

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 13, 2026

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
300 7th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20528

The Honorable Todd Lyons
Acting Director
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
500 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20536

Dear Secretary Noem and Acting Director Lyons:

As members of Maryland’s Congressional Delegation, we are deeply concerned with reported conditions at ICE’s Baltimore Field Office located at 31 Hopkins Plaza in Baltimore, Maryland. A recent video depicted dozens of individuals confined in a small holding room without adequate sleeping accommodations, sanitation facilities, or sufficient space. Representative April McClain Delaney, who conducted an oversight visit to the field office and holding rooms recently, shared that ICE confirmed the video is authentic and was taken in a holding room at the Baltimore Field Office.¹ The conditions revealed in the video are deeply disturbing and necessitate more information as to how the field office and agency are enforcing our immigration laws safely and humanely.

The conditions shown in the video are not acceptable. The holding rooms have no beds—only concrete benches and a barren floor, requiring many individuals to lie on the floor with thin mats and foil blankets. Representative McClain Delaney reported that detainees are “not allowed to leave that [room] ever—the entire time—even to use the bathroom or get a shower.”² There is a toilet with a partial privacy wall, providing only minimal privacy. Detainees shared with Representative McClain Delaney that they were hungry and thirsty, and she noted that the rooms were “very crowded.”³ These conditions are part of a pattern of disturbing reports of prolonged detainment, overcrowding, and inhumane conditions at ICE’s Baltimore Field Office. To make matters worse, our constituents have also reported that detainees are routinely denied due process and access to counsel, family visitation, and medical care.

Our concerns are compounded by the agency’s continued efforts to obstruct congressional oversight. On July 28, 2025, following reports of inhumane conditions in the holding rooms at ICE’s Baltimore Field Office, members of the Maryland Congressional Delegation—including Senators Chris Van Hollen and Angela Alsobrooks and Representatives Kweisi Mfume, Johnny Olszewski, Jr., Sarah Elfreth, and Glenn Ivey—were denied access to the office and its holding rooms while attempting to conduct a lawful oversight visit. This visit was undertaken pursuant to the lawmakers’ explicit statutory authority to perform inspections of “any facility operated by or for the Department of Homeland Security used to detain or otherwise house” individuals in ICE

¹ CBS News, “Maryland lawmaker describes ‘horrendous’ conditions inside Baltimore ICE facility, speaks out after viral overcrowding video.” <https://www.cbsnews.com/baltimore/news/ice-facility-conditions-immigration-enforcement/>

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

custody, and explicitly bars the agency from preventing such visits or from requiring Members of Congress to provide prior notice.⁴ It was not until more than two weeks later that ICE permitted members of the Maryland Congressional Delegation access to the field office and its holding rooms—more than enough time to have altered the conditions.

At that time, ICE cited its then-newly instituted oversight visitation policy for initially denying the members' access to the field office and its holding rooms. The oversight visitation policy required at least 7 days' advance notice for visits to detention facilities and contented that Section 527(a) of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (Public Law 118–47), which bars DHS from preventing Members of Congress from conducting oversight visits to any facility “used to detain or otherwise house” individuals in DHS custody, did not apply to ICE field offices because they purportedly are not detention facilities.

In December, a federal judge found ICE's oversight visitation policy contrary to the law and blocked its implementation while the lawsuit continues.⁵ Despite the judge's order, ICE reinstated the 7-day advance notice requirement with new, dubious legal reasoning. Recently, the judge blocked that policy, as well.⁶

In addition to ICE's initial refusal to permit the members' July 28, 2025, inspection, more recent requests have been postponed or denied, further limiting oversight access to the field office and its holding rooms. As our courts have made clear, this is an unacceptable obstruction of Congress' oversight role. As billions of dollars in taxpayer funding fuels ICE's operations, we have a duty to our constituents to conduct oversight around the use of these funds. These most recent reports further necessitate continued congressional oversight.

We would also alert you to ICE's lack of responsiveness to repeated outreach by our legislative and constituent services staff at the agency-level, as well as the Baltimore Field Office. Staff requests for information, clarification, and engagement have reportedly gone unanswered or unresolved. This lack of communication constitutes blatant obstruction of our congressional oversight role, and hinders our ability to respond to our constituent Maryland families seeking assistance.

For that reason, we are enclosing a list of questions our delegation submitted to ICE on August 27, 2025 following the oversight visit by Senator Van Hollen and Alsobrooks and Representatives Mfume and Elfreth on August 13, 2025. To date we have not received answers to these questions regarding ICE's policies and practices for providing food and nutrition to detainees, access to showers and hygiene supplies, family visitation policies, and a process for filing and investigating concerns regarding detention and facility conditions. On behalf of our constituents, we again request responses to the enclosed, previously submitted questions as well as the following additional questions by no later than February 26, 2026:

1. Representative McClain Delaney reported that ICE shared with her that the video was in fact taken in a holding room at the Baltimore Field Office. Please confirm the

⁴ H.R. 2882, the *Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024* (Public Law 118-47)

⁵ *Neguse v. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement*, 1:25-cv-02463, (D.D.C. Dec 17, 2025) ECF No. 36

⁶ *Neguse v. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement*, 1:25-cv-02463, (D.D.C. Feb 02, 2026) ECF No. 52

authenticity of the video, including the location, approximate date, number of individuals visible in the footage, and conditions depicted?

2. What immediate corrective actions, policy changes, or directives, if any, have ICE or DHS leadership implemented in response to the conditions depicted in the video, and when were they issued?
3. Do the conditions shown in the video exist today?
4. Have there been recent instances of individuals with medical needs being held in the holding rooms? If so, have their needs been met? Please describe the nature of the medical issues and the care provided.
5. Are the gender-specific hygiene needs of detainees being met while in detention? Please describe the policies and practices in place to ensure timely access to appropriate hygiene products, including menstrual products, and the process by which detainees can request such items.
6. How many individuals are currently being held at the Baltimore Field Office at 31 Hopkins Plaza as of the date of February 11, 2026?
 - a. How many individuals were being held at the Baltimore Field Office on each of the days from Monday, January 19, 2026, to Friday, January 30, 2026?
7. What is the maximum capacity of each of the holding rooms at the field office for standing room only vs. overnight stays, including the holding room shown in the video?
8. What is the average length of time individuals are being held at this facility prior to transfer or release? Please include:
 - a. The average length of stay beginning from January 20, 2025, to present.
 - b. The average length of stay for each quarter of 2025.
 - c. The average length of stay since January 1, 2026.
9. What is the longest length of stay an individual has experienced at the Baltimore Field Office since January 20, 2025?
10. ICE has shared with members of the Maryland Delegation that it is operating under a waiver to its 12-hour limit for detention in the holding rooms, which was issued on February 5, 2025, and must be re-evaluated one year after issuance. The waiver allows for the detention of individuals up to 72 hours in the holding rooms.⁷
 - a. What is the consequence for the Baltimore Field Office should it hold individuals in its holding rooms past the 72-hour period allowed by the waiver?

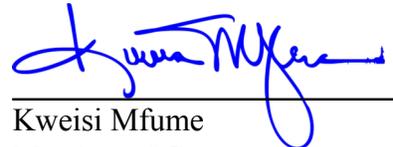
⁷ D.N.N. v. Bacon, 1:25-cv-01613, (D. Maryland Jun 30, 2025) ECF No. 40

- b. If ICE has held individuals at the Baltimore Field Office holding rooms for longer than 72 hours, what “exceptional circumstances” does the agency believe permitted it to do so?
- c. What factors will determine whether the 12-hour rule waiver is extended or rescinded?

Sincerely,



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



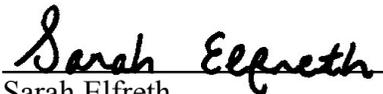
Kweisi Mfume
Member of Congress



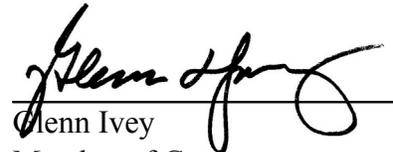
Angela D. Alsobrooks
United States Senator



April McClain Delaney
Member of Congress



Sarah Elfreth
Member of Congress



Glenn Ivey
Member of Congress



Johnny Ciszewski, Jr.
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



Steny H. Hoyer
Member of Congress

Enclosure:

Availability of privacy releases at the Baltimore Field Office, specifically:

- Are family members able to provide privacy releases to detained family members?
 - If not, why not?
 - If so, what protocols should the family follow to deliver the privacy release?
- Are there any limitations on the documentation that attorney can bring for a meeting with a client?
- Is there any reason an attorney would not be allowed to have their client at the Baltimore Holding Room sign a privacy release?

Percentage of detainees held at the Baltimore Field Office (or taken into custody by Baltimore ERO) without a criminal conviction;

- Specifically, statistics on:
 - Percentage with and without criminal conviction;
 - ICE Threat level breakdown of those taken into custody by Baltimore ERO for 2023, 2024, 2025, and thus far in 2026
 - Status - percentage of legal permanent residents, undocumented persons, individuals with Withholdings of Removal in place
 - Breakdown of locations individuals are being taken into custody (city, county, neighborhood breakdown)

Breakdown of nationalities taken into custody by ICE Baltimore ERO, including:

- Percentage of detainees held at the Baltimore Field Office from African nations

Longest time a detainee was held at the Baltimore Field Office, as well as:

- What food options are provided?
- Where is the shower located for extended stays?
- How and when does ICE determine when a detainee's stay warrants a shower?

Technical details as to ICE's process for determining where, when, and how (transportation) detainees are transferred to other locations, including:

- Please detail the specific metrics used when transferring each individual (i.e. geographical considerations, capacity considerations, etc.).
- How and when are families notified of transfers?
- Are families allowed visitation prior to transfers?

Additional Post-Visit Questions

- How can individuals file a complaint or grievance?

- How many complaints/grievances have been submitted related to the Baltimore Holding Room or ERO actions per month over the past year? Provide a breakdown of the types of complaints.
- What is your procedure and response time to respond to complaints and grievances?