



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

The Human Cost of Immigration Enforcement and Detention: Conditions and Oversight at Delaney Hall

June 17, 2026

We are here to stand united against the Trump administration's out-of-control immigration operations and to expose the dangerous conditions inside Delaney Hall and at detention centers around the country. I also want to thank Mayor Baraka and the staff here at City Hall for hosting us today.

Most importantly, thank you to our panel of witnesses for being here. Speaking truth to power requires immense courage. Your presence and your stories matter. And your testimony will help hold accountable an administration that tears families apart and believes it can violate the law with impunity.

Since taking office, the Trump administration has unleashed the most cruel, inhumane, and unlawful immigration policies in modern history. In response, congressional Republicans have chosen one path: silence. Republicans have said nothing when ICE and CBP agents shot and killed U.S. citizens. They have said nothing when DHS deported children battling cancer, or removed mothers, fathers, and grandparents with no criminal record whatsoever. They have remained silent as ICE and CBP terrorized communities with masked agents who detained people solely based on appearance — citizens and noncitizens alike.

Republicans have refused to conduct even basic oversight of the Department of Homeland Security or acknowledge the mounting abuses. In doing so, they are not bystanders — they are enablers. The only time Republicans raised their voices was to demand billions more for ICE and CBP, all while attempting to eliminate guardrails, accountability, and oversight. And when Democrats asserted that taxpayer dollars should not fund unchecked abuse, Republicans shut down the government rather than work with Democrats on reforms.

Republicans have made their priorities clear. They believe ICE and CBP should be terrorizing our communities and tearing families apart. And if a U.S. citizen protests, they can be arrested, labeled a domestic terrorist, or even killed. In the case of Congresswoman McIver, the Trump administration continues to press fabricated charges just because she dared to exercise her legal right to conduct oversight of Delaney Hall. We are all very proud of her for continuing to fight for justice, compassion, and the rule of law. Unfortunately, Republicans in Congress refuse to exercise the checks and balances our constitutional system requires.

Just last week, Republicans gave ICE and Border Patrol 70 billion dollars more so they can operate for the next three years without any guardrails or reforms. This is on top of the 140 billion dollars Republicans handed ICE and CBP last year to expand Trump's cruel immigration enforcement operations. ICE and CBP now have the largest budgets of any Federal law enforcement agency. It's clear that Republicans are more focused on protecting these agencies than the people law enforcement is sworn to protect. That is why we are here today. Oversight is not optional — it is our duty, even if Republicans have abandoned it.

We have all heard the horrific accounts coming out of Delaney Hall—and many of my colleagues here today have witnessed them firsthand. We've seen detainees living in inhumane conditions, mistreatment and abuse by staff, and food contaminated with worms and maggots. These are not isolated incidents. These are symptoms of a system collapsing under secrecy, neglect, profiteering, and disregard for human life. Let me be clear: every person detained in this country — regardless of immigration status — is entitled to basic human dignity.

They are entitled to safe and sanitary shelter, necessary medical care, access to legal counsel, and edible food. These are not luxuries. They are the minimum obligations of a government that detains human beings. Facilities like Delaney Hall are required to meet standards of care. What we have seen and heard makes one thing undeniable: those standards are being violated.

Today's forum is about exposing those violations, demanding accountability, and insisting that the United States government live up to the values it claims to stand for. And to meet those values, as representative McIver and other members of the New Jersey delegation have called for repeatedly, I too, call for the immediate closure of the Delaney Hall facility.

To our witnesses: thank you again for being here. And to all who fight to ensure our immigration system is rooted in justice, dignity, and humanity — we will not stop. We will not look away, and we will not allow these abuses to continue to go unchallenged.

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