



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

Northern Exposure: Assessing the Evolving Threat Landscape at America's Northern Border

June 30, 2026

The northern border faces threats and vulnerabilities, ranging from wildlife and drug trafficking to human smuggling. Democrats are committed to addressing those threats.

However, we cannot limit today's oversight to just the northern border and ignore the flagrant abuses from DHS operations across the country. That would be like fixing the fence around a house that's collapsed.

Since the beginning of his second term, President Trump has weaponized DHS and other law enforcement agencies to carry out his cruel, mass deportation agenda. Americans across the country have witnessed the cruel agenda firsthand, which has yielded nothing but chaos.

The administration claimed they were going after the "worst of the worst." Instead, they have been targeting anyone they suspect to be undocumented based on the color of their skin and accent they have. Nearly 43% of those detained by ICE by January 2026 had no criminal convictions or charges. Let me say that again - by January 2026, nearly 43% of those detained by ICE had zero criminal convictions or charges.

So much for the "worst of the worst."

Masked, unidentifiable immigration agents have been conducting nontargeted operations - abducting citizens and noncitizens alike - in unmarked vans. There are no limits to where people could be arrested. The Trump Administration has deployed – or threatened to deploy – armed Federal agents to sensitive locations like churches, hospitals, schools, daycares, and polling locations. People should not fear being arrested while praying at houses of worship, seeking medical care, or tending to their children.

And ICE and CBP agents should not be deployed near voting facilities to intimidate voters. In fact, it is illegal for them to enter polling places.

The human cost of these operations cannot be ignored. Countless numbers of American citizens and protestors have been pepper sprayed, beaten, tazed, and aggressively arrested. People have died from these operations. Renee Good and Alex Pretti, both American citizens, were shot and killed by DHS while protesting. This is not who we are as a country.

The constitutional cost cannot be ignored either. Last May, a senior ICE official issued guidance instructing agents to ignore the Fourth Amendment and enter private property without judicial warrants. Additionally, Border Czar Tom Homan bragged about a government database to track American citizens exercising their First Amendment right to protest.

Big tech and social media companies have received hundreds of DHS administrative subpoenas requesting the names, emails, and phone numbers of social media accounts that track and criticize DHS. DHS agents have tracked down individual American citizens, threatening them and asking for them to remove posts criticizing the department.

The shooting down of protestors in the streets and the surveillance and intimidation of those who speak out is reminiscent of our authoritarian adversaries.

This should be frightening to us all. Yet, Republicans keep funding this administration's dangerous agenda. Congressional Republicans just passed a bill giving DHS \$70 billion dollars to fund Trump's immigration agenda for the rest of his term. This is on top of the \$140 billion dollars ICE and CBP received in last year's big ugly bill, most of which has not been spent yet.

Combined, that's more than seven years' worth of funding for these agencies in less than a year. For the past year-and-a-half, Democrats have advocated for comprehensive and commonsense reforms to DHS immigration enforcement.

And at every turn, Trump, DHS, and Congressional Republicans have bucked every attempt towards change and reform. But while Republicans bury their heads in the sand and turn a blind eye to this harmful agenda, Democrats will call attention to the abuses and hold this administration accountable.

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[Media contact](#)