

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 17, 2025

The Honorable Pam Bondi
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

The Honorable Kash Patel
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20535

The Honorable Terrance C. “Terry” Cole
Administrator
Drug Enforcement Agency
600–700 Army Navy Drive
Arlington, VA 22202

The Honorable Gadyaces S. Serralta
Director
U.S. Marshalls Service
1215 S. Clark St,
Arlington, VA 22202

Mr. Daniel P. Driscoll
Acting Director
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives
99 New York Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20226

Dear Attorney General Bondi, Director Patel, Administrator Cole, Director Serralta, and Acting Director Driscoll:

We write to express our grave concerns about the Trump administration’s deprioritization of federal drug trafficking violations, which have seen prosecutions fall to their lowest levels in decades as the Department of Justice (DOJ) has shifted personnel and resources away from core national security and public safety missions to routine immigration enforcement.¹ A Reuters investigation, which analyzed nearly two million court records, found that there was a 10% year-over-year drop in drug prosecutions from 2024 to 2025, a decline that coincides with DOJ’s broad reassignment of federal agents, officers, and prosecutors.²

Since January 20, 2025, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has deputized personnel across multiple federal agencies, including DOJ components such as the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), and the U.S. Marshalls Service, to perform routine immigration enforcement functions.³ According to the Cato Institute, this vast reassignment includes roughly:

¹ Brad Heath, *Exclusive: Federal drug prosecutions fall to lowest level in decades as Trump shifts focus to deportations*, REUTERS (Sept. 29, 2025), <https://www.reuters.com/legal/government/federal-drug-prosecutions-fall-lowest-level-decades-trump-shifts-focus-2025-09-29/>.

² *Ibid.*

- One in five U.S. Marshals (650 of 3,892);
- One in five FBI agents (2,840 of 13,700);
- 50% of DEA agents (2,181 of 4,620); and
- Two-thirds of ATF agents (1,778 of 2,572).⁴

In a parallel move, on January 21, 2025, DOJ Acting Deputy Director Emil Bove issued a memorandum instructing all DOJ employees to prioritize immigration cases.⁵ This memorandum was accompanied by a request to all 93 U.S. Attorneys to identify line prosecutors to be transferred for deployment to so-called “border districts” (Florida and districts with jurisdiction over parts of our southern border with Mexico) to prosecute violations of immigration law.⁶ On March 6, 2025, DOJ Deputy Director Todd Blanche reiterated this call for more federal prosecutors to be transferred to border districts, and also announced that U.S. Attorneys in border districts were authorized to hire more line prosecutors and that these hires would be exempt from the broader hiring freeze imposed by the Trump administration.⁷ While it is not known how many federal prosecutors have been transferred or hired in border district areas, or how many have been reassigned to work primarily or exclusively on immigration cases, it seems likely to be significant.

These personnel changes signal a massive shift in the priorities of federal law enforcement. As one point of comparison, the FBI has reassigned over twice as many agents to immigration enforcement under the Trump administration as it did to counterterrorism efforts following the 9/11 terror attacks.⁸ These reassignments are not just abstract numbers but have shown up in the daily lives of average Americans, who have seen employees of DOJ components, including the FBI and DEA, patrolling their streets in support of ICE raids.⁹ Many of these federal agents have participated in raids that have disrupted communities and, in some cases, resulted in the wrongful detention of U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents.¹⁰

³ David J. Bier, *ICE Has Diverted Over 25,000 Officers from Their Jobs*, CATO INSTITUTE (Sept. 3, 2025), <https://www.cato.org/blog/ice-has-diverted-over-25000-officers-their-jobs>.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ U.S. DEP’T OF JUST., *Memorandum from Acting Deputy Att’y Gen. Emil Bove on Interim Policy Changes Regarding Charging, Sentencing, and Immigration Enforcement* (Jan. 21, 2025), <https://www.aila.org/doj-issues-memo-on-interim-policy-changes-regarding-charging-sentencing-and-immigration-enforcement>.

⁶ Ben Penn, *Trump DOJ Leader Said to Order Prosecutors Moved to Border* (1), *Bloomberg Law* (Jan. 30, 2025), <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/us-law-week/trump-doj-leader-said-to-order-prosecutors-transferred-to-border>.

⁷ U.S. DEP’T OF JUST., *Memorandum from Deputy Att’y Gen. Todd Blanche Bove on U.S. Attorneys’ Offices Staffing Priorities* (Mar. 6, 2025), <https://www.justice.gov/dag/media/1393741/dl?inline>.

⁸ Ken Dilanian, *Trump’s deportations divert FBI agents off child predator cases*, *MSNBC* (Sept. 16, 2025), <https://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/news/trumps-deportations-divert-fbi-agents-child-predator-cases-rcna231481>.

⁹ Joseph Nunn & Spencer Reynolds, *One Week of Trump’s DC Takeover Attempt*, *BRENNAN CENTER FOR JUSTICE* (Aug. 19, 2025), <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/one-week-trumps-dc-takeover-attempt>; Shelia O’Connor, *Federal reinforcements set to arrive in Memphis this week*, *FOX 13 MEMPHIS* (Sept. 29, 2025), https://www.fox13memphis.com/news/federal-reinforcements-set-to-begin-to-arrive-in-memphis/article_58c34812-6234-4682-a9f8-db4d8b64509c.html.

¹⁰ Jose Olivares and Will Craft, *Immigrants with no criminal record now largest group in Ice detention*, *THE GUARDIAN* (Sept. 26, 2025), <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/sep/26/immigrants-criminal-record-ice-detention>; Doc Louallen, *79-year-old US citizen claims ICE agents body-slammed him at his business, seeks \$50M*, *ABC NEWS* (Sept. 27, 2025), <https://abcnews.go.com/US/79-year-us-citizen-claims-ice-agents-body/story?id=125978834>.

At the same time, the prioritization of immigration enforcement has necessarily meant that other federal law enforcement priorities have been deemphasized. Federal drug prosecutions have dropped by 10% from 2024, falling to their lowest level in decades.¹¹ Money laundering charges, often used to dismantle trafficking networks, have fallen by roughly 24%.¹² DEA has shifted 25% of its operations away from targeting drug cartels and fentanyl traffickers.¹³ The FBI now spends less time on white-collar crime, violent crime, and child exploitation.¹⁴ DHS Homeland Security Investigations' entire investigations division, roughly 6,000 agents, has been reassigned to assist ICE with deportation operations rather than focus on terrorism, child exploitation, or human trafficking cases.¹⁵ These staffing shifts also come against the backdrop of DOJ's recent decision to disband the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force, a specialized inter-agency office that has been instrumental in investigating cartel activities since the 1980s.¹⁶ It is important to note that DOJ's staffing diversions have also placed great strain on federal prosecutors. For example, the political reassignment of career attorneys, attrition in key litigation units, and government buyouts and reduction in force (RIF) initiatives have decreased not only DOJ staffing levels but their morale.¹⁷

The implications and impacts are clear: our communities are less safe when agents trained to pursue drug cartels, violent offenders, sex crimes, and complex criminal networks are pulled away from their core duties. To assess operational, national security, and public-safety

¹¹ Brad Heath, *Exclusive: Federal drug prosecutions fall to lowest level in decades as Trump shifts focus to deportations*, REUTERS (Sept. 29, 2025), <https://www.reuters.com/legal/government/federal-drug-prosecutions-fall-lowest-level-decades-trump-shifts-focus-2025-09-29/>.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Brad Heath, Joshua Schneyer, Marisa Taylor, Sarah N. Lynch & Mike Spector, *Exclusive: Thousands of agents diverted to Trump immigration crackdown*, REUTERS (Mar. 22, 2025), <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/thousands-agents-diverted-trump-immigration-crackdown-2025-03-22/>.

¹⁴ Ken Dilanian, *Trump's deportations divert FBI agents off child predator cases*, MSNBC (Sept. 16, 2025), <https://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/news/trumps-deportations-divert-fbi-agents-child-predator-cases-rcna231481>.

¹⁵ Josh Meyer, *Thousands of DHS agents shift to deportation instead of drugs, weapons and human trafficking*, USA TODAY (Feb. 14, 2025), <https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/politics/2025/02/14/dhs-agents-deportation-not-trafficking/78641666007/?gnt-cfr=1&gca-cat=p&gca-uir=true&gca-epti=z119060e008800v119060b00xxxxd11xx65&gca-ft=116&gca-ds=sophi>.

¹⁶ Sarah N. Lynch, *Exclusive: US scraps Justice Department task force that took on cartels, documents show*, REUTERS (Oct. 2, 2025), <https://www.reuters.com/world/us-scraps-justice-department-task-force-that-took-cartels-documents-show-2025-10-02/>.

¹⁷ Sarah N. Lynch and Dan Levine, *US Justice Department reassigns about a dozen civil rights attorneys amid shakeup, say sources*, REUTERS (Apr. 23, 2025), <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-justice-department-reassigns-about-dozen-civil-rights-attorneys-amid-shakeup-2025-04-22/>; Suzanne Monyak and Justin Wise, *Justice Department to Lose 4,500 Staffers to Buyout Offers (1)*, BLOOMBERG LAW (Jun. 16, 2025), <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/us-law-week/justice-department-to-lose-4-000-staffers-to-resignation-offers>; Andrew Goudswaard, *Two-thirds of the DOJ unit defending Trump policies in court have quit*, REUTERS (Jul. 14, 2025), <https://www.reuters.com/legal/litigation/two-thirds-doj-unit-defending-trump-policies-court-have-quit-2025-07-14/>; Daniel Wiessner, *Trump DOJ says agencies' layoff plans are off limits in legal challenge*, REUTERS (Jul. 15, 2025), <https://www.reuters.com/legal/government/trump-doj-says-agencies-layoff-plans-are-off-limits-legal-challenge-2025-07-15/>; Steve Benen, *More federal prosecutors are ousted as the purge intensifies at Trump's Justice Department*, MSNBC (Sept. 29, 2025), <https://www.msnbc.com/rachel-maddow-show/maddowblog/federal-prosecutors-are-ousted-purge-intensifies-trumps-justice-depart-rcna234453>.

impacts, we ask that you please provide detailed answers to the following questions no later than **October 31, 2025**:

1. How many DOJ component personnel (DEA, FBI, ATF, USMS, DOJ Criminal Division, U.S. Attorneys' Offices, etc.) have been reassigned, full-time or temporary, to immigration enforcement or support of DHS/ICE operations since January 20, 2025?
2. How many criminal investigations, prosecutions, civil enforcement matters, and forfeiture cases has the DOJ delayed, declined, or placed on hold due to immigration-related reassignments since January 20, 2025?
3. Has the DOJ ever overruled a DOJ component's request to keep certain staff assigned to their core duties? If so, please explain why and under what rationale DOJ used to overrule any request.
4. What metrics, if any, is DOJ using to evaluate the impact of these diversions on national security and public safety?
5. What actions has DOJ taken to address the negative impacts that the federal hiring freeze, government buy outs, and RIF initiatives have had on DOJ's ability to investigate and prosecute potential offenders?

The American public deserves a full accounting of your department's decision to re-allocate critical staff and resources away from their core missions.

Sincerely,



Dave Min
Member of Congress



Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



Sam T. Liccardo
Member of Congress

Cc: **The Honorable Kristi Noem**, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Mr. Todd Lyons, Acting Director, U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement