



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2305

December 12, 2025

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Todd M. Lyons
Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Director
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Secretary Noem and Acting Director Lyons:

I write to express my deep concern about U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s (ICE) Operation Metro Surge the Twin Cities metro area of Minnesota. Since this operation began, it has been clear to me and other community leaders that ICE sent agents to the Twin Cities without preparing for legitimate, targeted enforcement of individuals who pose any risk to the public. Instead, constituents, advocates, and local officials have documented blatant racial profiling, an egregious level of unnecessary force, and activity that appears designed for social media rather than befitting a law enforcement agency. I am demanding answers on behalf of my constituents whose constitutional rights are being violated on a daily basis.

It is clear to me that this surge came in direct response to Trump’s racist comments about Somali people, and about me in particular. Earlier this month, Trump called Somali immigrants “garbage” and ranted that he does not want us in this country.¹ But over 90% of Somalis in America are U.S. citizens², and we are not subject to immigration enforcement because we are citizens. Rather than focusing the operation on individuals with judicial warrants, ICE officers have been stopping Black and Brown Minnesotans on the street or in public spaces at random, demanding to see their IDs.³

In some instances, that identification has not seemed to matter at all to officers, as multiple U.S. citizens have been arrested. One of my constituents, a U.S. citizen, was arrested by ICE officers after identifying himself as a citizen and offering to present his identification.⁴ On December 9th, ICE arrested a 55-year-old U.S. citizen in Minneapolis as she observed an ICE operation in her neighborhood.⁵ Media reported that one U.S. citizen was mocked for wearing a hijab and held in detention for 24 hours.⁶ It is appalling to witness this unlawful behavior by ICE agents, which echoes some of the darkest chapters in our nation’s history.

¹ Isabella Murray, Lalee Ibssa and Ivan Pereira. “Trump describes Somali immigrants as ‘garbage’ amid feud with Minnesota congresswoman, governor.” (ABC News, 2025)

² Alyssa Chen. “Most Somali people in America and Minnesota are citizens.” (Minnesota Reformer, 2025)

³ Mark Vancleave and Steve Karnowski. “Federal agents use pepper spray on crowd in Somali neighborhood of Minneapolis amid Trump crackdown.” (AP, 2025)

⁴ Katelyn Vue. “U.S. citizen offered to show I.D. but was arrested by immigration officers in Cedar-Riverside.” (Sahan Journal, 2025)

⁵ Jon Collins. “Federal agents arrest citizen observer watching ICE detain neighbors on her north Minneapolis block.” (MPR, 2025)

⁶ Mike Manzoni. “U.S. citizen arrested during immigration crackdown, family says.” (Fox 9, 2025)

My office has also received numerous complaints that ICE agents brandished weapons at members of the public who were not impeding enforcement activity, as well as reports of ICE agents using pepper spray on groups of observers.⁷ On December 7th, Augsburg University wrote that ICE agents aimed weapons at students and staff while operating on campus.⁸ The President of Augsburg University stated that during the arrest, agents refused to produce a warrant⁹, heightening confusion and fear amongst bystanders. This escalation in ICE agents' use of force puts our communities at risk and does not have a legitimate law enforcement purpose beyond the President's political objective to target anyone perceived to be an immigrant, or even supporting immigrants.

All of this was done at taxpayer expense, meaning that the very Americans ICE is targeting are footing the bill. The New York Times reported that ICE has sent around 100 officers to Minnesota for the surge¹⁰, where I assume officers are staying in rental accommodations and receiving per diems, all funded by the American taxpayer. I can't imagine a clearer example of waste, fraud, and abuse than what ICE leadership has unleashed in neighborhoods across the Twin Cities. Taxpayers deserve to know the true cost of this operation.

I request DHS provide a response to the following questions by December 18th, 2025:

- How many people have been arrested and detained during Operation Metro Surge? Of those arrests and detentions, how many were U.S. citizens? How many of those arrested and detained have not been convicted of a crime, regardless of their immigration status?
- What planning had the agency done to prepare for this surge? How many judicial warrants were prepared in advance? How many arrests were the result of judicial warrants?
- How is ICE ensuring due process protections while a large volume of new officers are on the ground? How can the public report potential violations of constitutional rights, and how will those be investigated? What is the estimated cost to the taxpayer for this surge? Please provide data broken down by lodging, meals, base salaries, overtime, paid media, and other expenses.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress

⁷ Howard Thompson. "ICE agents pepper spray crowd after allegedly detaining U.S. citizen in Minneapolis." (Fox9, 2025)

⁸ Leon Purvis. "ICE at Augsburg University: What happened?" (Fox 9, 2025)

⁹ Nina Moini and Ngoc Bui. "Augsburg University President: ICE 'illegally' detained student, didn't show warrant" (MPR, 2025)

¹⁰ Hamed Aleaziz, Zolan Kanno-Youngs and Ernesto Londoño. "New ICE Operation Is Said to Target Somali Migrants in Twin Cities" (New York Times, 2025)