

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 21, 2025

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Secretary of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE
Washington, D.C. 20528

Mr. Todd M. Lyons
Acting Director
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
500 12th Street SW, Mail Stop 5902
Washington, D.C. 20536

Dear Secretary Noem and Acting Director Lyons:

We are writing following the tragic news that Mr. Gabriel Garcia-Aviles, a resident of Orange County, died on October 23, 2025, while in the custody of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) at the Adelanto ICE Processing Center.¹ His death comes one month after the death of Mr. Ismael Ayala-Urbe on September 22, 2025, also at Adelanto, who was reportedly denied medical treatment.² These deaths raise serious questions about ICE's ability to comply with basic detention standards, medical care protocols, and notification requirements, and underscore a pattern of gross negligence that demands immediate accountability.³

As of the date of this letter, ICE has publicly reported 25 detainee deaths since January 23, 2025,⁴ and has issued 15 Detainee Death Reports in accordance with congressional reporting requirements.⁵ To put that figure into perspective, ICE has recorded almost 64 percent as many in-custody deaths in just the first nine months of President Trump's second term as occurred during his entire first term, when 36 detainees died in custody.⁶ Further, the number of deaths this year exceeds every year on record since reporting began in 2018, including Fiscal Year 2020, when deaths spiked in part due to the COVID-19 pandemic.⁷

Under both congressional mandates and ICE's internal policy directives, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and ICE must adhere to established standards of care for those in

¹ Izzy Ramirez, *Ten Days After Adelanto Internment, This Beloved Grandfather Died In Custody*, L.A.TACO (Nov. 4, 2025), <https://lataco.com/second-death-adelanto-custody>.

² Press Release, Rep. Judy Chu, *Rep. Chu Leads 31 Members Demanding Accountability Following Death of ICE Detainee* (Oct. 16, 2025), <https://chu.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/rep-chu-leads-31-members-demanding-accountability-following-death-39>.

³ According to a 2024 study by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), roughly 95% of deaths in ICE detention that occurred during President Trump's first term were likely preventable. This sobering assessment speaks to President Trump's pattern of recklessness when it comes to immigration detention and enforcement. Eunice Hyunhye Cho, *95 Percent of Deaths in ICE Detention Could Likely Have Been Prevented With Adequate Medical Care: Report*, ACLU (Jun. 25, 2024), <https://www.aclu.org/press-releases/95-percent-of-deaths-in-ice-detention-could-likely-have-been-prevented-with-adequate-medical-care-report>.

⁴ U.S. Immigration & Customs Enf't, *News Releases and Statements*, (last accessed Nov. 18, 2025), <https://www.ice.gov/newsroom>.

⁵ U.S. Immigration & Customs Enf't, *Detainee Death Reporting*, (last accessed Nov. 18, 2025), <https://www.ice.gov/detain/detainee-death-reporting>.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Brennan Center for Justice, *Immigration Detention and Covid-19* (last updated Jan. 7, 2022), <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/immigration-detention-and-covid-19>.

custody. In 2011, ICE revised its Performance-Based National Detention Standards (PBNDS) to “improve medical and mental health services ... [and] improve the process for reporting and responding to complaints.”⁸ Congress strengthened these obligations in 2018 by requiring ICE to publish a report on any in-custody death within 90 days of the incident.⁹ To implement that mandate, ICE issued a Directive, titled *Notification, Review, and Reporting Requirements for Detainee Deaths*, outlining procedures to ensure transparency when a detainee dies in ICE custody.¹⁰

However, ICE appears to have repeatedly failed to comply with internal standards, and these failures have contributed to deaths in custody. For example, over the last decade, ICE has delayed or provided substandard medical care, neglected to provide proper medication, and falsified medical records.¹¹ ICE has also failed to notify next of kin following the death of a detainee “timely, accurately, appropriately, and with sufficient detail” despite being required to by ICE Directive 11003.6 and PBNDS.¹² ICE’s failure to adhere to basic standards of care for individuals in its custody is inexcusable.

These are not just numbers on a website, but real people—with families, jobs, and hopes and dreams—each of whom died in ICE custody. The following cases illustrate systemic patterns of delayed treatment, neglect, and failure to properly notify families.

- **Gabriel Garcia Aviles**, a 56-year-old man who had resided in the U.S. for over 30 years, was detained by ICE agents on October 14, 2025, and sent to the Adelanto ICE Processing Center in California.¹³ He died 10 days later, with ICE only notifying Mr. Garcia Aviles’ family when he was on his deathbed.¹⁴ When his daughter arrived, she found him “unconscious, intubated, and . . . [with] dried blood on his forehead,” as well

⁸ U.S. Immigration & Customs Enf’t, *Performance-Based National Detention Standards 2011(2011) (Revised Dec. 2016)*, <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/detention-standards/2011/pbnds2011r2016.pdf>.

⁹ See Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018, Pub. L. No. 115-141, div. F, 132 Stat. 348 (2018); H.R. Rep. No. 115-239, at 33 (2017) (Conf. Rep.), accompanying the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2018.

¹⁰ ICE most recently updated this Directive, 11003.6, on February 27, 2025. U.S. Immigration & Customs Enf’t, Directive No. 11003.6, *Notification, Reporting and Review Procedures for Detainee Deaths* (Feb. 27, 2025), <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/foia/policy/11003-6.pdf>.

¹¹ U.S. Immigration & Customs Enf’t, *Detainee Death Review: Kamyar Samimi* (May 22, 2018), <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/23905031-kamyar-samimi-detainee-death-review>; Tom Dreisbach, ICE releases investigation into immigrant’s death after months of ‘inexcusable’ delay, NPR (Nov. 8, 2025), <https://www.npr.org/2023/11/08/1211316303/ice-releases-investigation-into-immigrants-death-after-months-of-inexcusable-del>; ACLU, *Fatal Neglect: How ICE Ignores Death in Detention* (Feb. 24, 2016), <https://www.aclu.org/publications/fatal-neglect-how-ice-ignores-death-detention>; Staff Report, Comm. on Oversight & Gov’t Reform, *The Trump Administration’s Mistreatment of Detained Immigrants: Deaths and Deficient Medical Care by For-Profit Detention Contractors* (2020), https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GOVPUB-Y4_OV2-PURL-gpo215984/pdf/GOVPUB-Y4_OV2-PURL-gpo215984.pdf.

¹² U.S. Immigration & Customs Enf’t, Directive No. 11003.6, *Notification, Reporting and Review Procedures for Detainee Deaths* (Feb. 27, 2025), <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/foia/policy/11003-6.pdf>; U.S. Immigration & Customs Enf’t, *Performance-Based National Detention Standards 2011(2011) (Revised Dec. 2016)*, <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/detention-standards/2011/pbnds2011r2016.pdf>; Izzy Ramirez, *Ten Days After Adelanto Internment, This Beloved Grandfather Died In Custody*, L.A.TACO (Nov. 4, 2025), <https://lataco.com/second-death-adelanto-custody>.

¹³ Izzy Ramirez, *Ten Days After Adelanto Internment, This Beloved Grandfather Died In Custody*, L.A.TACO (Nov. 4, 2025), <https://lataco.com/second-death-adelanto-custody>.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

as a “a cut on his tongue and blood on his lips, and . . . broken teeth and bruising on his body.”¹⁵

- **Ismael Ayala-Uribe**, a 39-year-old man who had resided in the U.S. for roughly 35 years, was also transferred to the Adelanto ICE Processing Center on August 22, 2025.¹⁶ He died one month later of an abscess on his buttock, having been denied timely lifesaving care despite Adelanto’s staff noting Mr. Ayala-Uribe’s potentially life-threatening condition.¹⁷ ICE did not inform Mr. Ayala-Uribe’s family that he was in the hospital; they only learned of his death following a police visit at 5:30 AM.¹⁸
- **Isidro Pérez**, a 75-year-old man who had resided in the U.S. for nearly 60 years, was detained by ICE agents on June 5, 2025, and sent to the Krome Service Processing Center in Florida.¹⁹ He died several weeks later after reporting chest pains.²⁰ Although his family had informed authorities about his previous heart attacks and catheterizations, Mr. Pérez told his family that he was sleeping on the floor, had not received the painkiller pills he had requested, and experienced delayed medical care because the infirmary was overcrowded.²¹
- **Tien Xuan Phan**, a 55-year-old man who had resided in the United States for almost 25 years, was detained on June 2, 2025, and transferred to the Karnes County Immigration Processing Center in Texas.²² He died seven weeks later while in custody following “seizures, vomiting, and unresponsiveness.”²³
- **Marie Ange Blaise**, a 44-year-old woman, was detained on February 12, 2025, and transferred between several detention centers until arriving at the Broward Transitional Center in Florida.²⁴ She died on April 15, 2025, after being found unresponsive in her room.²⁵ According to U.S. Representative Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick, Ms. Blaise was not given adequate medical care following complaints of chest pain for hours, and facility staff told her to lie down after giving her some pills.²⁶ Ms. Blaise never woke up.²⁷

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Press Release, Rep. Judy Chu, *Rep. Chu Leads 31 Members Demanding Accountability Following Death of ICE Detainee* (Oct. 16, 2025), <https://chu.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/rep-chu-leads-31-members-demanding-accountability-following-death-39>.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Abel Fernandez, *Isidro Pérez, the elderly Cuban fisherman who died in ICE custody after nearly 60 years in the US*, EL PAIS (Jul. 2, 2025), <https://english.elpais.com/usa/2025-07-02/isidro-perez-the-elderly-cuban-fisherman-who-died-in-ice-custody-after-nearly-60-years-in-the-us.html>.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Laura Strickler and Patrick Smith, *Investigation underway after Vietnamese national in ICE custody died in the hospital*, NBC NEWS (July 22, 2025), <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/investigation-underway-vietnamese-national-ice-custody-died-hospital-rcna220180>.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Rachel Treisman, *Lawmakers demand answers after a Haitian woman dies at an ICE detention center*, NPR (May 1, 2025), <https://www.npr.org/2025/05/01/nx-s1-5383108/haitian-woman-death-ice-detention>.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

These repeated policy violations and deaths reflect a broader pattern, demonstrating that ICE is providing insufficient medical care to the people this Administration has detained. Given the serious nature of these deaths and the alleged substandard care DHS and ICE are providing to those in custody, we demand answers to the following questions no later than **Friday, December 5, 2025**:

Medical Care, Corrective Action, and Family Notification

- What steps has ICE taken to increase medical personnel at ICE detention facilities given the increase in the detained population by 50 percent to almost 60,000 people?
 - Provide a list of all detention facilities (including those owned by ICE and operating under a contract) that are operating with fewer medical care staff than required by the facility's medical staffing plan. State the required number of medical staff for each position and the actual number of staff that are currently employed by the facility.
- Is ICE working to further revise its written policies governing medical screening, care, and supervision for detainees with pre-existing or chronic medical conditions, including ICE Directive 11003.6 and PBNDS, given that 23 individuals have died in its custody since January 20, 2025?
- Has ICE implemented any mechanisms to evaluate and track patterns of neglect and negligence at its detention facilities? For example, the Adelanto ICE Processing Center has a well-documented history of providing substandard medical care, resulting in likely preventable deaths.²⁸ Similarly, the Krome Service Processing Center, where at least two detainees have died this year, has been the subject of reports of detainee abuse.²⁹
 - Is ICE taking any actions to ensure that these facilities adopt corrective measures to prevent detainee deaths?
- What steps is ICE taking to address the notification delays evidenced in the deaths of Gabriel Garcia Aviles and Ismael Ayala-Uribe?

Departmental Oversight and Civil Rights Protections

- According to ICE's public website, once ICE completes its review of each detainee death, ICE provides the results to the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL). Has ICE continued to submit these results to CRCL since March 2025 despite DHS's decision to subject the majority of CRCL staff to a reduction in force?³⁰

²⁸ Ruben Vives and Jenny Jarvie, *A former DACA Recipient Died in ICE Custody. Did Officials Ignore His Pleas for Help?*, LOS ANGELES TIMES (last updated Sept. 24, 2025), <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2025-09-23/former-daca-recipient-dies-in-ice-custody-after-being-hospitalized>.

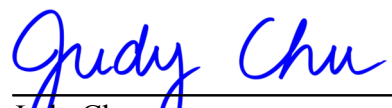
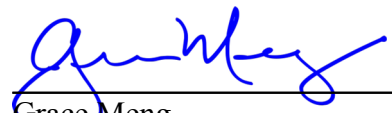
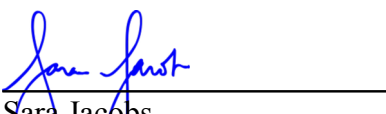
²⁹ ACLU of Florida, *Three deaths in ICE custody in just over a month of Trump's presidency marks the most deaths to occur in this fiscal year time period in five years* (Feb. 26, 2025), <https://www.aclufi.org/press-releases/three-deaths-ice-custody-just-over-month-trumps-presidency-marks-most-deaths-occur/>.

³⁰ Zolan Kanno-Youngs, Hamed Aleaziz, Adam Goldman and Eileen Sullivan, *Trump Shuts Down 3 Watchdog Agencies Overseeing Immigration Crackdown*, NY TIMES (Mar. 21, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/03/21/us/politics/trump-civil-rights-homeland-security-deportations.html>.

- Following the Administration's decision to reconstitute CRCL as well as the DHS Office of Immigration Detention Ombudsman (OIDO) in May 2025,³¹ has the CRCL or OIDO opened any investigations into detainee deaths since that time?

These questions go to the core of ICE's legal and moral obligations under federal detention law and standards, and we look forward to your prompt response. The American public, and the families of the deceased, deserve answers now.

Sincerely,


Dave Min
Member of Congress
Judy Chu
Member of Congress
Adriano Espaillat
Chair
Congressional Hispanic
Caucus
Grace Meng
Member of Congress
Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress
Greg Casar
Member of Congress
Yassamin Ansari
Member of Congress
Jared Huffman
Member of Congress

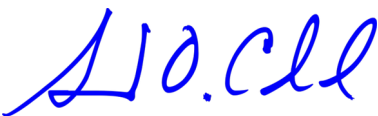
³¹ Public Citizen, *DHS Reverses Decision to Abolish Three Key Civil Rights Offices* (May 23, 2025), <https://www.citizen.org/news/dhs-reverses-decision-to-abolish-three-key-civil-rights-offices/>.



Lateefah Simon
Member of Congress



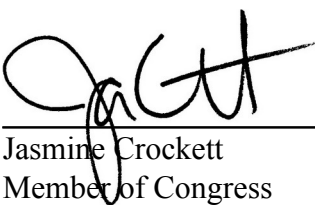
Robert Garcia
Member of Congress



Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



Jasmine Crockett
Member of Congress



MARK TAKANO
Member of Congress



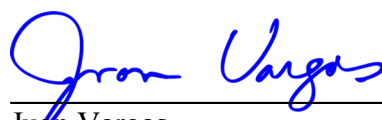
Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



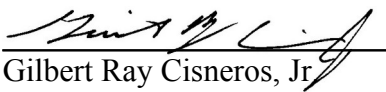
Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



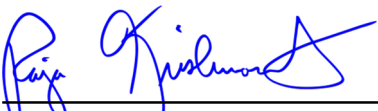
Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Gilbert Ray Cisneros, Jr.
Member of Congress



J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress



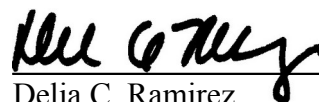
Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



Melanie Stansbury
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress



Wesley Bell
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



Maxine Waters
Member of Congress



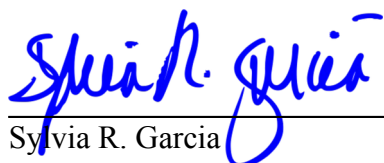
Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



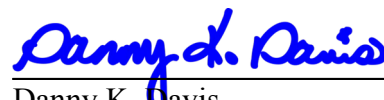
Summer L. Lee
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



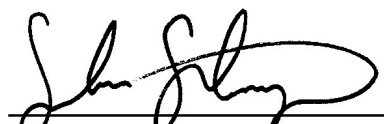
Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



Maxwell Alejandro Frost
Member of Congress



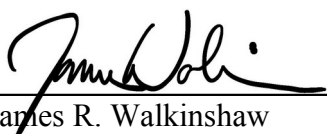
Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress



Suhas Subramanyam
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress



Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress



Mike Levin
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Emily Randall
Member of Congress



Robert J. Menendez
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress