

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 20, 2025

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

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

Dear Secretary Noem and Acting Director Lyons:

We write to express alarm about the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) continued obstruction of lawful congressional oversight visits, including recent denials of access to ICE field offices being used to house immigrants, such as the one located at 26 Federal Plaza in New York City. These denials are not only indefensible, but they are also a clear violation of current law.

As you know, Section 527(a) of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (Public Law [118-47](#)), states that:

*“None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the Department of Homeland Security by this Act may be used to prevent...a Member of Congress...from entering, for the purpose of conducting oversight, **any facility operated by or for the Department of Homeland Security used to detain or otherwise house aliens.**”*

ICE has claimed in [official guidance](#), titled “U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Facility Visit and Engagement Protocol for Members of Congress and Staff” that its field offices fall outside of Section 527 requirements because “ICE does not house aliens at field offices.” However, this assertion is directly contradicted by the agency’s own leadership.

On June 18, in the process of denying a request by Congressmen Dan Goldman and Jerry Nadler to observe the ICE facilities where immigrants are being housed, New York Deputy Field Director Bill Joyce confirmed that individuals are in fact held – without beds – at 26 Federal Plaza for multiple days.

When individuals are deprived of their liberty in a secure facility for multiple days, they are unquestionably being “detained” or “housed” under the plain language of Section 527(a). And the facility need not be designated as a “detention facility;” rather, the plain language of the statute refers to a facility “used” to detain or house immigrants. By ICE’s own admission, the Field Office at 26 Federal Plaza is being “used” to “house” immigrants.

Thus, any and all attempts to deny or delay such access violate the law and obstruct our constitutional duty to conduct oversight of the Executive Branch. Congressmen Goldman and

Nadler should therefore have been permitted to conduct their oversight duties to observe the circumstances and conditions of detention of the non-violent, non-criminal immigrants who are being snatched out of court proceedings in order to be quickly deported without due process.

Congressional oversight is essential to bring transparency to the conduct of the Department of Homeland Security. Given the overaggressive and excessive force used to handcuff and detain elected officials in public, DHS's refusal to allow members of Congress to observe the conditions for immigrants behind closed doors begs the obvious question: what are you hiding?

Accordingly, we demand you do the following no later than June 30, 2025:

1. Immediately rescind all guidance or instructions suggesting that ICE field offices are exempt from Section 527 oversight.
2. Reaffirm that Members of Congress are legally entitled to conduct unannounced oversight visits to any facility where people are detained by or for DHS including field offices where immigrants kept overnight.
3. Direct all ICE field offices and relevant personnel to comply with Section 527 and facilitate congressional access consistent with current law.

Your cooperation, or lack thereof, will determine whether the Department of Homeland Security is committed to transparency and upholding the law with integrity or to secrecy and obstruction of congressional oversight.

We look forward to your prompt and forthright response.

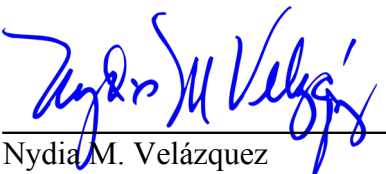
Sincerely,



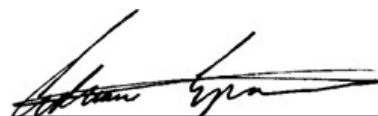
Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



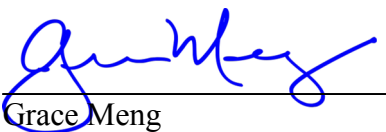
Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



Grace Meng
Member of Congress



Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress