaks for billionaires. They put their billionaire buddies over the little guys every chance they get.

And now you’re here, Secretary Noem, with your hand out, looking for more taxpayer money to continue the slash and burn activities of the Department of Homeland Security over the past hundred or so days. Until the Trump administration starts following the law, that’s going to be a very, very hard sell.

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