



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

Unmasking the Truth:

How Trump's Immigration Raids Target U.S. Citizens and Terrorize Communities

November 19, 2025

Democratic Members of the Committee on Homeland Security are holding today's hearing for a very simple reason — Donald Trump's immigration raids are targeting U.S. citizens and terrorizing American communities, and our Republican colleagues refuse to do a damn thing about it.

Despite repeated requests from Committee Democrats, Republicans have done no real oversight of the Trump administration or the Department of Homeland Security all Congress.

Though she's found plenty of time to fly around the world for staged photo ops, Secretary Kristi Noem has appeared before the Committee only once — far less than her predecessors under prior administrations of both parties.

Republicans have been complicit in allowing DHS officials to hide from accountability by holding what has to be the fewest hearings with administration witnesses in the history of the Committee.

Even in the face of horrific video footage of masked Border Patrol and ICE agents roving through American communities, assaulting and detaining U.S. citizens — including pregnant women, veterans, senior citizens, clergy, and children — Republicans have remained, as we say in the South, as silent as the grave.

They are loyal to Trump over their fellow Americans — an appalling violation of the oath they swore to the Constitution. That's not "America First" at all. In fact, it's unAmerican.

So, Democrats are doing what Republicans won't — sounding the alarm on what Border Patrol and ICE are doing to American citizens in communities across the country under the Trump administration.

I want to show a video clip of what one of our witnesses, Rev. David Black, a U.S. citizen, experienced as he peacefully exercised his constitutional rights near the Broadview Detention Center outside Chicago this summer. You will see armed agents hit the crowd, including Rev. Black, with multiple pepper balls, driving him to the ground in a cloud of caustic dust.

This is what it's come to under Trump. A member of the clergy, standing with his arms outstretched in prayer, being assaulted by armed government agents. And Republicans, who so often loudly proclaim their faith, are suddenly and conspicuously silent.

In another shocking clip, we see agents knocking a senior citizen to the ground, not once but twice, driving him into the pavement outside his place of business. This gentleman, a U.S. citizen, was later released from custody, but sustained broken ribs and bruises over his body.

Other video clips taken by concerned citizens show Border Patrol and ICE agents smashing car windows and pulling Americans going about their daily lives from their vehicles, and profiling brown and Black Americans who are repeatedly stopped and asked to show their papers simply because of the color of their skin.

We will see more of these videos today. They are hard to watch because of the violence they show, but because of what they say about the state of our country under the Trump administration.

Even our brave veterans have been targeted in Trump's raids. This summer DHS agents pulled U.S. citizen, Army veteran, and father of two, George Retes, from his vehicle as he drove to work, pepper sprayed him, and locked him in immigration detention for three days and three nights without letting him contact his family or a lawyer.

Unfortunately, this wasn't an isolated incident. ProPublica recently reported that ICE detained over 170 U.S. citizens – including almost 20 children, two of whom have cancer. This is an outrage and a disgrace.

Another of our witnesses, Mr. Jim Brown, is a decorated retired Navy combat veteran whose U.S. legal permanent resident wife, Donna, was thrown into immigration detention by the Trump administration after attending a family funeral in Ireland.

Besides being a green card holder, Donna is a home healthcare worker, a volunteer in her community, and is the mother of a United States Marine currently serving our country overseas.

The only mark on her record is from over a decade ago, when as a struggling single mom trying to feed her kids, Donna passed two bad checks at a grocery store totaling less than \$60.

That's it — less than sixty bucks to feed her kids, and that debt has since been repaid. Hardly the "worst of the worst" Trump promised to target.

Republicans claim to support our veterans and military, but again they are suddenly and conspicuously silent about these cases.

Tragically, we've also seen heartbreaking footage of U.S. citizen children being torn from their parents and news reports of kids being taken from their beds by masked Border Patrol agents in the middle of the night, zip-tied, and left outside in the cold. Kids are terrified to go to the doctor or to school for fear of what might happen. It truly is a special kind of evil to hurt children that way.

We are fortunate to have two pediatricians on our panel today who can speak to how these raids are hurting our kids and what we can do to help.

As Americans, we need to stand up for what's right and push back against these abuses by the Trump administration. Our democracy quite literally depends on it.

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