

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 14, 2026

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin  
Secretary  
Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

Mr. Todd M. Lyons  
Acting Director  
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement  
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Secretary Mullin and Acting Director Lyons:

We write to you to demand answers regarding the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS or Department) use of surveillance and data analytics technologies developed by Palantir Technologies that are being utilized to fuel the Trump Administration's immigration enforcement operations.

Public reporting regarding DHS' data analytics tools and software raise serious concerns about Palantir-developed technologies being used to compile, aggregate, and analyze large volumes of personal data and information. These data-compiling systems reportedly allow DHS personnel to link individual profiles to addresses, phone numbers, devices, and other identifying information across multiple datasets in order to generate leads and identify potential locations of persons sought for immigration enforcement actions.<sup>1</sup>

Even more troubling, Palantir-developed tools are not the only technologies being deployed by your department to fulfill the administration's mass deportation campaign and daily arrest quotas. Public reporting further indicates that DHS has deployed a range of surveillance technologies that are provided by multiple private contractors. This includes facial recognition systems developed by Clearview AI, social media monitoring and analysis tools produced by PenLink, stingray technology from suppliers such as L3Harris, and cellphone surveillance technologies built by Paragon Solutions.<sup>2 3</sup> These tools contribute to a mass surveillance ecosystem that appears to operate in conjunction with Palantir-developed platforms and ultimately support enforcement operations conducted by DHS, some of which target U.S. citizens.

During the recent so-called *Operation Metro Surge* in Minnesota, immigration agents used facial recognition technology and other cellphone monitoring tools in public, including instances in which agents scanned the faces of individuals who were either observing or protesting enforcement activities. In documented encounters, individuals who were subject to these scans

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<sup>1</sup> Sheera Frenkel and Aaron Krolik, "How ICE Already Knows Who Minneapolis Protesters Are," The New York Times, January 30, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/30/technology/tech-ice-facial-recognition-palantir.html>

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Eva Dou, Artur Galocha, and Kevin Schaul, "The powerful tools in ICE's arsenal to track suspects — and protesters," The Washington Post, January 29, 2026, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/interactive/2026/ice-surveillance-immigrants-protesters/>

— and who were later confirmed to be U.S. citizens — reported that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents informed them they were being recorded using facial recognition technology.<sup>4</sup>

These reports are supported by sworn testimony in a federal lawsuit in Oregon which revealed that ICE agents under oath acknowledged the use of a surveillance application called *Elite* which assists enforcement operations by identifying neighborhoods and geographical areas where individuals with immigration histories may be located.<sup>5</sup> According to the court testimony, the *Elite* application was described as functioning “*kind of like Google Maps*” by displaying where individuals are likely to be located. However, its reliability can be questionable. The agent testified that, “*the app could say 100 percent, and it's wrong. The person doesn't live there. And so it's not accurate. It's -- it's a tool that we use that gives you a probability, but there's never -- there's no such thing as 100 percent.*” The Court also inquired about where the application pulls its data from, to which the agent testified that, “*It pulls from all kinds of sources. Like, it was -- it's a newer app that was actually given to us in ICE.*”<sup>6</sup>

The combination of facial recognition tools, social media surveillance, and large-scale data aggregation systems and applications raise serious concerns about the operational use of personally identifiable information that belongs to individuals who are not suspected of any wrongdoing. Specifically, these technologies are seemingly being weaponized against citizens, journalists, and individuals engaged in constitutionally protected activities, which include lawful assembly and protest.

Despite these reports, both former Secretary Noem and Acting ICE Director Lyons stated in their testimonies in Congressional hearings that DHS is/was not maintaining a database:

- In a House Homeland Security Committee hearing on February 10, 2026, Acting ICE Director Todd M. Lyons was asked about reports that DHS was building or maintaining a database tracking U.S. citizens after video circulated of an ICE agent telling an individual that they would be added to a “little database,” Lyons responded, “*I can't speak for that individual ... but I can assure you that there is no database that's tracking United States citizens.*”<sup>7</sup>
- In a U.S. Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs hearing on February 12, 2026, Acting ICE Director Todd M. Lyons was again asked about DHS maintaining a database of “any kind” which can include facial recognition information, license plate information, addresses, or similar data, Lyons responded, “*we don't have a database.*”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> Joseph Cox, “Elite: The Palantir App ICE Uses to Find Neighborhoods to Raid,” 404 Media, January 2026, <https://www.404media.co/elite-the-palantir-app-ice-uses-to-find-neighborhoods-to-raid/>

<sup>6</sup> M-J-M-A v. Wamsley, et al., testimony of an officer from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon, Dec. 2, 2025, available at: [https://innovationlawlab.org/sites/default/files/2026-01/12-02-2025%20M-J-M-A%20v.%20Wamsley.%20et%20al.%20Combined%20\\_0.pdf](https://innovationlawlab.org/sites/default/files/2026-01/12-02-2025%20M-J-M-A%20v.%20Wamsley.%20et%20al.%20Combined%20_0.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Hearing before the House Committee on Homeland Security, *Oversight of the Department of Homeland Security: ICE, CBP, and USCIS*, 119th Cong. (Feb. 10, 2026), testimony of Acting ICE Director Todd M. Lyons, available at: <https://homeland.house.gov/hearing/oversight-of-the-department-of-homeland-security-ice-cbp-and-uscis/>

<sup>8</sup> Hearing before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, *Oversight Hearing*, 119th Cong. (Feb. 12, 2026), available at: <https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/hearings/oversight-hearing/>

- In a House Judiciary Committee hearing on March 4, 2026, Secretary Noem was asked whether DHS was creating a database of protesters. After being shown a video of an ICE officer saying he would add someone to a “nice little database,” and that the individual interacting with the office would now be considered a “domestic terrorist,” Noem stated, “*we’re not creating a database.*”<sup>9</sup>

Congress has a clear and important role in exercising its oversight responsibility to ensure that use of contractor-developed data technologies complies with all relevant federal law while respecting applicable constitutional protections. The reported use of these technologies and their current use raise significant questions about how DHS is using Palantir-developed tools and what safeguards exist, if any, to prevent the misuse and collection of sensitive personal information.

Accordingly, we demand answers to the following questions and requests no later than Friday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026:

1. Please identify and describe all databases, data analytics programs, and applications currently being utilized by the Department of Homeland Security and any and of its components—including Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Protection (CBP)—to support immigration enforcement operations. For each database or information/data system identified, please indicate whether it is developed or maintained by Palantir Technologies or any other private contractor.
2. Please provide a complete list of all currently active and prior contracts between DHS or any DHS component and Palantir technologies since January 1, 2020. For each contract listed, please include the contract value, performance period, and the specific tasks, applications, or data information systems that were developed or supported directly by Palantir technologies.
3. What government and/or commercial datasets and information, if any, are implemented into Palantir-developed systems or data applications utilized by DHS for the purpose of immigration enforcement?
  - a. What new policies, if any, has DHS enacted to address the concerns raised by the the DHS Inspector General report entitled, “*CBP, ICE, and Secret Service Did Not Adhere to Privacy Policies or Develop Sufficient Policies Before Procuring and Using Commercial Telemetry Data,*” which outlined, “*eight recommendations aimed at improving policies and internal controls related to the use of commercial telemetry data.*”<sup>10</sup>
4. Do any DHS data analytics systems, software, or applications—including those developed by Palantir and other private contractors/companies—collect or retain personally identifiable information that belong to U.S. citizens? If so, please describe the type of information that is collected, and the duration in which such data and information is retained.

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<sup>9</sup> Hearing before the House Committee on the Judiciary, *Oversight of the Department of Homeland Security*, 119th Cong. (Mar. 4, 2026), testimony of Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem, available at: <https://judiciary.house.gov/committee-activity/hearings/oversight-department-homeland-security-0>

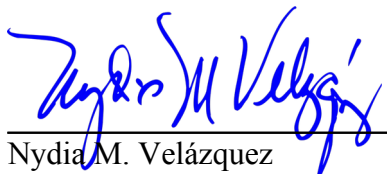
<sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General, *CBP, ICE, and Secret Service Did Not Adhere to Privacy Policies or Develop Sufficient Policies Before Procuring and Using Commercial Telemetry Data*, (September 28, 2023), <https://www.oig.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/2023-09/OIG-23-61-Sep23-Redacted.pdf>

5. What legal authorities does DHS currently rely on to collect and/or retain such data? What safeguards, if any, are in place to limit the retention of such data and to address data privacy concerns?
6. Does DHS currently use facial recognition tools during immigration enforcement operations? If so, please provide information related to any contracts with vendors or private contractors that develop or supply tools for this purpose. Please describe how and when facial recognition data is stored and whether such data is retained, and for how long it is retained. Please also describe any instances of false positives or mistaken identification that resulted from the use of these technologies.
7. In the process of conducting immigration enforcement operations, has DHS collected or stored or otherwise processed information about individuals peacefully observing, documenting or protesting immigration enforcement operations? If so, please describe the data that was collected and the circumstances that warranted such collection or processing of personally identifiable information.
8. Please provide a comprehensive report about the use of the data analytics and immigration enforcement application known as *Elite* including its purpose, the categories of data and information that is processed by the application, and the current number of DHS officials authorized to use such application to inform their work. Please include all related contract information that led to the creation, development, and use of *Elite*.
9. Please provide a list of all private contractors that provide data surveillance or analytics technologies to DHS. For each contractor listed, please provide the technology that is/was developed or supplied, and which DHS personnel are currently authorized to use said technology.
10. Please provide any relevant memos, guidance, or internal DHS policies that govern the retention, use, and/or processing of data contained by these DHS data analytics programs and applications.
11. Has the Department conducted assessments, internal or otherwise, regarding the use of Palantir-developed systems and data technologies and other contractor-provided technologies? If so, please provide any documentation regarding these assessments. If not, will you commit to conducting an internal audit and assessment within the next 90 days regarding the use of these data technologies?

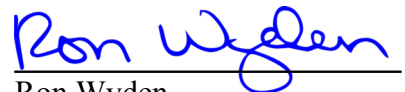
Sincerely,



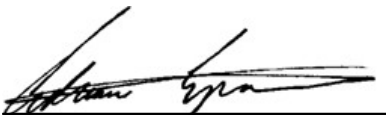
Dan Goldman  
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



Adriano Espaillat  
Member of Congress



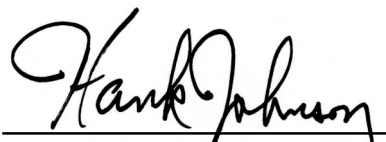
Greg Casar  
Member of Congress



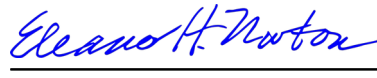
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez  
Member of Congress



Jasmine Crockett  
Member of Congress



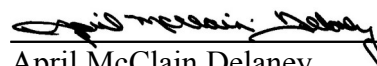
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress




Shri Thanedar  
Member of Congress



April McClain Delaney  
Member of Congress



Maxine Dexter  
Member of Congress



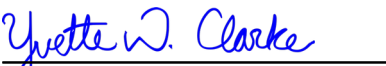
Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress




Sara Jacobs  
Member of Congress



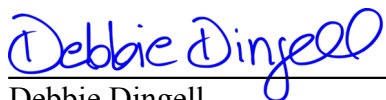
Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



Nanette Diaz Barragan  
Member of Congress



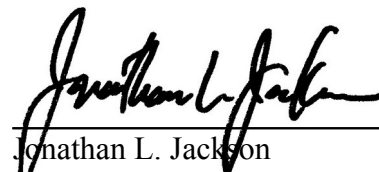
Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



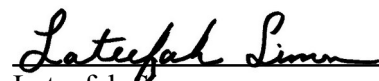
Melanie Stansbury  
Member of Congress



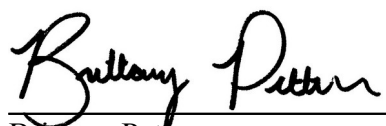
Jonathan L. Jackson  
Member of Congress



Julie Johnson  
Member of Congress



Lateefah Simon  
Member of Congress



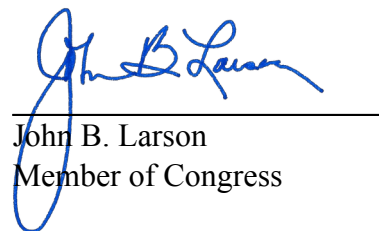
Brittany Pettersen  
Member of Congress



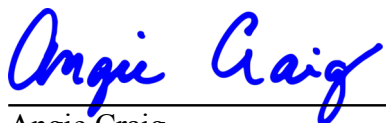
John Garamendi  
Member of Congress



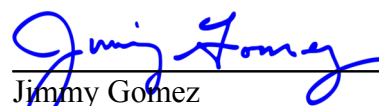
Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress



John B. Larson  
Member of Congress




Angie Craig  
Member of Congress



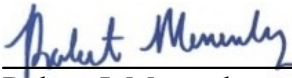
Jimmy Gomez  
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly  
Member of Congress



Gabe Amo  
Member of Congress



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Robert J. Menendez  
Member of Congress



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Al Green  
Member of Congress