



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

September 30, 2026

Orice Williams Brown
Acting Comptroller General of the United States
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Ms. Williams Brown:

U.S. citizens are not subject to administrative immigration enforcement and removal processes, which are only applicable to potentially removable foreign nationals. Yet, there are reports that, since January 2025, some U.S. citizens were mistakenly subject to immigration detainers, detained, or removed by the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) on administrative immigration charges. Additionally, some U.S. citizens have reportedly been held at or between U.S. ports of entry by DHS's U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). For example, during Operation Metro Surge in Minnesota from December 2025 to February 2026, federal agents and officers arrested approximately 131 U.S. citizens, and two U.S. citizens were fatally shot. Earlier this month, ICE officers confronted a U.S. citizen in Illinois who resembled a man for which they had a warrant for arrest. Despite the U.S. citizen informing the ICE officers of his citizenship, the encounter turned violent resulting in bodily injuries to the U.S. citizen.

In 2021, GAO reported that ICE guidance to its officers for investigating citizenship was inconsistent and ICE did not systematically track such encounters. GAO recommended that ICE take steps to better identify and track cases involving U.S. citizens.

In light of growing concerns about the impact of immigration enforcement operations on U.S. citizens, we request the GAO conduct a review that updates GAO's 2021 report and addresses the following questions:

- What do ICE and CBP data indicate about the number of U.S. citizens encountered or detained by ICE or held by CBP on administrative immigration charges in the last 5 fiscal years?

- To what extent have ICE and CBP developed procedures for investigating the potential U.S. citizenship of individuals their officers encounter and how do they ensure officers follow such policies?
- To what extent has ICE developed procedures for investigating the potential U.S. citizenship of individuals its officers identify for detainers and how does ICE ensure officers follow such policies?

Thank you for your assistance in this matter. If you have any questions, please have your staff contact the Committee on Homeland Security at 202-226-2616.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bennie G. Thompson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bennie" being more prominent.

Bennie G. Thompson
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J. Luis Correa". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the last name "Correa" being more prominent.

J. Luis Correa
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Border Security
and Enforcement