



**One Hundred Nineteenth Congress
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515**

September 30, 2026

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Mullin:

We write to express our outrage at the misuse of Department of Homeland Security (DHS) funds to air political ads in support of President Trump, demand that you cease all financial support for any political ads, and request additional information on the source of the ads' funding and the process by which taxpayer dollars were used to sponsor political ads to promote President Trump during the midterm elections.

In recent days, television stations across the country have aired political ads that state they are "paid for by the U.S. government."¹ Despite the obvious political purpose of these advertisements, the White House has attempted to defend them as public service announcements, while failing to explain the source of funding for the ads or what legal basis could serve as justification for spending taxpayer money on federally funded propaganda, just as Americans are voting to determine control of Congress.

It is now apparent that the ads' funding comes from the slush fund Congressional Republicans provided to Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act" (OBBBA) last year.² Earlier this month, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approved \$20 million in OBBBA funding for CBP for "commemorative events."³ Using that funding, CBP is now sponsoring political ads in a desperate attempt to rehabilitate the President's image at a time when he faces historically low approval ratings due to his failed war with Iran, crippling high costs for Americans, and his violent and cruel mass deportation efforts. Reportedly, President Trump is

¹ Bayliss Wagner, *A Trump 2024 Campaign Ad Returns, Now Brought to You by the Government*, N.Y. TIMES (Sept. 27, 2026), <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/09/27/us/politics/trump-ad-government-campaign.html>.

² Tarini Parti, Marianne LeVine & Michelle Hackman, *Homeland Security Money Financed Pro-Trump Television Ads*, WALL ST. J. (Sept. 29, 2026), <https://www.wsj.com/politics/policy/homeland-security-money-financed-pro-trump-television-ads-54ac33bb>.

³ OpenOMB, <https://openomb.org/file/11559134> (accessed Sept. 29, 2026).

personally selecting the taxpayer-funded ads, and these ads will continue through this election season.⁴

Unfortunately, this incident is not the first time that DHS has misused funding for political advertisements during the Trump administration. Under your predecessor, Secretary Kristi Noem, DHS spent over \$200 million on self-promoting commercials developed by politically connected Republican campaign consultants.⁵ This disturbing pattern of redirecting congressionally appropriated funding to advantage one political party must cease immediately.

While congressional Republicans have abdicated their responsibilities by providing this administration with a slush fund at DHS to carry out the President's political agenda and have failed to fulfill their constitutional oversight obligations, Homeland Security Committee Democrats intend to hold this administration accountable. As Secretary, it is your responsibility to ensure that DHS uses its funding in compliance with Federal law prohibiting the use of funds for political propaganda. Homeland Security Committee Democrats demand answers as to how this funding was approved and how it comports with Federal law.

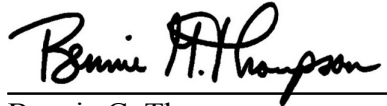
To facilitate the Committee's oversight of DHS's misuse of funds to air political advertisements, please provide the following information by October 7, 2026:

1. A breakdown of the amount and source of funding approved for television advertisements to be aired between September 23, 2026, and November 3, 2026.
2. Any plans for additional funding to air television advertisements before November 3, 2026.
3. A justification for how the airing of such television advertisements complies with Federal law.
4. All drafts and final copies of any contracts involved in carrying out these television advertisements.
5. All communications, including DHS communications with the White House and OMB, regarding the funding, approval, production, and distribution of these television advertisements.

⁴ Alex Isenstadt, *Scoop: Trump's hand-picked, taxpayer-funded ads about to ramp up*, AXIOS (Sept. 29, 2026), <https://www.axios.com/2026/09/29/trump-ads-taxpayer-funds>.

⁵ Justin Elliott, Joshua Kaplan & Alex Mierjeski, *Firm Tied to Kristi Noem Secretly Got Money From \$220 Million DHS Ad Contracts*, *ProPublica* (Nov. 14, 2025), <https://www.propublica.org/article/kristi-noem-dhs-ad-campaign-strategy-group>.

Sincerely,



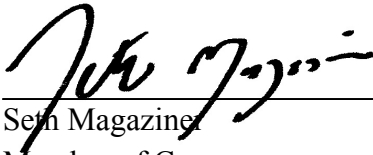
Bennie G. Thompson
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland
Security



J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress



Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress



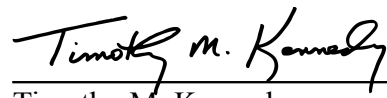
Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress



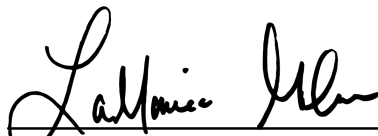
Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress



Timothy M. Kennedy
Member of Congress



LaMonica McIver
Member of Congress



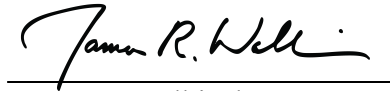
Julie Johnson
Member of Congress



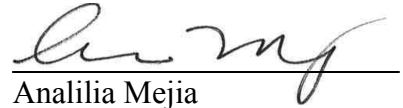
Pablo José Hernández
Member of Congress



Nellie Pou
Member of Congress



James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress



Analilia Mejia
Member of Congress



Troy A. Carter, Sr.
Member of Congress



Al Green
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Andrew Garbarino, Chairman