



COMMITTEE *ON* HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

A Review of the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Request for the Department of Homeland Security

June 3, 2026

Today's hearing comes at a critical time for our country, with challenges at home and abroad created or made worse by the Trump administration. President Trump campaigned on \$2 a-gallon-gas, ending inflation, and lowering the cost of living. Instead, he started a reckless war with Iran that has driven gas prices sky-high and imposed tariffs that sent inflation soaring. Everything is more expensive. Americans are paying higher prices. Families are struggling to put food on the table and working harder than ever to make the rent and pay their bills.

Now, Trump wants the same people who are barely getting by to pick up the tab for his billion-dollar White House ballroom — a ballroom he originally told us would be paid for by private donations. He also wants taxpayers to pay for a slush fund to make millionaires out of the rioters who attacked the Capitol and beat cops on January 6. The only people doing better in Trump's economy are his billionaire buddies who get sweetheart deals while the rest of the country is paying more at every turn.

Just like the Nation, the Department of Homeland Security is at a critical juncture. Nearly 25 years ago, DHS was created to protect our Nation against another 9/11-style attack. Since then, administrations of both parties have worked to strengthen the Department for that critical mission while protecting our constitutional rights. That is, until President Trump took office.

The Trump administration has weaponized DHS against the public and used it to line the pockets of the President's cronies. It has closed essential offices meant to keep us safe and protect our civil rights, and fired or forced out thousands of DHS employees with irreplaceable experience. He has politicized disaster aid, approving declarations for those communities he personally favors and denying aid for those he does not.

He has turned our country's immigration system into something out of a dystopian movie, where Federal agents shoot and kill Americans, peaceful protestors are gassed and beaten, and racism and xenophobia drive policy. In short, the Trump administration has betrayed our democratic principles and undermined the security goals DHS was established for. Last year, when then-Secretary Kristi Noem came before the Committee, I called on her to resign — unless the President removed her first.

She ended up cutting and running from that hearing — leaving under false pretenses before she answered Members' questions. We all know how Secretary Noem's time at DHS turned out. I'm only sorry her departure took as long as it did, because the damage the Trump administration did to the Department while she was Secretary will take years to undo. Noem wasted millions of taxpayer dollars on vanity projects and private jets and used her position to enrich herself and her friends.

Her disastrous tenure was marked by more than just endless grifting and shameless self-promotion. The human cost was very real. Two Americans — Renee Good and Alex Pretti — were shot dead on her watch.

A recent report by the Brookings Institution found that 147,000 U.S. citizen children were separated from a parent under Trump's mass deportation agenda, including tens of thousands of children under 6 years old. Unfortunately, Secretary Noem was the latest in a long line of failed Secretaries of Homeland Security and others running DHS under President Trump.

Kirstjen Nielsen put kids in cages. Kevin McAleenan and Chad Wolf served unlawfully and carried out more of the same immoral, inhumane, and illegal policies. Kristi Noem and the other disgraced former secretaries may be gone, but the Trump administration's weaponization of the Department has continued. I'm concerned that you're already following in your predecessors' footsteps, Secretary Mullin.

Since you were sworn in just over two months ago, detainees at the Delaney Hall detention facility have been living in squalid conditions and have been beaten and pepper sprayed by guards. Rather than addressing these problems and forcing the contractor that runs the facility to do its job, DHS responded by attacking protestors and defending inhumane conditions. Enough is enough — Delaney Hall should be closed.

Delaney Hall is just the latest example of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) being out of control under Trump. A record number of people are dying in Trump's detention centers around the country, at a rate of roughly one person every six days. Tragically, that number is rising due to inhumane conditions, neglect, and abuse in these facilities. And yet, the President wants Congress to give ICE and CBP a \$72 BILLION slush fund in reconciliation, after they just got BILLIONS in the so-called "One Big Beautiful Bill Act."

These are the very same agencies that killed two Americans in cold blood, took parents from young U.S. citizen children, and are defending holding detainees in squalor at Delaney Hall. ICE and CBP should not get one penny more of taxpayer dollars until they are held accountable. And Mr. Chairman, while we're on the topic, why isn't this Committee doing its job? The Senate is at an impasse. But that doesn't mean the House can't craft a bill that responsibly funds DHS while putting guardrails around its rogue agencies.

Our hands are not tied — House Republican leadership is just too lazy or too scared. Don't tell me otherwise. Previously, when the Senate started the reconciliation process, the House still did its job and marked up its own bills before making compromises with the Senate product. There is no reason we cannot do the same this year. Beyond the reconciliation issue, Mr. Secretary, I'm also very concerned that you seem determined to crash the U.S. economy by pulling CBP processing from airports in so-called "sanctuary cities."

The travel industry has sounded the alarm about your plan, warning of "unnecessary chaos throughout the nation's air transportation system" and "devastating consequences" to airports, airlines, and the traveling public. Americans are suffering enough in Trump's economy — they quite literally cannot afford another harebrained Republican scheme. I know we'll be discussing this issue further today, among several others.

Mr. Secretary, as I said at the outset, we're glad you're here because we have many questions for you. We expect that, unlike your predecessor, you will stay and answer them. Secretaries of Homeland Security under President Trump have set a very low bar – some might even say so low it was set in hell. I wish I was more encouraged by your early actions as Secretary that you'll clear that low bar, Secretary Mullin.

The situation at DHS is critical, and the American people deserve better. As the principal oversight committee for the Department, we will demand just that.

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