

OVERSIGHT OF FRAUD AND MISUSE OF FEDERAL FUNDS IN MINNESOTA: PART II

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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- * Article, *Reuters*, “Trump Aide Homan Accepted \$50,000”; submitted by Rep. Walkinshaw.

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ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

- * Questions for the Record: Hon. Keith Ellison; submitted by Rep. Comer.
- * Questions for the Record: Hon. Keith Ellison; submitted by Rep. Jack.
- * Questions for the Record: Hon. Tim Walz; submitted by Rep. Comer.
- * Questions for the Record: Hon. Tim Walz; submitted by Rep. Turner.
- * Questions for the Record: Hon. Tim Walz; submitted by Rep. Jack.

These documents were submitted after the hearing, and may be available upon request.

OVERSIGHT OF FRAUD AND MISUSE OF FEDERAL FUNDS IN MINNESOTA: PART II

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2026

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
Washington, D.C.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:04 a.m., in HVC-210, U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, Hon. James Comer [Chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Comer, Jordan, Turner, Gosar, Foxx, Grothman, Cloud, Palmer, Higgins, Sessions, Biggs, Mace, Fallon, Donalds, Perry, Timmons, Burchett, Boebert, Luna, Langworthy, Burlison, Crane, Jack, McGuire, Gill, Garcia, Norton, Lynch, Krishnamoorthi, Khanna, Mfume, Brown, Stansbury, Frost, Lee, Casar, Crockett, Randall, Subramanyam, Ansari, Bell, Simon, Min, Walkinshaw, Pressley, and Tlaib.

Also present: Representatives Emmer and McCollum.

Chairman COMER. The hearing of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform will come to order.

I want to welcome everyone here today.

Without objection, the Chair may declare a recess at any time.

I now recognize myself for the purpose of making an opening statement.

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN JAMES COMER REPRESENTATIVE FROM KENTUCKY

Good morning. Today's hearing is about a failure of leadership, plain and simple. For years, Governor Tim Walz and Attorney General Keith Ellison presided over one of the most extensive breakdowns of oversight this Committee has ever examined. Billions of taxpayer dollars were stolen from social services programs while warnings piled up, whistleblowers spoke out, and state officials chose delay and denial over action. Federal prosecutors estimate that as much as \$9 billion may have been stolen from just 14 Medicaid programs administered by the State of Minnesota. Those programs have cost taxpayers more than \$18 billion since 2018, and investigators believe that half or more of that spending may have been lost to fraud. And that did not happen overnight. As our investigation has shown, it happened because state leadership failed repeatedly to intervene. Governor Walz has claimed his Administration addressed fraud "very early," but that claim does not hold up to the facts. His Administration kept payments flowing.

In January, in the first hearing of this series, we heard from Minnesota State representatives who made clear this fraud was not hidden. It was known, documented, and repeatedly brought to the attention of state leadership. In case after case, state agencies identified red flags and received warnings from auditors and employees but continued to send money out the door, not because they lacked authority to intervene, but because they feared lawsuits, bad press, and political backlash. While Governor Walz hesitated, taxpayers lost billions.

Attorney General Ellison has likewise claimed his office was aggressively holding fraudsters accountable, but when his statements were tested against the record, they fell apart. In the Feeding Our Future case, Governor Walz and Attorney General Ellison publicly suggested that courts forced the state to continue payments. The judges in that case took the extraordinary step of publicly correcting them. The truth is the state made a choice, once again, to keep sending the money out the door. The Feeding Our Future scandal alone involved nearly \$300 million stolen from programs meant to feed children during the pandemic. We are talking about fake invoices, meals that never existed, luxury cars, and overseas investments, all paid by the American taxpayer. Today, dozens have been convicted, the fraud was real, the warning signs were obvious, and state leadership failed to act.

The same pattern repeats across Minnesota's social services system. In the Childcare Assistance Program, providers racked up dozens and, in some cases, more than a hundred violations and still collected millions. Facilities shut down and reopened the same day under new names at the same address. This went on for years. Housing Stabilization Services, a program expected to cost \$2.6 million annually, exploded to over a hundred million dollars a year. Federal prosecutors have described it as "easy money." Providers built services never delivered while the Walz Administration failed to intervene until Federal agents showed up, and when state employees tried to stop this, they were silenced and retaliated against for even daring to notice the fraud. We have spoken with over 30 whistleblowers, many of them current employees and Democrats, who say they were ignored, retaliated against, and even surveilled for raising concerns. Instead of protecting the whistleblowers, the Walz Administration protected the system that enabled the fraud.

We are taking oversight of fraud seriously, and today, I hope the Democrats will do the same, but their track record is not promising. We followed up with the whistleblowers when state leaders ignored them. Republican staff spent 36 hours and 46 minutes in nine transcribed interviews with current and former Minnesota State officials. Democrats, however, only asked 3 hours and 14 minutes' worth of questions. That is inexcusable and, frankly, embarrassing. Taxpayers deserve better.

We are working with the Trump Administration, which is taking a whole-of-government approach to stop fraud before money is stolen. What we have uncovered in Minnesota is not a paperwork error or a few bad actors slipping through the cracks. It is sustained failure of leadership. Governor Walz and Attorney General Ellison were warned repeatedly, auditors raised red flags, employees sounded alarms, invoices did not make sense, and still the

money kept flowing. While state officials hesitated, billions of taxpayer dollars were stolen from programs meant to serve children, the disabled, and families in crisis. While whistleblowers were silenced, fraudsters got rich. Accountability should not begin only after Federal prosecutors step in and cleanup the damage. Accountability should compel leaders to act, and here, they did not. Today, this Committee expects answers, and we expect an explanation for why it took Federal law enforcement, not state leadership, to finally turn off the spigot.

Before we proceed, I would like to ask unanimous consent to enter the Committee's interim staff report titled, "The Cost of Doing Nothing: How Tim Walz and Keith Ellison Fueled Minnesota's Fraud Explosion," into the record.

Without objection, so ordered.

And with that, I now yield to Ranking Member Garcia for his opening statement.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF RANKING MEMBER ROBERT GARCIA
REPRESENTATIVE FROM CALIFORNIA**

Mr. GARCIA. Thank you, Chairman Comer. I want to thank, of course, the Governor for being here today, the Attorney General as well. And to Reverend Mariah Tollgaard, thank you so much for being here. I especially, though, want to thank the Minnesotans that I know have traveled here to be with us today to witness this hearing, but also in solidarity of the horrors and terrors that are happening, not just in Minnesota, but that are happening across the country.

Now, we look forward to hearing directly on what life in Minnesota has been like thanks to the Trump Administration's actions, and the truth is that Donald Trump and Republicans have cut billions of dollars—billions of dollars—from healthcare and food assistance. That is a reality. Instead, with that money, they have used it to hire officers who are now terrorizing cities and killing Americans. That is where our taxpayer dollars have gone. We have taken from food assistance, we have taken from healthcare, and we super funded terror on American streets.

Now, Donald Trump has unleashed chaos against innocent Americans and across Minnesota, and we are going to talk about that today, terror that has actually impacted real families and kids like Liam Ramos, who have been used, as we know, as bait, and we all know Liam's story really well. The reality is American citizens, innocent kids, people have been brutalized and ripped away from their families. They have been thrown into detention centers with horrible conditions that people are literally dying in these centers. Peaceful Americans have been killed by Federal officers and agents and labeled them as domestic terrorists or assassins by their own government. Where is the hearing and the outrage for those actions?

Now, Alex Pretti, as we all know, a VA nurse was peacefully exercising his First and Second Amendment rights when he was pepper sprayed, tackled, disarmed, and then shot repeatedly in the back. Renee Good, a mom who told an officer, "I am not mad at you," was shot dead just moments after. And this pattern of violence and lawlessness, we have seen, of course, all over the coun-

try. Now, our Committee and Democrats have documented over 590 cases of suspected misconduct by President Trump and Kristi Noem's immigration and enforcement agents across the country, not just in Minnesota. There have been 240 incidents of violence or concerning use of force, and 181 have involved United States citizens. Now, we have heard testimony that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)'s training has actually completely changed, and now it actually teaches our agents to violate the rights of American citizens. That is what we are teaching now to Federal agents, and this is just the tip of the iceberg. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and ICE are out of control and must be held accountable by the Congress. Now, Oversight Democrats have been partnering to hold hearings to investigate these abuses, to hold DHS Secretary accountable, Stephen Miller, Greg Bovino, and make no mistake: this is Donald Trump's personal police and military force he is unleashing on American streets.

Now, the hearing that we have today is going to build on those investigations. Operation Metro Surge, which we are going to hear a lot about today, this is really about, not just what is happening in Minnesota through that operation, but the ways that President Trump has waged his own personal war on Minnesota. Of course we are talking about fraud, according to our Republican colleagues, but instead of improving systems to prevent future fraud, Trump has also cutoff \$259 million in Medicaid funding to the state. He has threatened Federal food aid for 600,000 Minnesotans, including 200,000 kids. President Trump has tried to use fraud as his excuse for all of this, but what is really happening is violence, terror, death, destruction, and ripping away services from those that need it. You do not fight fraud by issuing Presidential pardons to fraudsters. You do not fight fraud from ripping away food assistance to kids.

Now, since his reelection, Trump has also given out jail free cards to dozens of actual real fraudsters who could get out of repaying their victims more than \$1 billion. Where is the fraud hearing on those abuses? And we know that you just do not fight fraud by singling out states led by Democrats and ignoring states led by Republicans. Every single person here, and I know the Governor and the Attorney General believe this as well, we all want to fight fraud, waste, and abuse in government. Oklahoma, by the way, and Alabama lead the Nation in SNAP fraud. In Texas and Florida, a Russian citizen has been arrested for submitting billions of dollars in fraudulent claims and funneling millions overseas. Where are those hearings? Where is the Governor of Oklahoma, or Alabama, or Texas, or Florida?

I also want to note this. Because of the Trump Administration's illegal and unconstitutional actions, we know there are now 31 of 64 lawyers at the Minnesota U.S. Attorney's Office that have left. That is stunning. The lead attorney responsible for pursuing these fraud cases has left because the Trump Administration ordered them, we know, to investigate Renee Good's widow, not her killer. They were ordered to investigate Renee Good's widow, not her killer. If the President cared at all about fraud, we would not have all of these officers with all this illegal behavior on Minnesota streets.

And we should remember that the Trump Administration tried to use Operation Metro Surge as leverage to seize Minnesota's voter rolls. The Trump Administration was never serious about addressing fraud in Minnesota. Instead, they have been interested in election conspiracy theories and terrorizing kids, and they have accused the Governor and Attorney General of covering up fraud, only to investigate them and turn up actually no evidence. What they are trying to do is convince Americans that there is a good reason for violence, for killings, and for violations of the law. That is not acceptable, and we are not going to take that here today.

I want to thank our witnesses again for being here, and I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The Ranking Member yields back. I would like to welcome our witnesses. First, we have Tim Walz, Governor of the State of Minnesota. Governor Walz first took office in January 2019. Next, we have Keith Ellison, Attorney General of the State of Minnesota. Attorney General Ellison also first took office in January 2019. Finally, we have Reverend Mariah Furness Tollgaard, Senior Pastor, Hamline Church, United Methodist. Thank you all so much for joining us today, and we look forward to your testimony.

Pursuant to Committee Rule 9(g), the witnesses will please stand and raise their right hand.

Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Governor WALZ. I do.

Mr. ELLISON. I do.

Reverend TOLLGAARD. I do.

Chairman COMER. Let the record show that the witnesses answered in the affirmative, and please take a seat. We appreciate you being here today and look forward to your testimony.

Let me remind the witnesses that we have read your written statement and they will appear in full in the hearing record. Please limit your oral statements to 5 minutes. As a reminder, please press the button on the microphone in front of you so that it is on and the Members can hear you. When you begin to speak, the light in front of you will turn green. After 4 minutes, the light will turn yellow. When the red light comes on, your 5 minutes have expired, and we would ask that you please wrap up.

I now recognize Governor Walz for his opening statement. Governor?

STATEMENT OF HON. TIM WALZ GOVERNOR, STATE OF MINNESOTA

Governor WALZ. Thank you, Chairman Comer, Ranking Member Garcia, and Members of the Committee. I am proud to be here today as the Governor of the great State of Minnesota. Under my leadership, Minnesota has dedicated its resources to ensuring that all Minnesotans can live dignified and full lives with access to top-notch public schools, quality healthcare, good jobs. Thanks to these initiatives, Minnesota has been ranked as one of the best states to raise a family in, one of the best states to find a job in, and one of the best states to live in.

Although Minnesota's programs have overwhelmingly achieved their intended purposes, they are not immune from fraud. I will be the first to acknowledge that. But let me be clear. In Minnesota, if you defraud public programs, if you steal taxpayer money, we will find you, we will prosecute you, we will convict you, and we will throw you in jail.

In this anti-fraud mission, we keep good company. Across the country, our Nation's Governors work hard every single day to combat fraud in their programs. But even as we confront issues similar to our sister states, the people of Minnesota have been singled out and targeted for political retribution at an unparalleled scale, including blocking Medicaid reimbursements to our state just last week. Under the guise of combating fraud, the Federal Government has flooded Minnesota with masked, untrained, and unaccountable agents who are wreaking havoc in our communities.

On the streets of Minnesota, Federal agents have entered U.S. citizens' homes who have committed no crimes. They have violated the constitutional rights of our citizens. They have ignored court orders. They have shot first and asked questions later. Time and again, they have gaslit us by demanding that we ignore what we see before our very eyes, but the American people are not so easily fooled. The image of this brutal campaign are seared into our collective memory: the fragile innocence of the 5-year-old boy in a bunny hat being let away from his family; the maddening cruelty of a barely clothed man, a U.S. citizen, being dragged from his house in the dead of winter; the sheer devastation we feel seeing the lifeless bodies of Renee Good and Alex Pretti.

Long after the Federal Government's agents of chaos pack up and leave, and long after the fraudsters in whose name this hearing was supposedly called, are prosecuted and imprisoned, the good people of Minnesota will still be picking up the pieces from these senseless acts of cruelty and violence. As we forge ahead, I hope Minnesotans will remain grounded in a sense of justice, a sense of right and wrong. We know that the way to deter crime is to pursue offenders regardless of who they are, not to pardon them because of who they know. We understand that a key to keeping our people safe is to allow prosecutors to uphold the law, not to punish them for refusing to violate it. And we appreciate that public trust comes from building common sense, anti-fraud safeguards into our programs, not by tearing down established norms.

I have been invited here today to talk about how Minnesota pursues these objectives, and I hope we can have a conversation about how to strengthen program integrity in every state in the Nation. A single taxpayer dollar wasted on fraud is a dollar we cannot tolerate. That is why as Governor, I have taken decisive action. I appointed a head of program integrity to oversee statewide anti-fraud efforts. I created the position of Inspector General at the Minnesota Department of Education. At the Department of Human Services, I ordered data-driven reviews and, where appropriate, corrective action against providers. I have directed my Administration to work with our partners in state, Federal, and tribal law enforcement to make sure that fraudsters go to jail. Our cooperation with the FBI and the Department of Justice have led to serious criminal charges for over 75 individuals. Most importantly, year in and year

out, and long before Minnesota programs were featured on right-wing social media, I have worked with the Minnesota legislature to give state agencies the authority they need to take action based on red flags when they discover them.

There is undoubtedly more to do. We will continue to do the important work of combating fraud, but as we do so, we are going to remain true to Minnesota principles, we will feed our hungry children, we will help the poor afford healthcare, we will assist people with disabilities while also keeping fraud in check. We will demonstrate our decency, our integrity, and never yield to political scapegoating, particularly of our most vulnerable communities.

In these extraordinarily trying times, the people of Minnesota have come together to show the world their values. I am proud and honored to be their Governor, and I look forward to today's questions.

Chairman COMER. Thank you, Governor. We now recognize Attorney General Ellison.

**STATEMENT OF HON. KEITH ELLISON
ATTORNEY GENERAL, STATE OF MINNESOTA**

Mr. ELLISON. Thank you, Chairman Comer, and thank you, Ranking Member Garcia, and thank you to all the Members of the Committee. My name is Keith Ellison, and I have the honor of serving as Minnesota's Attorney General. You have invited me here today to speak about the topic I feel very strongly about: fraud enforcement. I look forward to discussing the contributions of my office and the contributions we have made to fighting fraud in our state. Fraud in government programs is reprehensible. It takes food from the tables of the hungry. It takes shelter from those without it. I have worked every day as Attorney General to hold fraudsters accountable, and I am proud of our record.

We have won 300 Medicaid fraud convictions, more than any other state of similar size, and recovered over \$80 million for Minnesota taxpayers. We have returned tens of millions of dollars to victims of consumer fraud in Minnesota. Since 2019, our Charities Division has resolved over 50 investigations and dissolved 17 sham nonprofits. It is important to note that under Minnesota law, my office has limited jurisdiction over criminal matters. The only kind of criminal case we can prosecute all on our own is Medicaid fraud. Any other kind of criminal case must be referred to us by county attorneys.

Still, we have punched above our weight where we do have criminal jurisdiction. I am proud that over the past six years, my Medicaid Fraud Control Unit has ranked fifth in the Nation in fraud convictions. Last week, I urged the state legislators to pass a bipartisan Medical Assistance Protection Act, which would give us additional resources to prosecute Medicaid fraudsters. Where fraud occurs outside of our jurisdiction, my office has and will continue assisting our local and Federal partners. When our help is requested, we support our 87 county attorneys in Minnesota, and we regularly coordinate with Federal investigators and prosecutors to combat fraud. That type of collaboration between enforcers at all levels of the government is essential in this fight, and that is why, if we are

to discuss law enforcement efforts in Minnesota, we cannot ignore the devastating effects of Operation Metro Surge.

As you know, the Trump Administration, on the pretext of fighting fraud, unleashed over 3,000 masked armed agents on the streets of Minnesota, and as a result, two U.S. citizens were killed by Federal agents, Renee Good and Alex Pretti. Federal law enforcement still refuses to cooperate with us in investigating their deaths. Young, innocent children were detained and traumatized. Schools and businesses were forced to close, costing countless families their jobs, their livelihoods, their education, and costing our state hundreds of millions of dollars in economic damage. Operation Metro Surge did nothing to address fraud in our state, it harmed our economy, it scarred our people, and it dealt a devastating blow to fraud enforcement in Minnesota.

As a result of Metro Surge, Federal prosecutors' efforts to fight fraud in Minnesota have suffered a major setback. In the U.S. Attorney's Office, six high-ranking attorneys resigned because of the Department of Justice pressured them to investigate Renee Good's grieving widow. Eight more prosecutors then followed. The remaining staff should be spending their time prosecuting fraudsters and criminals. Instead, they are drowning in immigration-related petitions resulting from Operation Metro Surge.

Mr. Chair, Members of the Committee, we cannot combat fraud without consistent messaging and support from our political leaders. All sides—Republicans and Democrats, the Federal Government and the states—must work together if we are going to win the fight against those who would steal from the public. We need our leaders to unite in that effort, not to use it as a political tool to score political points. I stand ready and willing to work with the Members of this Committee to advance the cause of holding fraudsters accountable. Now more than ever, we need coordinated, cooperative engagement across law enforcement if we are to achieve our goals. I look forward to your questions.

Chairman COMER. Thank you, General. I now recognize Reverend Tollgaard for her opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF REVEREND MARIAH FURNESS TOLLGAARD
(MINORITY WITNESS), SENIOR PASTOR
HAMLINE CHURCH UNITED METHODIST**

Reverend TOLLGAARD. Chairman, Ranking Member, Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I am the Reverend Mariah Tollgaard, and I serve as Senior Pastor at Hamline Church, United Methodist in St. Paul, Minnesota. I come before you today in my personal capacity as a pastor, as a citizen, as a mother, an ordinary Minnesotan who has witnessed up close the fear and harm that Operation Metro Surge has inflicted on our state.

The hearing today is about fraud in Minnesota, which is serving as a pretext for the terror the Federal Government has brought to the people of Minnesota. This fraud has been used as a rationale for deploying 3,000 Federal immigration enforcement agents into our state in operations that target the most vulnerable among us, but are indiscriminately impacting all of us. Let me tell you about what this looks like where I live.

In my church, Members have been afraid to come to worship and have even postponed funerals. An elderly Hmong man in our city, a U.S. citizen, was taken from his home in the freezing cold, wearing only his underwear and a blanket. ICE vehicles drive recklessly through our neighborhoods in packs of four to six, stopping people of color for proof of citizenship, including a local police officer. In St. Paul Public Schools where my three daughters attend, nearly a quarter of students enrolled in distance learning because families were too afraid to leave their homes. My 8-year-old struggles to sleep at night because she is afraid ICE agents might break into our house. At local elementary schools in Minnesota and across the country, students are practicing drills for what to do if ICE is near their school. Let that sit with you: American children are now practicing two kinds of drills at school, one for an active shooter and one to protect themselves from their own government. That is not security. That is a Nation failing its children.

This is happening to all of our neighbors in Minnesota. Every Minnesotan has stories that will stay with you, from hearing of someone hiding in a walking cooler or the back room when ICE stormed into their workplace, to friends and family members being followed when dropping off their children at daycare. In Minnesota, we love our neighbors. We care for one another, and because we believe that every person bears the image of God, we have built systems that reflect that belief: free meals for all children, healthcare for families who need it, schools where every kid belongs. That is what love of neighbor looks like in action.

This Administration has targeted Minnesota because we live out our values of loving our neighbors. These tactics aimed at undermining those values have not succeeded. When unidentified masked agents appeared on our streets, Minnesotans put on their own uniforms and it said, "Neighbor." Motivated by faith and conscience, we bought groceries for families in hiding. We paid rent. We drove children to school. We stood vigil at mosques. We served as constitutional observers. We pledged to care for children if parents were detained. We sang, we marched, we prayed. As a pastor, I say to you, if you feel even a flicker of discomfort hearing these stories, pay attention to it. If you hear about children like Liam Ramos, if you saw the videos of the murders of Alex Pretti and Renee Good, if you know of workers arrested in the very restaurants where they serve Federal agents their meals, if you understand that citizens and legal residents have been wrongfully detained and something in you tightens, that is not partisanship. That is conscience. In my faith tradition, we call that the still quiet voice, the voice of God. It is not too late to listen, to change our minds, our hearts, and our policies.

To the Members of this Committee and our leaders across government, the question I leave with you is simple. What are you willing to do about it? Your silence has a cost, and it is being paid right now by children who cannot sleep, families who cannot grieve, and communities that are hollowed out. To Americans across the country and those watching from home, and particularly to the families still too afraid to leave their houses, there are more people fighting for you than you know. Jesus teaches us in Matthew 25, "Whatever you do for the least of these, you do unto Me."

History will tell its story about us, but long before then, our own souls will know whether we stood with them or turned away. No Nation can build a true future on the terror of its own people. Security built on fear will shatter the first time it is tested. Only a community that chooses love of neighbor over fear will endure, and that is still within our power to become.

Thank you for allowing me to share our story. I am deeply proud to be a Minnesotan.

Chairman COMER. Thank you. Without objection, Majority Whip, Tom Emmer from Minnesota, and Representative McCollum, also of Minnesota, are waived on to the Committee for the purpose of questioning witnesses at today's Committee hearing.

Without objection, so ordered.

Okay. I would like to recognize Representative McCollum for a UC.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to, for the record, have a unanimous request put in with the statement. Thank you.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

We will now begin our questions, and Chair recognizes the Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, Mr. Jordan from Ohio.

Mr. JORDON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Governor, why didn't you tell the truth? Why didn't you just tell the truth about the Feeding Our Future program? This program, in my understanding, received \$3 million the first year, within a couple years was getting \$200 million of taxpayer money. Whistleblowers raised concerns. As the Chairman said, auditors raised concerns. Everybody raised concerns. March 30, 2021, the payments are stopped, and a little over a month later, the payments are restarted. Why didn't you tell the truth about why you restarted the payments?

Governor WALZ. Well, Chairman, we did tell you, and Feeding Our Future (FOF) grew because of the pandemic, and—

Mr. JORDON. I did not ask that question. I said why didn't you tell the truth about why you restarted the payments? The payments stopped because there were concerns obviously, or you would not stop the payments. Then they are restarted a month later. What was the reason for restarting the payments?

Governor WALZ. My understanding was the agency believed that the court had required them to make those payments.

Mr. JORDON. And that was false, wasn't it, and you repeated that, and you repeated.

Governor WALZ. I think that is—

Mr. JORDON. You said that, didn't you? You said that is one of the reasons—

Governor WALZ. I do not think—

Mr. JORDON. You said the reason you restarted is because the court ordered you to do so. Is that right?

Governor WALZ. I do not believe that is settled yet to the best of my knowledge.

Mr. JORDON. Well, I think it is because the court did something that—I do not know if I have ever seen it. They issued a statement saying you were wrong in what you were saying. This is from the court. It says, "*Feeding Our Future v. Minnesota Department of*

Education Correcting Reports and Statements by Governor Tim Walz concerning Orders Issued by the Court.” Here is what the judge says: “Governor Tim Walz told the media that the Minnesota Department of Education attempted end payments to FOF because of possible fraud, but that Judge Guthmann ordered payments to continue in April 2021.” Next sentence, “That is false.” So, you said something was not true. He further states this, Judge Guthmann, or the court says this, “Judge Guthman never ordered the Department of Education to resume payments to Feeding Our Future in April 2021 or at any other time.” So, I want to know why didn’t you tell the truth?

Governor WALZ. Congressman, the attorneys at the Department of Education interpreted that differently. Both of those judges are no longer on the bench, and I think that interpretation——

Mr. JORDON. Let me just read the very first sentence, the first seven words. This is not some unnamed source talking to *The New York Times*. This is not some anonymous source talking to whatever, *Minnesota Star Tribune* or whatever your paper is. This is the court speaking. First sentence, first seven words: “Due to inaccurate statements by the Governor, Ramsey County District Court Judge has issued and authorized that this following news is released.” That is pretty straightforward. So, the court is lying?

Governor WALZ. I cannot tell you, Congressman, but the interpretation was——

Mr. JORDON. Well, somebody is lying. Somebody is, because you cannot say the court ordered you to restart the payments, and then the court says we did not order you to restart the payments. So, either you are lying, or the court is lying, and I am just asking you, which one is it?

Governor WALZ. I just simply know what the attorneys at the agency believed that it was a misinterpretation.

Mr. JORDON. Could it be——

Governor WALZ. And I would note that those payments——

Mr. JORDON. Could it be you were trying to hide behind the court, Governor? Could that maybe be the reason why you issued the statements you did and why the court had to do something you never see done before? They issue a press statement saying you are wrong. The Governor is wrong. His statement is, their words, not mine, “false.” Could that be the reason?

Governor WALZ. That was not the interpretation of the attorneys, and you know how courts work. You can appeal those, Congressmen, as you well know. I am sure there——

Mr. JORDON. Was it all about politics, Governor?

Governor WALZ. No, it is about taking care of our people, which Minnesota does better than anyone else.

Mr. JORDON. Yes. These programs go from \$3 million. The Behavioral Intervention Program went from \$3 million to \$400 million in five years. The housing stabilization went from \$2.6 million to \$104 million. The Integrated Community Supports went from \$4.6 million to \$170 million in three years. And this is unbelievable what is happening, and you are trying to hide behind some pretend court order, some court order that did not exist. Governor, who is Kayseh Magan?

Governor WALZ. I do not know who Kayseh Magan is.

Mr. JORDON. Well, I will tell you. Mr. Magan is a Somali-American and a fraud investigator in the guy beside you's office, in the Attorney General's office, and here is what he said: "There was a perception that forcefully tackling this issue might cause political backlash among the Somali community, which is a core voting bloc." Did that have anything to do with this whole fraud scheme that went on in your state, Governor?

Governor WALZ. It did not, Congressman.

Mr. JORDON. It did not. So, now you are saying Mr. Kayseh Magan is lying, too?

Governor WALZ. I am not.

Mr. JORDON. You are the only one telling the truth in the whole state. Mr. Magan, who is a fraud investigator at the Attorney General's office says it is politics. The court said you were stating—

Governor WALZ. I could not speak for Mr. Magan. You asked me a question.

Mr. JORDON. I know. I am asking—

Governor WALZ. I said no when you asked me the question.

Mr. JORDON. And I am saying Kayseh Magan said just the opposite.

Governor WALZ. I do not know. You—

Mr. JORDON. So, the court is wrong and Kayseh Magan is wrong, and you are the only guy right. How many people have been indicted in your state right now? Do you know, Governor?

Governor WALZ. I do not have those numbers with me.

Mr. JORDON. You do not? Ninety-eight people been indicted. You happen to know how many are Somali American?

Governor WALZ. I do not. We do not investigate or prosecute people based on ethnicity, religion.

Mr. JORDON. Neither do I. We should not do that, but Mr. Magan is a Somali American who just said that one of the concerns was this is a core voting bloc, and I just want to know if you know how many of the 98 people who have been indicted in your state are Somali.

Governor WALZ. I do not. Their ethnicity is not my concern.

Mr. JORDON. Eighty-five. Eighty-five percent of the people indicted were Somali American, a key voting bloc, and I think that is what drove this whole thing. With that, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. Before I recognize the Ranking Member, it is my understanding, Mr. Biggs, you seek recognition.

Mr. BIGGS. Yes, Mr. Chairman. I have some UCs. Here you go: "Biden Clemency for Convicted Fraudsters Met With Outrage." Next one: "Biden's Clemency and Partner List Includes Former Elected Officials." Next one: "The Drug Dealers, Thieves, and Gang Leaders Granted Clemency By Joe Biden." Next one, "North Dakota Judge Blasts Biden for Setting Fraudsters Free." Next one, "Victims Shocked After Biden Grants Clemency to Kids for Cash." Next one, "Who Has Joe Biden Pardoned?"

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

The Chair now recognizes Ranking Member Garcia from California.

Mr. GARCIA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank, of course, our witnesses again for being here.

Now, of course, over the past two months, countless brave Minnesotans have shared their stories of heartbreak and violence and terror, not just with us on this Committee, but with folks across the country. Peaceful protestors have been shot in the streets. Children have been snatched from their schools, people dragged from their cars and tackled at work. And we know that parents, of course, have been missing work, and children have been missing school.

Now, Reverend Tollgaard, I want the country to really understand the effects on kids. Are you seeing families who cannot go to work, who cannot go grocery shopping, and who cannot take their kids to school or the library or the park because they are terrified to leave their home? Are you seeing that?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. Yes, that is what we are seeing in Minnesota.

Mr. GARCIA. And this includes, of course, U.S. citizens, right? We are talking about also families, U.S. citizen families, and kids who are United States citizens. Is that correct?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. Yes, people who are U.S. citizens and legal residents.

Mr. GARCIA. Well, thank you. I want to just show this image here.

[Poster]

This is an image of some kids, including, by the way, one of Liam Ramos' classmates. These are kids that are being held at U.S. detention centers and detention facilities. Now, Reverend Tollgaard, when children hear about thousands of kids being detained, reportedly almost 4,000, that must be terrifying. Is that correct?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. That is absolutely terrifying for children to hear these stories and to fear for that experience.

Mr. GARCIA. And would you say that kids are scared at their school?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. Kids are scared at their schools, at home.

Mr. GARCIA. Parents are scared of what is going to happen to their children. Would you say that is correct also?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. That is correct.

Mr. GARCIA. Well, thank you. Now, we are discussing the violence and brutality that has happened, and I want to show another image. It is kind of difficult, I think, to see, but I think it is important for the American public to continue to see it.

[Poster]

Now, this is the driver's seat of Renee Good's car seat after an ICE agent shot her dead. Now, Reverend Tollgaard, are families in your community afraid that this sort of horrific image could happen to them next?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. Yes.

Mr. GARCIA. Are kids scared that this type of horrific image could happen to one of their parents?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. Kids like my own, kids like the kids in my church, are afraid that that could happen to their parents when they speak out.

Mr. GARCIA. And let us remember that an ICE agent specifically told a protestor, "Have y'all not learned from the past couple of days?" This is just two days after Renee Good was shot. That is

being told to people on the ground in Minneapolis and across the country, across Minnesota, and it is not acceptable. We should be clear here. This violence does not make us safer. It does not address fraud, waste, and abuse. It does not help families with healthcare, does not grow or build small businesses, and it is certainly, as we are continuing to discuss, is not preventing the kind of fraud that Republicans are discussing here today.

Now, Governor, can you walk us through specifically how Operation Metro Surge affected Minnesota's ability to investigate actual fraud?

Governor WALZ. Well, thank you, Congressman. Well, first of all, as I have said, we have been partners with our Federal partners, whether that be the FBI or be the U.S. Attorney's Office, which I will note was one of the premier U.S. Attorney's office, regardless of who they were appointed by. Right now, those lead investigators and basically that whole team has left that office. They have not been filled back in. The U.S. Attorney, himself, was in front of a Federal judge yesterday on contempt issues of that office not working together.

Now, look, we are going to prosecute, as we have, every single person that is involved in fraud, but we cannot do it alone. The Attorney General's office is doing everything they can. He has consistently come and asked the legislature for more money, more of the investigators he needs, but right now is the backlog at the U.S. Attorney's office is being challenged by the Federal courts. It makes it more difficult for us to get those cases over to them. But the good news is the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension is continuing to do those. We got a conviction this week. Those are things that will continue on.

And while we need to put in all the safeguards, we need to, as you heard the Attorney General's opening statement, if we partner together in this, our chance of defeating this fraud is that much higher, but right now, it is stymied. There are no investigators over there, there are no U.S. attorneys, the FBI has been decimated, and it is very difficult.

Mr. GARCIA. And that right there, the American public needs to hear. I mean, it is completely outrageous what has happened to those that are actually trying to take on fraud in Minnesota and across the country. Those offices have been decimated, and there is no support. Not acceptable. And, Governor, finally, there appears to be actually no evidence that ICE and DHS reign of terror in Minnesota that continues has actually prevented any fraud. Is that your assessment, sir?

Governor WALZ. That is correct. What you saw on the streets did not do anything to it, and we have actively asked, if you have folks who can help us, if you have folks who are good at the forensics, if they can help us do this, we want you there. As we have for the last seven years that I have been Governor, we partnered together and convicted people.

Mr. GARCIA. Thank you, and with that, I also, just for the record, want to introduce our report as well. Today, the Democratic staff released it as well as it relates to this hearing and Operation Metro Surge. So, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

The Chair now recognizes our Majority Whip, Representative Emmer from Minnesota.

Mr. EMMER. Thank you, Chairman Comer, and actually, thank you, Governor Walz and Attorney General Ellison, for appearing before the Committee today.

Gentlemen, let us see if we can agree on at least one thing today. Today's hearing is titled, "Oversight of Fraud and Misuse of Federal Funds in Minnesota." Can we agree that this fraud is a serious thing, Governor Walz? Yes or no. Can we agree on that?

Governor WALZ. Yes, any fraud is serious.

Mr. EMMER. Thank you, because it is interesting that you and I agree that it is a serious thing considering the man sitting next to you, your Attorney General, Keith Ellison, just two months ago said, "This is a political matter. This is not a serious thing." Attorney General Ellison, is there an organized crime ring operating in Minnesota? I will answer for you, sir. Governor Walz believes there is an active crime ring in our state. In October, the Governor said, "We have got an organized crime ring in Minnesota. I think it has been going on for years."

Moving on, Mr. Ellison, I, along with millions of Americans, have grave concerns over your alleged relationships with Somali fraudsters who have since been charged and convicted of Federal crimes. I am sure you are aware that over 90 percent of the defendants charged in the Feeding Our Future fraud case are of Somali descent. In fact, you have personal knowledge of these people. There is a 54-minute audiotape of your meeting with these criminals in December 2021, and during your meeting, they complained to you about increased scrutiny of their nonprofits and you told them, "Of course I am here to help." It is on the internet. Anyone can listen to you say that. Since then, you claim you were not aware of their crimes in the \$250 million Feeding Our Future scheme, the largest pandemic fraud case in the Nation, but just weeks after your December 2021 meeting, the FBI executed search warrants that you never would have requested in the Feeding Our Future fraud investigation.

Now, let us fast forward to September 2022. Ten months after you met with the Somali fraudsters, your office issued a press release stating, "Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison and his office have been deeply involved for two years in holding Feeding Our Future accountable." So, according to your office, sir, you have been deeply involved in the Feeding Our Future case since September 2020. That actually sounds like you are saying that at the time of your infamous meeting with the Somali fraudsters, you were already aware of the allegations of fraud. When you had this meeting in December 2021, did you know, sir, about the long-running FBI investigation into Feeding Our Future? Yes or no.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Chairman, Representative Emmer—

Mr. EMMER. Reclaiming my time. When did you personally become aware of the FBI investigation? That is all I am asking.

Mr. ELLISON. Representative Emmer, as you know, I have addressed this issue many times. I have—

Mr. EMMER. All right. Reclaiming my time. In that same meeting with the fraudsters, Mr. Attorney General, you took aim at the Minnesota Department of Education. You stated that the Min-

nesota Department of Education had fought the nonprofit in very disgusting ways, in a very racist, xenophobic, and Islamophobic manner. You actually asked for the names of all these folks who are just hung up and offered to call the Minnesota Department of Education to “demand some explanations.” We now know that when you made these comments, the Biden DOJ was working with the Minnesota Department of Education and that their work exposed the massive fraud ring. Pretty bad look for you, sir. Either you were oblivious to what was going on under your nose, or worse, you were trying to obstruct the work of the Minnesota Department of Education. So, I can see the time is getting short.

Mr. Chairman, we are left with two questions. One, what did Governor Walz and Keith Ellison know about the fraud, and two, when did they actually know it? I would suggest that if they do not give direct and truthful answers to both these questions at this hearing, then they both need to be put under oath in a deposition. This is a serious thing, Mr. Attorney General. You are the only one who thinks protecting taxpayer dollars is political. Mr. Ellison, my concern is that you actively obstructed this investigation in exchange for campaign donations, a quid pro quo. If these concerns are proven to be true, you should be disbarred, and you should go to jail. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. The Chair now recognizes Ms. Norton from Washington, D.C.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is critical that the Federal Government support people who need assistance with food, housing, and healthcare. Unfortunately, as long as the government provides these services, there will be bad actors trying to take advantage of them. We need to prevent and identify these fraudsters so that social services can reach those who need them. However, we cannot recklessly deny help to many people who need services because of a few bad actors.

My Republican colleagues have now held two hearings to talk about fraud in one single state, but they have completely ignored the fact that the Trump Administration is the most corrupt Administration in history. If Republicans really cared about fraud abuse and holding criminals accountable, they would call them out: Donald Trump, for firing 17 Inspectors General. These internal watchdogs are the front line of rooting out waste, fraud, and abuse of Federal agencies. The Trump Administration has also retaliated against whistleblowers and allowed Administration officials to engage in serious conflicts of interest that often cross the line into outright corruption. We need inspectors general, whistleblower protections, and rules prohibiting conflicts of interest to protect Federal programs and make sure that people can get the services they need.

Across the country, Americans are struggling to afford their healthcare premiums and groceries. The Trump Administration should be strengthening the social safety net, not cutting the safeguards that catch the fraudsters taking advantage of it, and I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentlelady yields back. I will now recognize myself for 5 minutes.

Governor Walz and Attorney General Ellison, my questions are going to be simple and direct. Governor Walz, you were inaugurated as Governor on January 17, 2019, and have served in that role through two terms ever since, correct?

Governor WALZ. That is correct, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. During the time period 2019 and 2020, while you were serving as Governor, isn't it true that state auditors and officials raised concerns about fraud and vulnerabilities and programs overseen by your Administration?

Governor WALZ. I cannot confirm that, but I am assuming we have always ongoing Office of the Legislative Auditor (OLA).

Chairman COMER. I will take that as a yes. Those warnings were communicated to senior officials in your Administration, including yourself, correct?

Governor WALZ. I cannot speak if it was directly.

Chairman COMER. I think the correct answer to that would also be yes. Despite those warnings, you did not order a broad stop payment or suspension of payment in any program at that time, correct?

Governor WALZ. We are not going to stop payments that feed children until we have the proof that things happened. In 2019, we did start taking action. I went to the legislature that legislates.

Chairman COMER. Okay. Okay. Governor Walz, when fraud concerns were raised early in your tenure in the Childcare Assistance Program, did your Administration stop payments at that time?

Governor WALZ. The Childcare Assistance Program in the——

Chairman COMER. The answer is no. When fraud concerns were raised——

Governor WALZ. Would you like me to answer or not, Chairman?

Chairman COMER. Well, it is yes or no.

Governor WALZ. I am trying to. I want you to help——

Chairman COMER. You have already answered the question. You said you did not ever stop payments, and that is what the problem is, and that is what the Democrats are complaining about, "Oh my gosh, Trump stopped payments." Well, my god, you lost billions to fraud in Minnesota. That is what this hearing is about.

Governor WALZ. But, Mr. Chairman, that——

Chairman COMER. You did not stop payments because you did not want to rock the boat, and when fraud concerns were raised——

Governor WALZ. That is not correct, Chairman.

Chairman COMER. When fraud concerns were raised in Medicaid, Home and Community-Based Services, did your Administration stop payments? No, you did not. When fraud concerns were raised in non-emergency medical transportation, did your Administration stop payments?

Governor WALZ. Chairman, if I could mention what a stop payment meant by what the Administration did last week is 400,000 children without healthcare. Are you stopping payment at one person?

Chairman COMER. We believe that is your fault and the Attorney General's fault because you do nothing about fraud, even though everyone in America sees with their own eyes the fraud.

Governor WALZ. Our Medicare error rate is lower than your states.

Chairman COMER. You have been defrauded. You have not been good stewards of the taxpayer dollars, and the Democrat position is, well, keep the money flowing. The American taxpayers have had enough. They have had enough.

Governor WALZ. I think that that is an unfair characterization.

Chairman COMER. They want their taxpayer dollars spent wisely. We all support social programs to the vulnerable.

Governor WALZ. That is not a fair characterization.

Chairman COMER. But if you are going to waste the money to fraudsters, then we have to stop and recalculate.

Governor WALZ. We are not. We are putting them in jail when we can, Chairman, and some of these programs are crafted in such a way that there is a procedure to follow. And I am with you: one dollar is too much. I do not think there is a lot of difference here if you want to help us get at this. The question is, is it a sledgehammer, or is it a scalpel? I understand. There is no political upside to it.

Chairman COMER. Let us get into what we have talked—you eventually did pause payments in certain programs, but that was not until late 2025 after the Federal Government stepped in. Is that correct?

Governor WALZ. I do not think that is a fair characterization of stepped in. We have been partners in this and working on them, but—

Chairman COMER. All right. Let us move on, and that decision occurred only after large-scale fraud had already taken place for years. Now, Governor Walz, employees inside state agencies raised concerns about fraud and improper payments for years. Is that correct?

Governor WALZ. Inside agencies? We have been prosecuting them for years, yes.

Chairman COMER. They have raised concern. Agencies have raised concern about fraud in Minnesota, correct?

Governor WALZ. Which of those—

Chairman COMER. For years.

Governor WALZ. Yes, when they do, and they are prosecuted, yes.

Chairman COMER. Some of those employees faced retaliation after raising those concerns. Is that correct?

Governor WALZ. That is not correct, Chairman.

Chairman COMER. Okay.

Governor WALZ. Minnesota has strong whistleblower protections.

Chairman COMER. Attorney General Ellison, you are the chief legal officer of the State of Minnesota, correct?

Mr. ELLISON. Yes.

Chairman COMER. Your office advises agencies on compliance with Federal and state law, correct?

Mr. ELLISON. Yes.

Chairman COMER. Retaliation against whistleblowers reporting fraud is unlawful, correct?

Mr. ELLISON. That is right.

Chairman COMER. At any point during your tenure, did you tell state agencies to stop payments due to credible fraud allegations? Yes or no.

Mr. ELLISON. Sir, we prosecuted over 300 people in the Medicaid fraud area.

Chairman COMER. Three hundred, I would——

Mr. ELLISON. We convicted them. We——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Predict is a drop in the bucket, but you have never said to stop payments. That is——

Mr. ELLISON. It is one of the highest rates in the country, sir.

Chairman COMER. Well, you have one of the highest fraud rates in the country in Minnesota.

Mr. ELLISON. That is not true, and my office does not have the authority to do a stop payment.

Chairman COMER. All right.

Mr. ELLISON. We prosecute criminals when they are presented to us by the agency.

Chairman COMER. So, the answer is no, unfortunately. No one has ever from your office said to stop payments until we can get the fraud under control. So, to summarize, you both knew about fraud risk, and payments continued. Our investigation has shown that whistleblowers were alerted about the widespread fraud, were ignored, sidelined, and even retaliated against. Only after Federal authorities ultimately stepped in, did you take any action. It is not this Committee's responsibility to decide guilt or dole out punishment, but it is clear there was a massive failure of oversight and, quite frankly, a failure of leadership. One wonders whether either of you should bear some personal responsibility for the billions of dollars siphoned off by fraudsters under your noses in the state that you led. Again, this is not for the Committee to decide, but based on your answers today and apparent failure to take any responsibility, still the answer to that question has become abundantly clear. And now, I recognize——

Ms. RANDALL. Mr. Chair, I seek unanimous consent to enter items into the record.

Chairman COMER. All right. Before I recognize Mr. Lynch, Ms. Randall, you have a UC?

Ms. RANDALL. Thank you. I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record a November 12, 2025, article from *ProPublica* entitled, "How Trump Has Exploited Pardons and Clemency to Reward Allies and Supporters," which shows President Trump rewards those in his good graces. I also seek recognition to insert into the record a *Washington Post* article from December 19, 2025, entitled, "Trump's Pardons Wipe Out Payments to Defrauded Victims," which shows that President Trump lets criminals and fraudsters walk free.

Chairman COMER. Okay. With that——

Ms. RANDALL. And I also seek unanimous consent to enter into the record an article from May 29, 2025, from *ABC News*, titled, "Trump's Flurry of Pardons Include Some Campaign Contributors."

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

And, Ms. Pressley, we will do one at a time. We will go to Mr. Lynch, then I will recognize you.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you.

Chairman COMER. Mr. Lynch from Massachusetts.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Governor, good to see you, my friend. Attorney General Ellison, good to see you again. Reverend, thank you for your willingness to testify before the Committee.

I want to shift gears here a minute, and I want to focus on ICE. So, I was recently asked to serve as the co-chair of the FIFA 2026 soccer tournament. It is a global tournament, the largest sporting event in the world, and my home city of Boston has been asked to host a lot of the games. In Boston, we will host teams from Morocco, Ghana, Bolivia, Iraq, Scotland, France, England, and Suriname. We will also host over three million foreign national visitors who are coming into Boston for these tournaments, and we recently learned from the Trump Administration that ICE will play a key role in the security operations during those games. So, we have got all these people flying in, foreign nationals, a lot of different countries, South America and elsewhere.

Governor, since you have had direct and relevant experience on dealing with the Metro Surge and the security operations of ICE, I was interested in getting your thoughts and your observations and any recommendations you might have to help us with confronting our experience or what we expect to see during these games with ICE coming in, as well as so many foreign visitors.

Governor WALZ. Well, as I think the world saw, and do not take my word for it, take professional law enforcement across Minnesota and across the country, the most unprofessional, aggressive force that I think you could imagine. And I was here in front of this Committee and answered all your questions on June 12, and I warned this Committee what a masked group of folks turned loose in an American city could do, and if I am not mistaken, I said someone could get killed doing this. And I just want to be very clear about this. When Tom Homan had to come in to clean up the mess of Secretary Noem and Greg Bovino, Secretary [sic] Homan himself acknowledged Minnesota follows the law, exactly as I told you in this Committee.

So, my advice to you, Mr. Lynch, is to get very public upfront commitments from these folks. While I disagree with Mr. Homan's views on many things, he is at least professional enough that he pulled the leash back and pulled these folks out of Minnesota after, again, misrepresenting the number of people they were detaining, misrepresenting before he got there exactly what Minnesota did, and I am just going to name it on accountability. The Secretary of DHS being chastised by Republican Senators added insult to injury to Minnesota, pouring salt in the wounds of the parents of Alex Pretti and Renee Good's family by not even apologizing or acknowledging. And if you want accountability, for one of the times, as far as I know, the attorneys know better, we not being included in the investigation. And the actions that were taken of a gentleman who was shot in the leg was the night that Kristi Noem called me a domestic terrorist and said that this gentleman was attacking Federal agents. Well, now we know the story. They lied. They are now under investigation, "they" being the Federal agents.

So, look, I am with you. I want your help on fraud. Why would I not want money to go to the programs I care deeply about—feed-

ing people, clothing people, housing people? But what ICE did disrupted everything that we were doing, it disrupted our Federal partners, and it forced our law enforcement agencies, who have worked hard to gain the public trust, to have the public believe in them. So, my advice to you is, and especially when the world is coming to see this, let Boston's finest lead, let the people of Massachusetts lead, let the Tenth Amendment stand for something, and allow us to be able to do this. The people of Minnesota will hold us accountable if they do not feel we are doing a good enough job, but to demonize and retribution against a state, in the words of the President, in the words of the Vice President, have done nothing.

So, Mr. Lynch, the world should be looking forward to coming, but I would get it upfront, and I would make sure that Boston's Police Department are in the lead.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you. Attorney General Ellison, we need coordination between law enforcement agencies. This is a big job. What are your views on that likelihood of cooperation from ICE?

Mr. ELLISON. Well, I hope you get the cooperation that you need. In Minnesota, we do not have a good record of cooperation, which is interesting because so many times in the past, we have had great cooperation between local Federal enforcers and local state ones, and we have just worked seamlessly. Nowadays, that has all changed, and that is quite unfortunate.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I yield back. Thank you for the courtesy.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. Ms. Pressley?

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you. I asked unanimous consent to enter to the record a February 2026 letter from 200 state lawmakers urging Congress to exercise its oversight authority and demand the Administration immediately restore full childcare funding that it had frozen for five states.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, it is ordered.

The Chair recognizes Dr. Foxx from North Carolina.

Ms. FOXX. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank our witnesses for being here.

Governor, you have reminded people that you were here last June. At that time, I reminded you that the Feeding Our Future scam made Minnesota ground zero for the largest COVID-19 fraud scheme in the Nation. \$250 million of Federal taxpayer funds were taken out of the mouths of hungry children, and as the FBI noted, they were "funneled into luxury homes, cars, and lavish lifestyles while families struggled." You assured me then that you wholeheartedly supported the Federal Government's effort to bring those responsible to justice. I appreciate your sentiment, but a person's actions matter more than their words. Governor Walz, when did you first become aware of the fraud in Feeding Our Future? A specific date, please.

Governor WALZ. Well, Congresswoman, it is good to see you, and having served in your job for 12 years, I can tell you my job is a little different as Governor for seven years. I take a lot of meetings. I certainly would not specifically state, but I think during that pandemic, I think by late 2020, we started to see the irregularities. They were flagged, and I will note that we cooperated.

Ms. FOXX. Right, but the state officials were aware of the fraud in early 2020.

Governor WALZ. So, you are asking when I, in my office, the Governor became aware.

Ms. FOXX. Yes.

Governor WALZ. And I do not have a specific date.

Ms. FOXX. Okay.

Governor WALZ. But what I would say is we provided witnesses' documents to the U.S. Attorney and the FBI, and 79 of those people have been prosecuted going back to 2022.

Ms. FOXX. Okay. Well, when I was Chair of the Committee on Education and Workforce, I issued you a subpoena in September 2024 because you and your Administration were not forthcoming about how your Administration "failed to identify what has been described as the largest pandemic fraud in the Nation." In September 2024, you were aware of the Feeding Our Future fraud and your Administration's handling of it, correct? Yes or no.

Governor WALZ. 2024? Yes, by that time, we had already put people in jail and had extensively investigated it.

Ms. FOXX. This Committee has testimony that the Minnesota Department of Education briefed your office about the Feeding Our Future draft lawsuit and litigation hold on April 28, 2020. Let me jog your memory. Is that correct?

Governor WALZ. I cannot speak specifically to that, and if it is my—

Ms. FOXX. Okay. It was April 2020. That means Feeding Our Future received a total of over \$200 million in Federal funds after you and your Administration knew about the fraud concerns. Why didn't you stop sending money to Feeding Our Future as soon as the fraud concerns were raised?

Governor WALZ. Congresswoman, as following the program. We notified the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) under the Trump Administration's first term. We had notified them, too, because it is a program administered out of USDA, and they were working to work through the process. Eventually—

Ms. FOXX. Didn't you say you were fearful of political retaliation from the FOF founder?

Governor WALZ. No, I never said any such thing. I never said any such thing.

Ms. FOXX. Well, that is what we understood, you were afraid of political retaliation. So, given the size and scope of the Feeding Our Future fraud, I think you and your Administration would have been on high alert looking for additional fraud in the state. But after seeing the handling of Feeding Our Future and its \$250 million in fraud, it came as no surprise to learn that even more staggering amounts of fraud, estimated at up to \$9 billion, were uncovered in the Childcare Assistance Program, the Minnesota Medicaid program, and other programs. How could you allow such massive fraud schemes in your state to get to this point?

Governor WALZ. Congresswoman, we do not see anything by \$9 million. Local press and everyone reports it about \$300 million. But as I have said, if it is one dollar, it is too much, but we started in 2019 putting anti-fraud programs forward. After Feeding Our Future, we started going through and making sure every program had

the integrity in it that it needed, and that is why you see convictions. That is why you see these programs going forward.

Ms. FOXX. But why did it take did it take nearly seven years for you to get engaged to stop the fraud? Seven years.

Governor WALZ. We started in 2019, Congresswoman. It may be a surprise. If you arrest someone for stealing a car, other people are still going to try and steal cars. What we have tried to do is bring program integrity, but I will go back to this. We are not going to shut down programs that have things that are going well in it, and we need to find that proper balance, and I have acknowledged that every year, we are putting things in place, and Inspectors General—

Ms. FOXX. Governor Walz, Governor Walz, you did not do your job. You did not do your job. You did not protect taxpayer dollars. You allowed massive fraud. You and Mr. Ellison allowed massive fraud to go on in the State of Minnesota, and it is unfortunate, as somebody said, that you cannot be held personally responsible at this stage of the game. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. The gentlelady yields back. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Krishnamoorthi from Illinois.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Governor Walz, you have seen firsthand the brutal excessive force used by ICE and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents in Minnesota. Unfortunately, we saw the same tactics employed in Chicago during Operation Midway Blitz. I want to turn now to ICE and CBP's horrific pattern of abuse.

Secretary Noem went to our cities ostensibly under the guise of arresting "the worst of the worst," but in Illinois, less than 3 percent of those arrested during Operation Midway Blitz had criminal histories. In Minnesota, the vast majority of those detained had never been in trouble with the law, correct?

Governor WALZ. I believe that is correct, Congressman.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. There were also more than 170 cases this year where ICE and CBP detained U.S. citizens. U.S. citizens should never be detained by ICE, correct?

Governor WALZ. That is correct.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. According to—

Governor WALZ. I would hope we all could agree on that.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. Well, I hope so, too.

[Poster]

According to the *Chicago Sun Times*, Federal agents have pepper sprayed children, including this 1-year-old baby in Chicago, and children should never be pepper sprayed, right?

Governor WALZ. I would hope we could all agree on that, too. They should not.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. And according to the Independent, CBP agents dragged a 67-year-old U.S. citizen out of his car, breaking his ribs and causing internal bleeding. No person should be subjected to that kind of treatment, right?

Governor WALZ. They should not, Congressman.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. Attorney General Ellison, let me turn to another topic. In President Trump's second term, ICE has become America's highest-funded Federal law enforcement agency with a budget of more than \$85 billion. If ICE were an army, this budget

would make it the 13th largest army in the world. Let us look at where that money has gone. Last year, DHS spent \$172 million on two private luxury jets for Secretary Noem. I assume you are not aware of a stop payment on that particular payment, right?

Mr. ELLISON. No, I am not, sir.

[Poster]

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Republican Senator John Kennedy yesterday grilled Secretary Noem about a \$220 million ad campaign featuring her prominently, including on this horse in front of Mount Rushmore. Secretary Kennedy suggested this was wasteful spending, and I agree. I assume you would agree with that as well, right?

Mr. ELLISON. I do.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. This gross misuse of funds must end now, and Secretary Noem must be held accountable. Not tomorrow, not next week, now.

Chicago was ground zero for Secretary Noem's overreach when she launched Operation Midway Blitz. Chicago media reported that ICE and CBP agents had pepper sprayed a 1-year-old baby, shot at a pastor, harassed seniors, tased U.S. citizens, and even killed a person. It is clear that Midway Blitz was never intended to make Chicago safer. In December, ICE and CBP began Operation Metro Surge in Minnesota. Over 3,000 agents were sent to one state. There were military-style raids at childcare centers, children kept home from school, adults postponing medical care. In Minneapolis, Renee Good and Alex Pretti, both U.S. citizens were fatally shot by Federal officers. It is clear that Operation Metro Surge was never intended to make Minnesota safer.

But this is not isolated to just Illinois and Minnesota. Inside detention centers across the country, the suffering continues. Detainees report physical and sexual abuse, medical neglect, and pressure to self-deport. On top of that brutality, Kristi Noem is misusing funds to buy herself private jets and enrich her associates. Kristi Noem is testifying in the House Judiciary Committee today, but she must come before this Committee to explain the rampant corruption and waste within her Agency. DHS is out of control. There is no congressional oversight. I was denied entrance to ICE facilities twice in Illinois. There is no accountability. Secretary Noem has still not appeared before this Committee, nor has she responded in a substantive manner to more than one dozen letters I have sent her. There are no consequences.

Noem is still the leader of DHS despite regularly breaking the law and abusing her authority. Secretary Noem must answer for her wrongdoing, for Jaime, my State of the Union guest, who raises his little sister after his father was coerced into self-deportation; for Chicago and Marimar Martinez who was shot five times; for my constituent, Evelyn, an 18-year-old U.S. citizen who was wrongfully detained by ICE; for Renee Good, Alex Pretti, and Silverio Villegas-Gonzalez, and all the other victims of ICE and CBP, for the American people. It is for all those reasons that, Mr. Chairman, pursuant to Clause II(k)(6) House Rule XI, I move to subpoena Kristi Noem to testify before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. This is for every family impacted by Kristi Noem's terror campaign. They demand answers, and so do I.

Chairman COMER. A motion has been made. The Committee will hold this motion in abeyance until the end of today's hearing. The Committee will now proceed with today's hearing, and I want to remind everyone, I believe Kristi Noem is testifying in front of the Homeland Security Committee in the House today after testifying in the Senate yesterday.

Before I recognize Mr. Cloud, I believe Mr. Higgins has a UC?

Mr. HIGGINS. Yes, Mr. Chairman. I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record an interview from December 2024, *The Minnesota Star Tribune* with Governor Walz noting the Federal investigation into the Early Intensive Developmental and Behavioral Intervention Program, the EIDBI Program, serving autism patients, since its first year of inception in 2017, growing from \$1.7 million per year to over \$400 million per year. Unanimous consent, sir.

Chairman COMER. Without objection so ordered.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Cloud from Texas.

Mr. CLOUD. Thank you, Chairman. Thank you for holding this hearing. This hearing was designed to be a hearing looking into the massive expansion of some of the social programs and the fraud that was contained therein, but, Reverend Tollgaard, I was struck by part of your opening statement because you invoked Matthew 25, and that is a scripture we see tossed around a lot up here, but often without context. And so, I went and got my Bible and thought we would dig into Matthew 25 for a minute. The scripture you invoked was Matthew 25: 35–40. It ends with this. It says, "Then the righteous will answer to Him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry, feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink, and when did we see you as stranger and invite you in or naked and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and come to you?' And the King will answer to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did to one of these brothers of mine, even the least of them, you did this to Me.'" I would ask you, who is the "you" in that passage?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. Thank you for your question. "You," meaning all of us, the followers of Christ.

Mr. CLOUD. The followers of Christ, right. In Matthew 24:3, it says, "After Jesus was sitting on the Mountain of Olives and the disciples came to him privately, and then they asked him," and that began this whole chapter. Now, what Christ did not say was to lobby your government. He said if you have, you give. That is the general biblical principle here. You know, II Corinthians chapter nine gives us probably the best scriptural understanding of what charity is. It says, "Each of you should give which you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." Would you say that taxes are under compulsion?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. Taxes are not my area of expertise, but I—

Mr. CLOUD. But are they given under compulsion? Do you pay your taxes?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. As a U.S. citizen, I pay my taxes, as we all do.

Mr. CLOUD. Yes, because what happens if you do not?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. We do not have the services that we need to support our——

Mr. CLOUD. What happens to you personally if you do not pay your taxes?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. You get in trouble.

Mr. CLOUD. You get in trouble, and I would say that is under compulsion. So, if we are talking about what charity is—I am always amazed in D.C. how much of we get to define our personal worth as a politician or statesman, or whatever you want to call us, by how much of other people's money we give away. And so, there is certainly a place for a social safety net potentially, but the idea that Matthew 25 is kind of used as a blanket statement, as a matter of fact, the parable that He gives right before that scripture that you go into is the parable of the talents, where you see a business owner go away, and he leaves three employees in charge and gives them each a bit of investment. And two of them turn their investment into a profit, and one that turns it not into a profit, does nothing with it, just sits on it, what does he call him?

[No response.]

Mr. CLOUD. You are a pastor, right?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. Yes, I am, sir. I do not have that Scripture——

Mr. CLOUD. He calls him a wicked and a lazy servant.

Reverend TOLLGAARD. Mm-hmm.

Mr. CLOUD. And so, you know, scripturally speaking, God expects us to do something with what He has given us. Now, Romans 13 talks about the purpose of government. You know, Scripture is replete with there are different institutions, and each have a different thing, the primary job of raising our kids and taking care of our families and the institution of the family. The government has a different one. It says, "For the one in the authority is God's servant for your good, but if you do wrong, be afraid for the rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants serving as agents of wrath on the wrongdoer." Would you say that someone who commits fraud is doing wrong?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. We all are against fraud.

Mr. CLOUD. Right. Is fraud theft? Would you agree that that is theft?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. Yes.

Mr. CLOUD. As the Eighth Commandment says, "Thou shall not steal." Would you recommend that someone in your church go into debt to give an offering in your church?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. No.

Mr. CLOUD. Okay. So, we have a massive program of fraud that is being paid for by taxpayers, and it is not really us paying. It is really our kids and our grandkids that are paying it, and yet we continue to see this massive expansion, taken out of context of what charity is being defined as. You know, it is interesting. I find it odd that the left continues to bring up Matthew 25 because at the very beginning of that, right before He goes in that scripture that we talked with, it says, Matthew 25:32, "All the nations will be gathered to Him, and He will separate the people from one another as sheep and goats. He will put the sheep on His right and His goats on the left, and the King will say to those on his right,

‘Come in, you are blessed of the Father, take your inheritance to the kingdom,’ and those on His left, He will say, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels,’” you know.

So, I would caution those who begin to use Matthew 25 to do so in the proper context, understanding that we have multiple biblical institutions, and they each have a purpose.

Reverend TOLLGAARD. The context here is vast.

Mr. CLOUD. And, Mr. Chairman, I would like to submit the entirety of Matthew 25 into the record.

Chairman COMER. Without objection—

Ms. RANDALL. Mr. Chairman, I also have a unanimous consent item.

Chairman COMER. Does anyone object to—

Ms. RANDALL. Thank you. It is a *Huffington Post*—

Chairman COMER. Whoa, whoa, I did not recognize yet, Ms. Randall. Does anybody object to Mr. Cloud?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Now, I will recognize Ms. Randall.

Ms. RANDALL. Thank you, Mr. Comer. I would like to enter into the record an article from the *Huffington Post* yesterday, “Troops Being Told Trump’s Been Anointed by Jesus to Cause Armageddon in Iran.”

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Well, we will do one. Let us recognize Mr. Khanna, and then I will get Mr. Walkinshaw. Mr. Khanna from California.

Mr. KHANNA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Governor Walz, when I went to Minneapolis and was at Alex Pretti’s memorial, I was struck by the people there. I expected a lot of folks who were immigrants, and I expected folks who were children of immigrants who looked brown like me, and there at the memorial were fourth and fifth generation Minnesotans, most of them white Americans talking about how they face tyranny, how when they go to church, they were being followed by ICE agents, when they would go to give a meal to an immigrant, they were being followed by agents. And I just had so much hope for our country, seeing them there, and I want to thank Minnesota as a Californian, as someone grew up in Pennsylvania, as an American, for their character, for their courage, for what they have modeled in a multiracial democracy.

And my question for you, I mean, having served as a Congressman, a Governor, what is it about Minnesota that we can learn? What is it that leads to this kind of inclusive feeling about immigrants and our Nation?

Governor WALZ. Well, thank you, Congressman, and thanks for your work on many fronts. Look, I think Reverend Tollgaard summed it up in getting at the heart of this. It is about the neighborliness and the care, and left to our own devices, I am going to make the case, Minnesota, and the way, I would remind folks, states have to balance their budgets. We are AAA bond rated, one of the states that is ranked the highest. We have a surplus, and we also have the highest rainy day funds, one of the strongest protections. So, we understand fiscal responsibility, but we also understand this caring, this neighborliness. People saw their neighbor. I

believe our politics can change with that idea of what the next-door neighbor looks like.

Now, I will have to tell you, Mr. Khanna, I was deeply concerned last year when the Vice President of the United States mentioned he can understand why people would not want to live by somebody who is not like them, which seems to go against our entire ethos in Minnesota, whether it was the first wave of Norwegian and Swedish immigrants that came to Minnesota, German immigrants like my family, or whether it was Hmong coming after the Vietnam War, or Somali and other East African immigrants to our country. And I think it is this sense of working together.

There is a reason that we rank at the top in healthcare, we rank at the top in personal incomes, we rank near the top in home ownership, we rank near the top in happiness because this idea that we are all in it together and that we believe everybody should have a chance. So, I think it is an ethos and it gets into our politics on the secular side.

I believe as an elected official that I should not give a sermon, but I should attempt to live one. And one of our politicians, Paul Wellstone, talked about we all do better when we all do better, and that is what we do. And I know that is true to a certain degree in other states, but I see folks making the claim that, well, you would not have any fraud if you just cut all these programs, if you just zeroed them out. That is true. If we did not provide food for our children, no one would steal from that program, but there would also be a lot of hungry children. And what I am asking for and acknowledging the accountability, we need to put program integrity in. So, I think it is a neighborliness, I think it is a historical point about caring for your own, and I think it is a clear understanding that if your neighbor does better, you are going to do better.

Mr. KHANNA. Well, thank you, Governor, and obviously fraud matters and budgets matter, but what really matters right now in this country are values, and I really appreciate your sharing that.

Attorney General Ellison, in the brief time I have, you know, I just want to be clear about Somali Americans because when I was growing up as an Indian American, anytime someone who was of Indian origin did something wrong, every Indian American was concerned, you know? And I do not think people understand that if you are not a minority, how that makes you feel. I understand there were 80 or 90 people who were Somali Americans who were involved in this, but there are a hundred thousand Somali Americans, at least in Minnesota. And statistically, from all the studies I have seen, it is just factually untrue that Somali Minnesotans or Somali Americans commit more fraud than white Americans or Indian Americans or other Americans, and could you just speak to this because it is so dangerous. And I do not even think on the other side, people are doing that on purpose, but if you are not an immigrant, if you have not lived that or are a child of immigrants, you do not know what that makes you feel. And can you talk about the Somali experience in Minnesota?

Mr. ELLISON. You know, the reality is the Somali community in Minnesota has brought great things to our state. They have opened businesses. They have gotten professional degrees. They are great

neighbors who volunteer and help their neighbors. They have been a benefit to our state. If you pick out a few people who have done wrong, sure, you can do that, but I can guarantee you, you can do that in any ethnic group at all in the State of Minnesota or anywhere in America.

Mr. KHANNA. Thank you. Thank you both.

Chairman COMER. All right. Before I recognize Mr. Higgins, I will recognize Mr. Walkinshaw for a unanimous consent.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and, first, I just wanted to make a quick correction. You said Secretary Noem is before the Homeland Security Committee today. That is not true. I am a Member of the Committee. She was with us a couple months ago, but she is not scheduled.

Chairman COMER. Okay.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. With that, I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record of September 22, 2025, article from *Reuters* titled, "Trump Aid, Homan, Accepted \$50,000 in Bribery Sting Operation," which shows the Trump Administration is willing to cover up blatant corruption of its officials.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Higgins from Louisiana.

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Gentlemen, ma'am, thank you for being here today. Governor, when you took office, this fraud had already begun. Is that an accurate assessment?

Governor WALZ. That is accurate, Mr. Higgins.

Mr. HIGGINS. Yes, sir. So, what we are trying to get our heads wrapped around here as a Nation, and we are doing our best as a Committee, I am quite certain, on both sides, to just sort of focus our attention on what needs to be focused on. You had massive fraud in the State of Minnesota, and when we started looking into waste, fraud, abuse, and theft across the country, Minnesota surfaced as a wow moment for the entire country. So, naturally, you know, we look, as a citizenry, to, well, who is in charge there, and my old friend, Governor Walz is in charge, and the truth is, is fraud had begun before you took office.

So, it is a reasonable question, Governor. You are noted in many interviews—I am not going to go through them ad nauseum—you were aware of this level of fraud and investigations, and yet, it seems like nothing was done until the Trump Administration reestablished itself in a second term and we began broad investigations into waste, fraud, abuse, and theft, and Minnesota popped. I will just give you a minute to respond?

Governor WALZ. Yes.

Mr. HIGGINS. Why did not you do something sooner? I know some people were put in jail, I know there were investigations, but there was billions and billions and billions of dollars being stolen from a pretty concentrated demographic in your community. And this demographic is a significant political supporter for you and your party, good, sir. So, I just ask you, please explain.

Governor WALZ. Yes. Well, thank you, Mr. Higgins, and I appreciate your question in good faith on this. First of all, the issue of billions, and I will keep saying this, one dollar is too many. That number got thrown around. There is nothing behind it, but I will

acknowledge one dollar is too much. I will also note the characterization——

Mr. HIGGINS. I would say it is low. I would say it is low, but continue.

Governor WALZ. Well, there is nothing to support that, but, look, we will pursue it and assume that that is the case. We will still make the changes we need to make. The characterization that nothing happened until the Trump Administration came in is simply not true. We worked with them in the first Administration where USDA did not take action, and I think that is documented. The fact is, starting in 2019, I went to the legislature asking for——

Mr. HIGGINS. But you did not pause payments, Governor.

Governor WALZ. The pausing payments is——

Mr. HIGGINS [continuing]. And the criminal investigation, which I am running out of time. I want to jump to, the way America sees this, Governor Walz, respectfully, sir, is that this money just continued to flow. There was a high awareness of this waste, fraud, abuse, and theft, like organized-crime-level theft, and it seemed to be slow rolled, and nobody stopped the money from rolling in. The money is gone, been remitted overseas.

Attorney General Ellison, you stated in your opening statement, you sort of stated that your office only has direct jurisdiction over Medicaid fraud. Did you say that in your opening statement?

Mr. ELLISON. I did say that.

Mr. HIGGINS. Okay. Well, you seem to indicate that you do not have, like, criminal authority, but you do, don't you? Under your own law, you have an authority. If the county district attorney asks you to get involved or if the Governor asks you to get involved, then your office can take lead on any criminal investigations, specifically if you have particular staffing and capabilities within your office because it is statewide to look into organized crime. Is that not correct?

Mr. ELLISON. It is true——

Mr. HIGGINS. Okay. So, you have the authority to lead your state's effort to respond to this massive fraud at the state level from within the healthcare realm where government money has been stolen at very, very high levels, unprecedented levels in your state. Are you leading that effort for the State of Minnesota?

Mr. ELLISON. Yes, we are aggressively prosecuting it.

Mr. HIGGINS. You are addressing it. Are you leading it? Are you leading the effort?

Mr. ELLISON. We are leading the effort to prosecute Medicaid fraud in Minnesota.

Mr. HIGGINS. I am not talking about Medicaid fraud. Do not hide behind that. You have the authority to prosecute anything criminally that the Governor asks you to, and this thing is big. I am giving you an opportunity, sir. Are you leading the criminal investigative effort into this massive fraud across the board in the healthcare spectrum in the State of Minnesota or not?

Mr. ELLISON. We are following the law, and the rest——

Mr. HIGGINS. You are not leading. You are not leading. I am going to say, Mr. Chairman, that the Attorney General of the State of Minnesota should resign. I yield.

Chairman COMER. Thank you. The gentleman yields back. Before I recognize Mr. Frost, Mr. Walkinshaw, you were right. She is not testifying in Homeland Security. Kristi Noem is testifying in Judiciary. I knew she was here somewhere today, so you were right. I misstated the wrong Committee.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Frost from Florida.

Mr. FROST. Thank you so much, Mr. Chair, and I have a unanimous consent called, "Fraud Focus: Why is Trump Granting Clemency to Convicted Fraudsters?"

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. FROST. Thank you all for being here. The whole world has witnessed unprecedented and extreme immigration enforcement tactics this year in Minnesota. After the murder of Renee Nicole Good and before the murder of Alex Pretti, President Donald Trump posted on Truth Social that "The day of reckoning and retribution is coming." Governor Walz, the dictionary defines "retribution" as "punishment inflicted on someone as vengeance for a wrong or criminal act." Based on what we have seen play out in Minneapolis, what is the problem with the President of the United States directing agents to carry out retribution?

Governor WALZ. Well, yes. Thank you, and this is certainly troubling because under the guise of fraud, which we all want to tackle, we were subject to, as you saw, the largest invasion of a state by the Federal Government, I do not know, in certainly any of our lifetimes, and that infliction, to me, we are trying to figure it out. Look, we will acknowledge, and we are fixing it in Minnesota, but I am telling you, each of you are going to go back to your state, and if some of you think you want to be Governor, you are going to deal with this, and these folks keep moving.

The problem is, Congressman, this was about retribution. This was about singling out Minnesota, and I am going to just name it. I think it is singling out because our state works, and it provides things for people and we care, and we mind our own business and we respect our neighbors, and this retribution had nothing to do with getting the worst of the worst. We know that. It had nothing to do with stopping fraud, and we were subject, we being Minnesotans, for over ten weeks.

And I want to note just before, and I will yield back on this, Congressman. I think this is important to note. The gentleman from Illinois noted Midway Blitz, the damage it did to Chicago, there were 500 agents on the ground in Chicago. Kristi Noem testified yesterday there are still 650 in Minnesota. It is not over. This is not ancient news. This is not looking like everybody moved on. Minnesotans are still experiencing this.

Mr. FROST. It is bad for our communities and makes our people less safe. It is terrorizing our streets.

Governor WALZ. Yes.

Mr. FROST. Reverend, what has been happening in your community when individuals try to record Federal agents?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. Thank you for your question. Individuals who have tried to record Federal agents have been told they cannot. They have been asked for—taken pictures of their license plates. They have been followed. They have been subject to fear and intimidation tactics by ICE agents.

Mr. FROST. And one of the only reasons that, really, the world knows about what is going on in Minnesota is because of our Constitution and the right to be able to record law enforcement and Federal agents. Those videos and the videotapes have been, in part, the reason why we know what is going on. Trump Administration officials have suggested that observing or identifying Federal agents is “doxxing” or “assault.” We know Federal agents have followed observers to their homes. We know protestors have been pepper sprayed. We know people have been violently detained who were filming them. Without bystanders having cameras, who knows how the murders of Renee Nicole Good and Alex Pretti by ICE agents would have been handled by this Administration?

They have already tried to lie about these murders, even with footage. After Alex Pretti was murdered, Stephen Miller said he was “a domestic terrorist,” who tried to “assassinate Federal law enforcement.” Kristi Noem said that he committed an act of domestic terrorism, and the President of the United States said that he was an agitator and perhaps an insurrectionist.

Reverend, the last thing I want to get to that I think is really important, I grew up in the church, and I used to wear one of the “What Would Jesus Do” bracelets, mainly because I used to curse a little too much when I was little, and then I would, like, snap myself when I cursed. Either way, nowadays I think less about what would Jesus do, and I think more about what would happen to Jesus in this country. And I just wanted to give you a moment to talk about what you think would happen to refugees, Mary and Joseph, as they come to our border. Would they be separated from their child? I mean, what does this look like?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. Such a good point, Congressman, and, yes, Jesus was himself a refugee as were His parents, and, yes, I fear that they, too, would have experienced the harm and cruel treatment that Minnesotans have been experiencing at the hands of our government.

Mr. FROST. What do you say to the people who hide behind the Bible and wrap themselves in the flag to say that what is going on in our country right now with ICE terrorizing our communities, ripping our neighbors—ripping our families apart, what would you say to people like that?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. I think, again, Matthew 25, where are we in this moment? It should be on the side of the least—the widow, the orphan, the hungry, the homeless—and that as people of faith and moral conscience, history will tell what side we stood on, but our actions today will show true love of neighbor.

Mr. FROST. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. Before I recognize Ms. Mace, Mr. Grothman, I believe, has a UC.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Yes. I would like to submit for the record something here called—

Chairman COMER. Hit the button.

Mr. GROTHMAN. I would like to submit for the record something called, “Minnesota Financial and Compliance Report on Federally Assisted Programs for the Year Ending June 30, 2024.”

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

The Chair now recognizes Ms. Mace from South Carolina.

Ms. MACE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good morning, gentlemen. Thank you for being here today.

Governor Walz and Attorney General Ellison, you have presided over one of the worst government fraud scandals in American history. This was money intended to feed hungry children, help kids with autism, provide food and shelter and healthcare to the needy, and more. You both allowed billions in these American taxpayer dollars to be pillaged and plundered by Somali pirates. You knew this was happening, you chose to do nothing about it, and in some cases, you even enabled it. Attorney General Ellison, you even profited from this fraud by taking campaign donations from these Somalians after pledging to help quash the investigation into them. I find your behavior despicable.

My questions this morning, my first go to Governor Walz, and I hope you learned some lessons from your last hearing with me on the Oversight Committee. Have you learned anything since then?

Governor WALZ. I did, that if I did not speak up, two of my people would be dead, Congresswoman, and I warned you.

Ms. MACE. Okay. Governor Walz, what is a woman? Have you learned that lesson? Do you know what a woman is?

Governor WALZ. I am the Governor of Minnesota, Congressman.

Ms. MACE. Do you know what a woman is?

Governor WALZ. I am not here to be your prop for your obsession. I taught middle school.

Ms. MACE. Okay. So, if you cannot define what woman is——

Governor WALZ. Your obsession——

Ms. MACE [continuing]. You certainly cannot define what fraud is. If you cannot even define what a woman is, you cannot define fraud. How much money was spent on autism in Minnesota in 2017, Governor?

Governor WALZ. I do not have those numbers in front of me, Congresswoman.

Ms. MACE. Okay. Did you prepare for this hearing today?

Governor WALZ. I did.

Ms. MACE. Did you do any preparation for today?

Governor WALZ. I take Congress seriously.

Ms. MACE. Okay, and you have seen the numbers about autism fraud in Minnesota. So, we are going to do some Minnesota math with you today, okay? Are you ready? How much money was spent in 2017 for autism in Minnesota? How much?

Governor WALZ. I do not know. I was not the Governor.

Ms. MACE. Okay. Did you not just say that you prepared for this hearing today? One million dollars, okay? A quick Google search or using your AI could tell you \$1 million was spent. How much money was spent on autism in Minnesota in 2024?

Governor WALZ. I do not have the number in front of me. As Governor, I do not——

Ms. MACE. Were you Governor in 2024?

Governor WALZ. I was, but I am not the head of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Ms. MACE. Okay. So, your excuse before that you did not know what 2017 autism numbers were because you were not Governor, and today you cannot answer the numbers about 2024 as Governor, and you still said you prepared for this hearing today. It is unbe-

lievable. Three hundred and forty-three million dollars was spent in 2024. What percent increase is that? From \$1 million to \$343 million, what percentage increase is that?

Governor WALZ. I am not here to be your prop. Go ahead and tell me.

Ms. MACE. Wait, are you Governor of Minnesota or not?

Governor WALZ. Yes, I am. I am not prop for a Member of Congress.

Ms. MACE. Okay. Well, when I am Governor of South Carolina, you can sure as hell bet that I am going to know the math. The math is 34,200-percent increase, an increase of 343 times what it was in this time period. Do you know the number of children in Minnesota?

Governor WALZ. I know that Minnesota ranked as a top three state for children in the last year.

Ms. MACE. Okay. What is the total population in Minnesota?

Governor WALZ. Five-point-seven million.

Ms. MACE. Okay. What is the total population of children in Minnesota?

Governor WALZ. I do not have the number in front of me right now.

Ms. MACE. Are you Governor of Minnesota?

Governor WALZ. I know 400,000 were cut out of healthcare last week—

Ms. MACE. Okay. That is not—

Governor WALZ [continuing]. By the decisions you made.

Ms. MACE. Are you Governor of Minnesota?

Governor WALZ. I am.

Ms. MACE. And you do not know the number of children residing in Minnesota? It is—

Governor WALZ. I do not have the specific number. It is 5.7 million.

Ms. MACE. That is your total population.

Governor WALZ. What is the age, zero to five?

Ms. MACE. One-point-two—

Governor WALZ. Zero to 19?

Ms. MACE. You have approximately 1.2 million children in Minnesota.

Governor WALZ. What age?

Ms. MACE. I am not even Governor of South Carolina. Our population in South Carolina is 5.5 million. We have approximately 1.1 million children under the age of 18 in my home state of South Carolina, okay? As Governor, I expect you to know this information. Thank god you are not Vice President of the United States. Do you know approximately how many children in Minnesota are autistic or on the spectrum?

Governor WALZ. No, I do not have that number.

Ms. MACE. Okay. Well, if you take the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s roughly 1 in 36 kids are on the spectrum, we are talking about approximately 33,000 kids. In South Carolina, it is about 31,000 or so. Do you know what this is per child spending wise in the fraud for autistic kids in Minnesota?

Governor WALZ. Again, I am not here to be your prop. Go ahead and tell us.

Ms. MACE. Is doing Minnesota math a prop? This is math. We are talking about fraud. We are talking about——

Governor WALZ. Minnesota ranks at the top.

Ms. MACE. We are talking about money.

Governor WALZ. Where does South Carolina rank?

Ms. MACE. We are talking about money. That was supposed to——

Governor WALZ. Where does South Carolina children rank on healthiness?

Ms. MACE. These are my questions for you. It does not go the other way around unless we are debating on the debate stage, and we are not, but this is——

Governor WALZ. If you are asking questions about being Governor, it does.

Ms. MACE. I am asking you questions about being Governor——

Governor WALZ. When you are Governor, you can come and count.

Ms. MACE [continuing]. Of Minnesota, which you cannot answer. This is basic math, and you cannot even answer.

Governor WALZ. I am not here to be your prop.

Ms. MACE. Do you even care about kids in Minnesota? Do you care?

Governor WALZ. They rank near the top in every category. My children are fed. My children are housed. My children have healthcare.

Ms. MACE. Are autistic children are getting the services they need in Minnesota.

Governor WALZ. My children have the best schools.

Ms. MACE. You clearly do not. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. Chairman?

Chairman COMER. The gentlelady yields back.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. Oh, Ms. Boebert? Yes.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chairman?

Chairman COMER. Oh, Ms. Mace.

Ms. MACE. May I make my two motions?

Chairman COMER. Proceed.

Ms. MACE. Okay. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee issue a subpoena to Hon. Pamela Jo Bondi to appear before the Committee for a deposition regarding the Department's handling of the investigation of Jeffrey Epstein and his associates in compliance with the Epstein Files Transparency Act.

Chairman COMER. A motion has been made. The Committee will hold this motion in abeyance until the end of today's hearing. The Committee will now proceed with today's hearing.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee issue a subpoena to the Office of congressional Workplace Rights for the awards and settlements paid pursuant to Section 415 of the congressional Accountability Act prior to December 12, 2018, with only redactions allowable for the personally identifiable information of victims, alleged victims, and witnesses.

Ms. BOEBERT. Hear, hear.

Ms. MACE. Thank you, ma'am.

Chairman COMER. A motion has been made. The Committee will hold this motion in abeyance until the end of today's hearing.

Ms. RANDALL. Mr. Chairman, I seek unanimous consent.

Mr. GARCIA. Oh, Mr. Chairman, can I have one thing before—

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes the Ranking Member.

Mr. GARCIA. Thank you. No, we would just like to see Mrs. Mace's motions in writing, which would be great.

Chairman COMER. Okay. Now, before I recognize Ms. Lee, Ms. Randall?

Ms. RANDALL. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record a December 11, 2025, article from the *Guardian* titled, "Somalis Are the Scapegoat: Fear Rises as Trump Targets Minneapolis Community," which describes the Trump—

Chairman COMER. Without objection.

Ms. RANDALL [continuing]. Administration's xenophobic attacks.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

The Chair recognizes Ms. Lee from Pennsylvania.

Ms. LEE. Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the past few months, Democrats on this Committee and in the Senate have been holding hearings on the unconstitutional actions of the Trump Administration. So, we have heard from in that time whistleblowers, industry experts, and survivors of abuses of Federal agents. They spoke about warrantless searches that they have been subjected to, including Federal agents bursting into their homes with guns. They spoke about being shot at and dragged out of their cars, and then, you know, being made to look like they were actually the perpetrators. They spoke about Federal agents' use of masks and unmarked vehicles, and the efforts of these agents to hide their identity to escape any sort of accountability. And we heard from the brother of Renee Good, who was murdered by ICE agents in Minneapolis. That is what oversight looks like, not two hearings on fraud in one single state, which is not even the worst instance of fraud out there, though we all here agree that we should target fraud.

Republicans have dragged Governor Walz in again to demonize and target his state because he is a Democratic Governor and he is implementing Democratic policies. Republicans took a legitimate investigation, and as per usual, has made it a circus. Now, we have just a random guy lurking around childcare centers trying to get into buildings with children as the fraud vigilante. The Somali community has been vilified and made to feel unsafe, and Federal benefits are being cut to Minnesota and other Democrat-led states. Trump and his Administration also used this investigation as a justification for an immigration enforcement push that has created chaos and fueled violence, and resulted in the death of American citizens.

Reverend Tollgaard, as a Minnesotan, do you feel that these oversight hearings and the Trump Administration's fixation on fraud in Minnesota has made anyone safer in your state?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. No, they have not.

Ms. LEE. Republicans have been touting alleged fraud in childcare centers and the need to protect children, but since the immigration enforcement push, have kids been able to be kids? Have they felt comfortable going to school or playing out in public with each other or with their friends?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. They have not been safe. They have not been able to go to school, to be in playgrounds, to be in libraries and places you would normally expect to find them.

Ms. LEE. Are you worried about the long-term impact of being surrounded by violence and uncertainty of what it could have on these children?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. I am deeply concerned about that, and I know that their teachers and their parents are as well.

Ms. LEE. You were arrested earlier this year while protesting ICE agents and deportations. Why was it important for you and other clergy members to speak out against Trump's Administration's actions in Minnesota and elsewhere?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. Thank you for your question. I was arrested along with 99 other faith leaders in Minnesota, many of whom could be here today, and we were compelled to action to stand on the side of the most vulnerable in our communities and those who have been facing enormous cruelty and unfair actions on the hands of ICE. And we needed to stand alongside them, as have many others in our faith traditions in history. We stand along with that great cloud of witnesses.

Ms. LEE. I want to thank you for coming in today and for, of course, having the courage to stand up to the attacks against your community. This, as we can all see, was never truly about fraud. It is a part of a greater effort by Trump and Republicans to gut social services, roll back civil rights, to villainize and make others out of people who they do not want to have and enjoy the same civil liberties and rights as others in this Nation. They want to strip away and have been stripping away healthcare and education, childcare funding that millions of people rely on. This investigation and these actions have only been used to harm, not to help people. And rest assured, this will not stop in Minnesota just as it did not stop in Chicago before that or LA before that. This is a blatant attempt, blatant authoritarian grab that the Trump Administration has been persistent in. It will come to all shores if we do not all take a collective stance.

But more than that, urging my colleagues in the Republican caucus or conference to take up their job and their test as a co-equal branch of government. We do not serve as the lapdogs, as the cult followers of Donald Trump, of a President. When there are abuses or overreach, it is supposed to be us that takes a stand. And I would hope that at some point in the 119th Congress, some Republican with a gavel will do so. I thank you all for your time, and I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentlelady yields back. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Donalds from Florida.

Mr. DONALDS. Thank you, Chairman. Governor Walz, when did you first receive notice of potential fraud in Minnesota's social services programs?

Governor WALZ. Social service programs in general, we knew that there was issues with the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) program as early as 2012, and my first days in office, we started taking action.

Mr. DONALDS. But as Governor, when were you first notified?

Governor WALZ. Before I took office.

Mr. DONALDS. All right. Governor Walz, former Department of Human Services Commissioner, Tony Laurie, testified that you were aware in early 2019 of fraud in two Department of Human Services-administered programs. Is this statement accurate?

Governor WALZ. Not that I recall. I am not sure what he is speaking about.

Mr. DONALDS. You do not remember this meeting or this notification?

Governor WALZ. No, not specifically, I do not.

Mr. DONALDS. In March 2019, your Office of Legal Affairs reported \$5 to \$6 million in alleged Childcare Assistance Program fraud. In April 2019, it was also reported that the Department of Human Services lacked proper integrity controls to control fraud. Were you aware of these reports?

Governor WALZ. Not specific reports, but because of that, my office, we put forward actions to address them starting in 2019.

Mr. DONALDS. Is it correct that your Administration was aware of the Feeding Our Future fraud as early as of May 2020 based upon regular discussions about program irregularities?

Governor WALZ. I believe that is correct with the agency, the Department of Education, and then going back to USDA.

Mr. DONALDS. I am going to go back. Was your office notified of these fraud allegations?

Governor WALZ. Not me specifically, that they are handled internally in the Administration. It happens every day.

Mr. DONALDS. Who was notified, Governor Walz?

Governor WALZ. The agencies do their work, the commissioners, and then if someone in my office was notified, they let me know. As Governor, you know, I make 50 decisions a day. I said, I did this job for 12 years. I make more decisions in a day.

Mr. DONALDS. Governor Walz.

Governor WALZ. So, someone was maybe notified, but the agencies are the ones that take the action.

Mr. DONALDS. May I ask the next question? We have it under sworn testimony in the Oversight Committee that your former Chief of Staff was notified directly by these various commissioners about the fraud in Minnesota.

Governor WALZ. That could be correct.

Mr. DONALDS. So, are you saying that your Chief of Staff did not notify you?

Governor WALZ. I am saying I do not recall whether he did at that time or not, but we took action. So, I am assuming when we put our budgets together, based on that, we put a package together for that legislative session.

Mr. DONALDS. Let us talk about budgets, Governor Walz. Feeding Our Future went from \$307,000 in 2018 to \$199 million in 2021. Are you aware of this increase in budgetary costs from Feeding Our Future?

Governor WALZ. Not specifically, but I know it increased during the pandemic.

Mr. DONALDS. The Housing Stabilization Services went from \$27 million in 2021 to \$105 million in 2024. Are you aware of this increase, Governor Walz?

Governor WALZ. Not specifically, but I know it increased.

Mr. DONALDS. Autism centers went from \$24 million in 2019 to \$342 million in 2024. Are you aware of that?

Governor WALZ. Not specifically again, but yes, we know the budgets increased.

Mr. DONALDS. Integrated Community Supports went from \$4.6 million in 2021 to \$170 million in 2024. Are you aware of that?

Governor WALZ. Again, not specifically on the numbers, but it is the budget.

Mr. DONALDS. Governor Walz, you have to submit a budget to your legislature every single year like every Governor has to do. If you are not aware of these increases, what was your office doing?

Governor WALZ. Every one is balanced. My budget is about \$72 billion. It impacts 23 agencies, six million people.

Mr. DONALDS. Florida's budget is \$115 billion, sir, but what were you doing if you are seeing program increases like this amid allegations of fraud in your state?

Governor WALZ. Action was being taken on these starting back in 2019 if it was seen.

Mr. DONALDS. Can you describe the action that was taken in 2019?

Governor WALZ. Sure. In 2019, I will go to the first things that we did on childcare assistance. We lowered the standards on proof of administrative fraud disqualification. We increased the——

Mr. DONALDS. Whoa, whoa, you lowered the standards?

Governor WALZ. We lowered the standards for proof of administrative fraud. The standards where we had to prove it were so high, it was impossible to try and do it, so we lowered what it took to show that fraud was happening.

Mr. DONALDS. And what did you do with the results of lowering the standards to prove fraud? What did you do?

Governor WALZ. We put 79 people in prison and——

Mr. DONALDS. But Governor Walz——

Governor WALZ [continuing]. We continued to prosecute——

Mr. DONALDS [continuing]. The fraud continued to increase. It increased under your tenure. Do you acknowledge that?

Governor WALZ. Did the numbers increase? Yes, and I tell you, when you catch people and prosecute them, it shows up that the fraud increase. I would tell you, Congressman——

Mr. DONALDS. But if it——

Governor WALZ [continuing]. Just because you care——

Mr. DONALDS. But if it increases——

Governor WALZ [continuing]. About fraud does not mean——

Mr. DONALDS. I got 50 seconds, Governor, and I do not want to get into a fight with you, but let me move quickly to the Lieutenant Governor. Peggy Flanagan is your Lieutenant Governor. Is that correct?

Governor WALZ. That is correct.

Mr. DONALDS. Does the Lieutenant Governor go on the ticket with you, or are they elected by themselves on a ballot in the State of Minnesota?

Governor WALZ. It is on a ticket.

Mr. DONALDS. It is on a ticket. Peggy Flanagan essentially works for you.

Governor WALZ. She is a constitutional officer. She is on the ticket, but she is independent as a constitutional officer in Minnesota.

Mr. DONALDS. You could ask for her resignation at any time. Is that correct? That is typically how it works with lieutenant Governors.

Governor WALZ. Yes, but she is a constitutional officer. I do not believe that has happened in Minnesota.

Mr. DONALDS. Peggy Flanagan, there are accusations that she was intimidating whistleblowers. There was a meeting on April 12 of 2024 where she went on stage and publicly denounced whistleblowers in the State of Minnesota, calling them losers in their mother's basements. Is this the type of treatment that your Administration allows—

Governor WALZ. I am not familiar—

Mr. DONALDS [continuing]. For whistleblowers in Minnesota?

Governor WALZ. I am not familiar with that.

Mr. DONALDS. Are you aware of any intimidation of whistleblowers in the State of Minnesota?

Governor WALZ. No.

Mr. DONALDS. There are 30 whistleblowers who have given letters to this Committee on the record saying that they have witnessed, they have been subject to intimidation by your Administration because they were trying to stop the fraud in Minnesota.

Governor WALZ. I encouraged them to go to the OLA and the independent sources of Minnesota that are open to that.

Mr. DONALDS. The OLA. You are the Governor.

Governor WALZ. No, the OLA is the independent officer that—

Mr. DONALDS. But sir, you are the Governor. Why didn't you take responsibility for what is going on in your state?

Governor WALZ. We do take responsibility. I am telling you, I have no knowledge—

Mr. DONALDS. But you lost billions of dollars of American taxpayer money in the process, Governor Walz.

Governor WALZ. We prosecuted these people, Congressmen. I think Florida has fraud.

Mr. DONALDS. I would argue that the prosecutions have largely come from the Federal offices—

Governor WALZ. That is not how this works.

Mr. DONALDS [continuing]. As opposed to the state offices.

Governor WALZ. You know what we refer to—

Mr. DONALDS. What do you mean that is not how it works? That is exactly how works.

Governor WALZ. They are partners. They partner together at the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA).

Mr. DONALDS. Is the Attorney General allowed to investigate fraud and prosecute fraud in the State of Minnesota without the Department of Justice, federally? Are you allowed to do that, Attorney General Ellison?

Mr. ELLISON. Yes, and we do prosecute Medicaid fraud all the time. We have prosecuted over 300 people since I have been—

Mr. DONALDS. Apparently not enough because Minnesota is rife with it. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentlemen yields back. The Chair recognizes Ms. Randall from Washington State.

Ms. RANDALL. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Governor Walz, Attorney General Ellison, and Reverend Tollgaard, for being here to shed light on the impacts of the Trump Administration's harmful actions in Minnesota, and, frankly, to be pulled into some really ridiculous question lines.

The escalation in attacks from this Administration on social services programs in Democratically led states like Minnesota on the heels of the "Big, Ugly Law's" billions of dollars of Medicaid cuts last summer is clearly devastating our communities. Do I believe Congress has a responsibility to reduce opportunities for misuse and fraud where we have seen evidence that it exists? Sure. That is why I introduced the Federal Program Integrity and Fraud Prevention Act, a bipartisan bill that would prevent individuals who have been convicted of fraud from applying for Federal contracts. Mr. Chairman, if you are serious about addressing fraud, I would love to see this Committee hold a hearing on my bill, which was developed based on feedback from nonpartisan Inspectors General, whose entire job is overseeing the appropriate administration of government programs.

And let me remind my friends on the other side about Mississippi, a state with Republican leadership where over \$77 million in Temporary Assistance For Needy Families funds were misused. One of the perpetrators of that fraud? former NFL quarterback, Brett Favre, who received \$1.1 million from the Government for speeches he never made. Congressional Republicans' response was to invite Favre to come testify before the Ways and Means Committee about how we should strengthen oversight of Federal welfare programs because I am sure he had some good advice about that. Meanwhile, my Republican colleagues are villainizing entire minority populations because of the actions of a few. We have a word for that.

I also have a lot of Republican colleagues here who talk about being fiscally responsible and reigning in Federal spending. Again, I also believe we should be fiscally responsible, but to me, fiscally responsible governing means that we invest in transformative universal healthcare that saves us money in the long term, childcare policies that give the budget back \$7 on the dollar spent in long-term costs for the children who benefit; policies that will actually save our country money in the long run and contribute to a strong society and strong economy, not slashing social services, not defunding hospitals, not eliminating childcare programs.

Governor Walz, why do you think the Trump Administration is so obsessed with fraud in Minnesota when its own agencies have found other states with even worse problems?

Governor WALZ. Well, it is a question we are all asking, Congresswoman, and I would like to say, and thank you for this. I just want to make sure I go on record, Chairman Comer, in condemning the slurs toward my Somali community that the gentlewoman from South Carolina made. Thank you.

Look, Congresswoman, I do not know. I think it has been pretty clear the president does not like me personally. I think he continues to tell lies about our electoral system, claiming that he has won all three times when he lost all three times. I think he has people around him who were trying to find quotas around immigra-

tion, and they saw a perfect storm, if you will, that included some Somali folks. You know, if we are going to condemn folks, there are no Somali folks in the Epstein files, things like that, we know, but I do not know. It is an obsession, and I come back to it again. I think it is because we are so ideologically opposed to making children go hungry, people go unhoused. We invest in education, we invest in research, and we believe everybody has a place. And so, I think it is just personal about how we do business.

Ms. RANDALL. Thank you so much. I could not agree more. There are also reports that as many as 50 prosecutors in the U.S. Attorney's Office for Minnesota have quit in the last 12 months. They used to have 70 prosecutors. Now some reports say they have as few as 17. Many of those who left include the very same prosecutors who were prosecuting the Feeding Our Future fraudsters. How has this flight impacted your efforts to fight fraud in Minnesota?

Governor WALZ. Well, it is made it very difficult. And I think for all of my friends on the Republican side, we welcomed the Republican folks, the attorneys over at the U.S. Attorney's Office who were good at helping us as partners. We turned this over to them. They prosecuted. They put people in jail. They are not there now. There is nobody doing this. And I will remind this Committee, the U.S. attorney was in front of a Federal judge yesterday being threatened with jail because of what is going on in that office. And from my perspective, who is prosecuting trafficking, drugs, murder, and fraud?

And so, we want them. If you could do anything, Chairman, call the President and tell him to put some U.S. attorneys over there to prosecute fraud. I will sign on with you.

Ms. RANDALL. Thank you, Governor, and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. The Chair now recognizes Chairman Burchett from Tennessee.

Mr. BURCHETT. You say that with disrespect in your voice, Mr. Chairman.

Governor, you mentioned that President Trump lost all three times. I believe that is an error, and that is a conspiracy theorist. I believe you have spoken in error there, but——

Governor WALZ. No, he lost Minnesota all three times.

Mr. BURCHETT. Okay. Okay. Well, I am glad you corrected that because——

Governor WALZ. He does not agree with that, though, Chair——

Mr. BURCHETT [continuing]. We are good. We are good. Have you ever used taxpayer funds directly or indirectly to take action against individuals suspected of disclosing potential wrongdoing within a government entity?

Governor WALZ. I have not.

Mr. BURCHETT. Well, almost 30 whistleblowers accused you and your administration of retaliation. Would you say that is a conspiracy then?

Governor WALZ. I cannot speak to what they said. I can tell you it did not happen.

Mr. BURCHETT. Okay. Are you aware of reports alleging state officials have engaged in retaliation against whistleblowers?

Governor WALZ. No, I am not. Not specifically, no.

Mr. BURCHETT. You are not aware of that when 30 have come forward? Okay.

Governor WALZ. I am not. I believe these are internet.

Mr. BURCHETT. Okay.

Governor WALZ. We have options. The OLA, we have independent folks that they can come to, and I encourage them. It is against the law in Minnesota. I have executive orders—

Mr. BURCHETT. It is against the law here, but it does not stop it. What actions have you taken to protect whistleblowers in your state, sir, and has anyone faced consequences for retaliation? If so, who?

Governor WALZ. Well, in Minnesota we have a nonpartisan Office of Legislative Auditor. We have zero tolerance. The Minnesota Whistleblower Protection Act prohibits retaliation. I signed an executive order in 2025, added protections. The law expands and clarifies protections around what reports are protected and who can report issues. They are strong. When I was here, I was an advocate for the Inspectors General (IG)s, and I think that is well known in my 12 years here that we need them.

Mr. BURCHETT. Okay. Well, a whistleblower told our office that her supervisor at the Minnesota Department of Health and Human Services threatened to make her job difficult, and the supervisor that did that later received a promotion. Would that surprise you, and can you confirm if this account is accurate?

Governor WALZ. No, I cannot confirm it, and I do not make HR decisions. But I am being very clear about this, there is a zero tolerance for whistleblower retaliation in Minnesota.

Mr. BURCHETT. How can any agency combat fraud when retaliation goes unchecked?

Governor WALZ. It makes it more difficult. That is why we do not allow it.

Mr. BURCHETT. Do you think that any of the fraudsters sent stolen funds to Somali terrorist groups?

Governor WALZ. Pardon me?

Mr. BURCHETT. Do you think that any of the Somali folks that received funds sent any of the stolen funds to Somali terrorist groups?

Governor WALZ. There have been reports done and investigations done on this, and I do not believe there is any proof to support that.

Mr. BURCHETT. Okay. Mr. Attorney General, do you recall a December 2021 meeting with individuals connected to Feeding Our Future, during which you stated there will be cases that you know, “I want you to feel free to call me directly, and then I call up and like, ‘what is the problem,’ and let me tell you, just letting the inquiry from AG is sometimes enough to make people knock it off.”

Mr. ELLISON. Congressman, yes, I was at a meeting like that. Let me just say that I have reported on this numerous times. I have been in front of a Committee in the Senate. I am here today. I was in front of a state House Committee. This is a widely discussed matter, and I have been fully transparent, but let me just be clear. These people were fraudsters as everyone here agrees. They were liars. They lied to me, they lied to courts, they lied to everyone, and I would like you to know that I do meet with community meetings

all the time. I mean, it is a regular part of my job. Nothing unusual about me meeting with people. Nothing unusual about me telling people if you got a problem, you know, my office will try to help you, but these people were liars and fraudsters.

Mr. BURCHETT. Okay.

Mr. ELLISON. The main thing I would like you to know is that we are down so many Federal prosecutors that it has put our ability to hold these people accountable, definitely at a low.

Mr. BURCHETT. Yes, sir. Eight hour days do get long. In September 2022, you issued a press release titled, "For Two Years, Attorney General Ellison's Office Has Held Feeding Our Future Accountable." Does that sound familiar?

Mr. ELLISON. Thank you for the question, Congressman. Let me tell you, the Department of Education—

Mr. BURCHETT. Does it sound familiar or not, sir?

Mr. ELLISON. It certainly does, and the Department of—

Mr. BURCHETT. Okay. How much did you receive in campaign contributions from individuals charged in the Feeding Our Future case?

Mr. ELLISON. Every campaign donation I got was returned to all authorities.

Mr. BURCHETT. Okay. Everybody knows about the \$250 million in fraud for Feeding Our Future case, which was prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office in Minnesota, but there were just two other large site sponsors that you settled with instead of prosecuting them. Why did you not prosecute Partners in Quality Care or the Gar Gaar Family Services?

Mr. ELLISON. Because my office does not have jurisdiction to prosecute in those cases.

Mr. BURCHETT. Well, you allowed them to dissolve, but no one was prosecuted, and Partners in Quality Care (PIQC)—

Mr. ELLISON. They still may be, Congressman.

Mr. BURCHETT. Sir, PIQC is accused of \$300 million in fraud as significant assets, yet no charges and no attempts to recover taxpayer money. I will remind you all, \$19 billion. I was a state legislator and I can remember when our state budget was \$19 billion. This is money that has been stolen and it will not be recovered, and you all are to blame, and every dadgum one of you all ought to step down. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. Before I recognize Mr. Bell, Mr. Donalds, you have a UC?

Mr. DONALDS. Yes, I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record an op-ed from the *Minnesota Star Tribune* authored by Jim Nobles, the former Minnesota legislative auditor, dated December 29, 2025.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

The Chair recognizes Mr. Bell from St. Louis.

Mr. BELL. Thank you, Chair, Ranking Member, and our witnesses for being here today. My Republican colleagues have called this hearing today once again to divert the public's attention from the dangerous threats that they themselves have created for the American people. They have chosen to turn a blind eye to the escalating public safety crisis in Minneapolis, Minnesota, fueled by the deployment of ICE agents under the direction of President Trump.

On December 1, 2025, this Administration launched Operation Metro Surge under the false pretense of promoting public safety in Minneapolis. Since then, we have witnessed several deaths, including the brutal killings of Renee Good on January 7, 2026, and Alex Pretti only a few short weeks later on January 24. News reports state that in 2026 alone, there have already been eight additional deaths at the hands of Federal agents. We are now living in one of the deadliest periods on record with more deaths carried out by ICE agents in recent years than at any time since 2004. Under this Administration's direction, masked agents have inflicted trauma that will remain in these communities and neighborhoods. There is a lack of accountability and justice. Survivors' stories have been suppressed, false narratives have been told, and Federal officials have refused to cooperate, even going so far as to block state investigators from accessing evidence.

AG Ellison, as the chief legal officer for the State of Minnesota, what level of cooperation would you expect from the Federal Government during an investigation of this magnitude?

Mr. ELLISON. Congressman, I would expect the kind of cooperation that we are used to experiencing. I mean, in all of the time that I have even been a lawyer, which is now 36 years, state-Federal cooperation was exactly how we did business all the time. We are very proud and we love working with our FBI agents, DEA agents, ATF agents. It is a regular thing. This is what is strange and unusual.

Mr. BELL. And has the lack of cooperation and unclear communication from the Federal agencies undermine the investigations into the death of Renee Good and Alex Pretti?

Mr. ELLISON. It certainly has. We have been denied access to critical evidence in this case that we would need to evaluate this matter based on a use of force analysis.

Mr. BELL. Which is befuddling to me because as a former prosecutor, I have led serious and thorough investigations in pursuit of justice. I can say that what we have seen by DHS, DOJ, and the FBI is the complete opposite of a detailed and thorough investigation into the wrongdoing of ICE officials. And let us be clear: despite what President Trump would have the public believe, those agents remain on the streets of Minnesota. These actions are not isolated incidents. We have seen similar events taking place across the Nation in Illinois, North Carolina, California, to name a few. We have heard directly from survivors about the cruelty and mistreatment they endured by ICE agents, and we have seen the individuals appointed under President Trump to head these operations evade justice and not be held accountable for their actions.

We cannot stand by and allow this to continue. Those responsible for these actions must be held accountable and survivors and their families deserve answers and justice, which is why, Mr. Chair, I move that pursuant to Clause (ii), Subsection (k)(6) of Rule XI, the Committee shall subpoena Greg Bovino to testify before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

Chairman COMER. A motion has been made. The Committee will hold this motion in abeyance until the end of today's hearing. The Committee will now proceed with today's hearing.

Mr. BELL. I yield the remainder of my time to the Ranking Member.

Mr. GARCIA. I would like just to provide just a few of that time to the Reverend, who wanted to make some additional comments about something that was said earlier in the hearing.

Reverend TOLLGAARD. Thank you.

Mr. GARCIA. You have 30 seconds.

Reverend TOLLGAARD. Thank you. Just following up on Matthew 25. I am so proud of the countless ways that Minnesotans, Christians, and people of other faiths and moral conscience have stepped forward to show love of neighbor and to come alongside those who are suffering most in this time. There is no greater example of living out the teachings of Christ and caring for the least among us than what we have seen in Minnesota these past few months.

Mr. GARCIA. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. Before I recognize Mr. Perry, I have a unanimous consent to enter into the record an article from *Alpha News* where U.S. Attorney Rosen stated, "We have more than adequate staffing to carry out the fraud. We have been reinforced in dramatic numbers by the Department of Justice and by other departments of the Federal Government." He also said fraud investigations are increasing in pace: "Fraud prosecutions you will see are going to be dramatically increasing in pace." According to Rosen, if you are committing fraud in the State of Minnesota, it is really not a good time to be doing so. I just wanted to enter that article into the record.

Without objection, so ordered.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Perry from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Governor, good to see you again. You are an Army guy. I am an Army guy. What is, as Governor, one of your primary responsibilities is keep your citizens safe, right? I think we could probably agree on that. We might not agree on much, but we could probably agree on that, and I heard you talk earlier about working with Federal partners. There has a lot been discussed here about fraud of various kinds, but I want to talk about something that seems to me, quite honestly, a dereliction of duty or certainly a huge lapse in judgment. Now, were Governor in October 2023, right?

Governor WALZ. That is correct, Congressman.

Mr. PERRY. I just want to make sure we are on the same page here, and you signed the Minnesota Driver's Licenses for All Act. Is that correct?

Governor WALZ. That is correct.

Mr. PERRY. That is correct, right? So, now, look, I am not going to hold you to knowing every single thing in these laws. There are a lot of paragraphs and wording, and so on and so forth, but under your law that you signed, it prohibits the disclosure of information contained in the license or identification card applications for enforcing Title VIII of the United States Code. Just to make sure, are you familiar with what Title VIII deals with?

Governor WALZ. I am not specifically.

Mr. PERRY. Okay. So, it deals with immigration, nationality, and aliens. Particularly, the law that you signed eliminates the requirement for Social Security numbers or proof of lawful presence, and

furthermore, it is a violation under Section 14-4 of your code for anybody to research that. As a matter of fact, immigration status is classified as private under Section 13.18. So, literally, the Federal Government, your partner, as you said, we work with our Federal partners, cannot use that driver's license information regarding people that are here illegally. Now—

Governor WALZ. I do not understand the connection between the driver's license and the immigration piece, I guess.

Mr. PERRY. Well, let me make the connection for you. According to the Secretary of Transportation, one-third of Minnesota's non-domiciled commercial driver's licenses were issued illegally. Were issued illegally. Do you have a video ready to play for me? Can you play it now? This is what happens, Mr. Governor. This is what happens when you issue driver's licenses to people illegally.

[Video shown.]

Mr. PERRY. And crossing over there, and thank God. I do not know how much that thing weighs, 60-80,000 pounds, 60 miles an hour. You can cut the video. He was licensed in your state under a law that you signed that precludes Federal officials, your Federal partners as you call them, from determining whether they are here illegally. That guy that was driving that truck could not pass the test. He did not pass the test out on the road. There is another video—I am not going to play it—but there is another video of a guy here illegally turning a truck like that around in the middle of a highway where people lost their lives because they were decapitated when they went underneath it. That is what happened. So, my question for you is, this should be easy.

Governor WALZ. Yes.

Mr. PERRY. What are you going to do to rectify the law that you signed that allows people here illegally to get a commercial driver's license (CDL)? That tape was in Missouri, not in your state.

Governor WALZ. Okay.

Mr. PERRY. Look, if you do not want to protect the people in your state, I guess that is your business and the business of your voters, but that driver was driving in Missouri. And if he would have hit a bunch of people, quite honestly, to me, you could have been held liable.

Governor WALZ. Yes. Well, Congressman, first of all, Minnesota ranks in the top three safest states by highway data from your own departments.

Mr. PERRY. Highway data.

Governor WALZ. The data from the Department of Transportation for highway safety.

Mr. PERRY. Yes. Right.

Governor WALZ. We have the third. We want everybody on our roads to be licensed and to be insured.

Mr. PERRY. So, are you saying based on that, that you are okay with—

Governor WALZ. I am not okay with that. I am not okay with you or I speeding. I am not okay with Driving Under the Influence (DUI)s.

Mr. PERRY. But you signed this law that allows for that. You signed it, and you are going to do nothing about it?

Governor WALZ. I cannot speak specifically on the CDL. What I can tell you is legally, we believe that——

Mr. PERRY. I can. I referenced your law.

Governor WALZ. Everybody——

Mr. PERRY. It says, “House of Representatives, State of Minnesota,” and I know there are a lot of words here.

Governor WALZ. I do not know the specific case. I just know our roads are safer.

Mr. PERRY. But I referenced exactly the sections that allow for this to happen and preclude Federal enforcement regarding immigration and the illegality of people receiving CDLs under your state’s provisions.

Governor WALZ. Driver safety and immigration are two separate things. Had that been a citizen or not, it is still tragic, it is wrong, and we should not do it. What I am telling you is in Minnesota, we have the third safest roads in the country based on the things we do.

Mr. PERRY. So, you are good. So, you are good with this practice.

Governor WALZ. I am not good with that, or with people——

Mr. PERRY. Well, what are you good with, because that is what is happening under your law.

Governor WALZ. Well, I cannot speak to the specific on if it is an outlier. We give licenses to people who then eventually——

Mr. PERRY. That happened

Governor WALZ [continuing]. We give licenses to people who then eventually——

Mr. PERRY. Governor, do you know——

Governor WALZ [continuing]. Break the law after we issue them a license.

Mr. PERRY [continuing]. That happened last month. This is March. That happened a week and a half ago. Are you familiar?

Governor WALZ. Yes, that is wrong, and, look, I——

Mr. PERRY. But you are not going to do anything.

Governor WALZ. Sure, we are going to do things.

Mr. PERRY. What are you going to do?

Governor WALZ. There are traffic laws against them.

Mr. PERRY. What are we going to do?

Governor WALZ. Was this person arrested?

Mr. PERRY. I sure hope so.

Governor WALZ. That is good.

Mr. PERRY. But he was licensed in your state under your law that you signed about a year and a half ago.

Governor WALZ. Every day we give licenses and people speed, so we ticket them and try and stop that. What I am telling you is, I do not understand the connection between licensing——

Mr. PERRY. He is here illegally, he cannot read, and he got a license under your provisions——

Governor WALZ. I cannot speak to the specifics.

Mr. PERRY [continuing]. And he is driving all across the country and periling everybody else. That is the connection.

Governor WALZ. I cannot speak to that——

Mr. PERRY. Thank you. Chair, I yield.

Governor WALZ [continuing]. Because the data shows Minnesota is one of the safest driving states in the country. I do not know what to tell you.

Mr. PERRY. They are all in other states driving, apparently.

Governor WALZ. I do not know, sir.

Chairman COMER. Thank you, Mr. Perry. The Chair now recognized Mr. Min from California.

Ms. SIMON. I am first, sir.

Chairman COMER. Oh, you are next? Okay.

Ms. SIMON. Is that okay, sir?

Chairman COMER. I did not have it on the list, but.

Ms. SIMON. Oh, I showed up—

Chairman COMER. I will yield to the Ranking Member.

Mr. MIN. You can go ahead. I do not care.

Ms. SIMON. You sure? Okay.

Chairman COMER. Who is next?

Mr. MIN. You can go ahead. I will let her go next.

Ms. SIMON. I was tardy. I thank you, Mr. Min. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good afternoon and thank you, witnesses, for coming today. So, what I have heard so far is Feeding Our Future, \$250 million stolen, 50 convictions secured, the prosecution was working, then the Administration froze \$10 billion in childcare across five states. No evidence, no legal authority, no statutory process. A Federal court ruled it unlawful and unconstitutional within 48 hours. Thank you, Attorney General Ellison and Attorney General Bonta, for that work. Then the lead prosecutor resigned. His team followed. Those prosecutions are now at risk. So, the record shows they froze \$10 billion illegally, lost in court immediately, and dismantled the prosecution actually putting fraudsters in prison. Every single action made the fraud worse. This is not incompetence because incompetence is random. This was targeted, legally defective, and prosecutorially catastrophic. If this Committee was serious about fraud, the first witness should have been the HHS official who sent the letter, not the Attorney General who beat them in court.

Attorney General Ellison, what are we doing here, and I want actually to ask you, what is your office doing systemically to prosecute fraud in the state?

Mr. ELLISON. Well, thank you for the question, Congresswoman. As I said, prosecuting Medicaid fraud is very important work that we do. We do it every single day. We have secured millions of dollars for people. We have gotten millions in restitution. We have convicted people and held them accountable. We also represent state agencies and help those agencies support the work that they do. The fact of the matter is, is that, you know, this work we do to stop fraud is helping to protect public money. We are proud of it. And we also support Federal prosecutions by providing them with information that they need to prosecute fraud, which we have done and will, of course, continue to do.

Ms. SIMON. So, sir, so tell me this. How has the ability to prosecute that fraud in social services programs been affected by this Administration?

Mr. ELLISON. Well, it has been devastated by the actions of this Administration. This Administration has cut the number of pros-

ecutors, but also has redirected FBI agents to do immigration as opposed to——

Ms. SIMON. Why have they cut those prosecutors?

Mr. ELLISON. Those prosecutors, actually I said “cut,” but they actually resigned as a matter of conscience because the Administration was trying to force them to investigate the widow of Renee Good.

Ms. SIMON. Say more.

Mr. ELLISON. So, many of them said that they could not work under those circumstances because it violated their personal ethical requirements, so they quit. So, they——

Ms. SIMON. They left their jobs that they had sworn to do en masse because they were conflicted with conscience.

Mr. ELLISON. That is right, and may I add, Congresswoman, that we have had motions to dismiss for the violation of a defendant’s right to a speedy trial granted by judges in Minnesota because there are not enough Federal prosecutors. And, you know, one of those was a person who was a violent offender who was being prosecuted for a felon in possession of a firearm. Case was dismissed because there are not enough people to perform the functions of prosecuting people who commit crimes. So, this is having a devastating effect on our state, and in addition to all that, Congresswoman——

Ms. SIMON. Well, so let me get this straight. Help me understand. Fifty convictions secured. Additional prosecutions in limbo. The Administration’s prosecutors have quit because the staging of how this all works, they believe and they have said on record is immoral. Why are we here?

Mr. ELLISON. I have been wondering that, Madam.

Ms. SIMON. Because aren’t you saying that you would love for the prosecutions that are dangling in the wind, you would love for those folks to face justice?

Mr. ELLISON. Absolutely. Stealing public money is repugnant.

Ms. SIMON. So, the ask would be then to the Administration for what? With this Committee here, I think your colleague, the Governor of your great state, said you want more Federal prosecutors on this case.

Mr. ELLISON. Yes, but also, we should go back to the Hippocratic oath of do no harm. I mean, it would be good to just stop doing things that should not be done, such as demanding that prosecutors investigate Renee Good’s widow.

Ms. SIMON. Right. That is right. Well, I want to thank you all so much for coming today, and to the Reverend, I was able to come to your state briefly. And like one of my colleagues said, I did go by the site of Ms. Good’s death, and it was heartening to see the solidarity in your community. There are about 150 Christians reciting the Lord’s prayer over and over and over. You all are showing us what good really means. Thank you so much for being here today, and I will yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentlelady yields back. The Chair recognizes Mr. Crane from Arizona.

Mr. CRANE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to our guests for coming today.

I want to start with you, Attorney General Ellison. In an interview with *CNN* host, Laura Coates, she asked you about whether or not you did enough to stop the fraud. Do you remember that interview, Attorney General?

Governor WALZ. Congressman, I got to admit that I do not remember the details of that.

Mr. CRANE. Can we play the video, please, so to refresh Mr. Ellison's memory?

Chairman COMER. Are we ready? It may take us a second on that. I am sorry.

Mr. CRANE. Okay. I will just tell you what you said when she asked you if you had done enough to stop the fraud, and she mentioned the \$9 billion. You said, "Of course we have done enough. We are doing more every single day. This is a political matter. This is not a serious thing." Do you remember saying that, Attorney General Ellison?

Mr. ELLISON. I remember the conversation. What I remember was that I was lamenting the politicized nature of this very serious problem. I——

Mr. CRANE. Well, you said it is not a serious thing, so now you are saying——

Mr. ELLISON. Fraud is a serious thing.

Mr. CRANE. Okay. Well, that is not——

Mr. ELLISON. Politicizing fraud is not a serious thing.

Mr. CRANE. That is not what you said on *CNN*, Mr. Ellison. You said this is a political matter, and this is a quote, "This is not a serious thing." So, I noticed you are changing your tune now that you are before the House Oversight Committee.

Mr. ELLISON. I would have to disagree.

Mr. CRANE. Do you understand, Mr. Attorney General, why this adds gasoline to the fire when Americans are so frustrated with this government for their out-of-control spending and the amount of money they pay in taxes, and then to see \$9 billion of it, an estimate of \$9 billion, getting stolen of their taxpayer dollars and being used to fund cars and vacations and homes and even fund terrorism? Do you understand how statements like that throw gasoline on the fire, sir?

Mr. ELLISON. Congressman, I believe that you are mischaracterizing what I said. Certainly——

Mr. CRANE. No, I actually read you the quote. I am not mischaracterizing it all.

Chairman COMER. Mr. Crane, the video is ready if you still want it. It is up to you.

Mr. CRANE. Yes, let us play it, please.

[Video shown.]

Mr. CRANE. So, how are you going to sit here, Attorney General, saying I am mischaracterizing? I read word for word your quote. I then showed it to the entire dais, the entire audience here today. How are you going to sit here and say that I mischaracterized you?

Mr. ELLISON. Congressman, I believe you mischaracterized me because, clearly, what I was referring to by "not serious" is that the serious issue of fraud is being politicized and converted into a political weapon. That is not a serious matter in my view. That is something that I believe all of us should take seriously, but we are not

taking seriously enough. So, sir, I would say very clearly fraud is an odious, horrible, malignant thing, and that is why it should not be turned into a political weapon, but we should come together on a bipartisan basis to stop it.

Mr. CRANE. The reason it is becoming political, sir, is because of statements like that when confronted with the \$9 billion of fraud in your state, as the top cop in your state, that you are clearly not doing enough to address. I want to move on.

Reverend TOLLGAARD, you said in your opening statement that today's hearing is "about fraud in Minnesota, which is serving as a pretext for the terror the Federal Government has brought to the people of Minnesota. This fraud has been used as a rationale for deploying 3,000 Federal immigrant enforcement agents into our state." Did you say that, Reverend?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. Yes.

Mr. CRANE. This is absolutely false. These Federal agents were actually brought in to the State of Minnesota for a very specific operation to remove illegal alien criminals. It was not because of the fraud. That is being handled under a completely different agency, and ICE, and everything else. That is the U.S. District Attorney, okay? Did you know that?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. The Administration has linked all of these things together.

Mr. CRANE. Well, they have linked the fact that you guys supported an open border that let in \$15 to \$20 million. And some of the fallout from that is fraud, like the \$9 billion we are talking about today. Some of it are the rapists, the gangsters, you know, the people that are committing fraud. They are burglarizing people. They are carjacking people. It is all kind of linked together. It is also linked to the SAVE Act, which many of you guys and my Democrat colleagues do not want to vote for, even though 83 percent of Americans support it. It is all linked together, but that is not what this operation was about. So, you are bearing false witness in this hearing today because that is not what that operation was about at all.

Reverend TOLLGAARD. What I am here to talk about is the suffering of Minnesotans at the hands of Federal agents, including children and their parents, and the great devastation and harm that it has caused across our state and across our wonderful communities.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Mr. Chair, he is over his time.

Mr. CRANE. Have you spoken out about Laken Riley or any of the American victims that have been raped, murdered, or killed by these illegal aliens, Reverend? I did not think so. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. Now, the Chair recognizes Mr. Min from California.

Mr. MIN. Thank you, Mr. Chair, for convening in this hearing. Let us start at the outset by just stating the obvious: waste, fraud, and abuse are horrible. They are stealing from taxpayers. They are taking money and food out of the mouths of hungry kids. I have spent my career fighting against fraud. I started my career at the SEC, prosecuting corporate fraud, continued on as a law professor, teaching the next generation. And as someone on the Oversight Committee, this is a very, very important issue to me. Again, every

dollar that is stolen from these programs is a dollar that is not just taken from us hardworking taxpayers, it is something that is meant for a better use.

And so, I appreciate the gist of this hearing, but as I have pointed out in prior hearings on allegations of fraud in Minnesota, the singular and exclusive focus on the Somalian community in Minnesota seems very partisan and wrong because we know there is massive fraud across this country, particularly in southern states, including states like Florida and Mississippi. Mississippi is still at trial right now over \$77 million in welfare fraud. Federal prosecutors have recently arrested a Russian national accused of submitting billions of dollars in fraudulent schemes in Texas and Florida. And of course, Oklahoma and Alabama consistently rank as the highest states when it comes to SNAP fraud, and yet we have only focused on Minnesota. Why?

As a freshman Member, I have been here 14 months, but I have learned that the House Republicans are all single-issue voters with just a handful of exceptions, and that single issue, the only thing that you all care about is whether you are on Team Trump or not. And so, when Donald Trump goes after Minnesota and falsely claims that he won the election there three times and that it was rigged against him, I pay close attention. When he says that he would no longer admit Somalians to this country because they contribute “nothing to this country,” I listen. That is a wildly racist statement, but it is going to reflect what Republicans are going to do, and that is why we are holding this hearing.

I care about welfare fraud, and I care about the scumbags who rip off taxpayer money, but if this was about welfare fraud, we would be also hauling in people like Mississippi Governor Tate Reeves and former NFL quarterback, Brett Favre, who clearly knew about his scheme to send money to build a volleyball facility at the college where his daughter was playing at, receive funds for \$600,000 or more for work that he never did from the government, again, taking money from the mouths of children that are hungry.

No, this hearing is not about welfare fraud. It is about placating Donald Trump. This Committee is holding this hearing for the same reasons that it is ignoring the massive corruption we know that Donald Trump is engaged in with his family, soliciting bribes from foreign governments and private companies in exchange for regulatory favor; for the same reason that Republicans are protecting pedophiles right now and that the DOJ is right now actively deleting Epstein files while we are at war with Iran. It is why they ignore their oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. It is why we are holding hearings on this rather than on ICE abuses or the fact that Donald Trump just took us into war without even consulting with Congress, let alone getting our authorization for military use or force or actual declaration of war, in direct contravention of the Constitution of the United States.

But for those of us who care about taxpayer dollars, let us focus on that. This is horrible, but of course we have seen, instead, a different type of abuse of our taxpayer dollars. They have taken our taxpayer dollars and used them to fund abuses against our American people, as a number of our witnesses have aptly described.

And I want to just point out that until the murder of Alex Pretti, not a single DHS or ICE agent accused of wrongdoing, witnessed or videotaped assaulting Americans, was suspended, faced any disciplinary action. That does not happen with police. When my local law enforcement are accused of misconduct, certainly if they are videotaped shooting someone, they are subject to investigation. Maybe they are justified or not, but they are suspended, removed from duty, investigated. None of that has happened until the murder of Alex Pretti and the outrage around that.

Now, Governor Walz, I want to just briefly ask you, what is the economic impact that deployment of ICE in Minnesota's had over the past few months?

Governor WALZ. Well, thank you, Congressman. I thank you for your characterization. I associate myself with you on fraud is horrific. It is corrosive. It hurts those people that are there, and taxpayers should demand accountability, and I think that is what we are trying to take. The issue again?

Mr. MIN. What is the economic impact? I know businesses have—

Governor WALZ. Well, for us we just had our economic numbers, and I would tell people that we have to balance the budget every year. Minnesota, we are AAA bond rated. That shows up good. It does not account for what happened over the last three months, and by estimates, the city of Minneapolis estimates they lost \$200 million alone, and I remind people, you saw pictures of Minneapolis. This happened across the state. Near my hometown of Mankato, Minnesota and St. Peter, we saw a woman that was pulled over at gunpoint, a citizen. The chilling effect it had: businesses going under, especially immigrant-owned businesses, people who are here legally.

Mr. MIN. Yes.

Governor WALZ. Citizens, starting businesses, were shut down.

Mr. MIN. I am just going to reclaim my time to make one final point here. I was at Minneapolis, had the chance to meet with you and others. I also met with a number of local police chiefs, and one of the things they told me, first, this is not the first time ICE has operated in Minnesota, but in the past, what is different about this time is that they did not coordinate. They did not tell anyone.

Governor WALZ. That is true.

Mr. MIN. And that resulted in a lot of 9-1-1 calls because when you see mass men jumping out of vans, pulling people out, assaulting them, punching them in the head, as happens all the time with ICE agents—and by the way, that is not a matter of training, it is a matter of picking people who are predisposed to violence—that costs our local police quite a lot of money. It is one of the reasons I am going to be introducing the RECOUP Act so that local jurisdictions are repaid for the funds that they expend due to ICE misconduct. With that, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. Before I recognize Ms. Boebert, Mr. Gill, I understand you have a UC?

Mr. GILL. Yep. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record a letter from the America First Policy Institute, dated March 3, 2026, which details widespread and rampant fraud in Minnesota.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

The Chair now recognizes Ms. Boebert from Colorado.

Ms. BOEBERT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to summarize some of the things that have already been said here today rather than ask these questions directly.

The Federal prosecutors that we have, have now charged nearly 100 individuals across multiple Minnesota fraud schemes, including Feeding Our Future and, related, Medicaid, daycare, and autism programs, with 85 of those charged being of Somali descent. Governor Walz, your Administration's Department of Education and Department of Human Services failed to act on multiple early fraud warnings about Feeding Our Future, allowing the theft of at least \$250 million in Federal child nutrition funds that were supposed to feed hungry kids during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Governor Walz, I would like to turn to the demographics and policy choices that enabled this. Since you took office, the Somali population in Minnesota has grown substantially. Recently, *Fox9* reported—the reporting puts the total over 107,000. Did your Administration's soft-on-immigration policies, including expanded refugee programs and temporary protected status, contribute to that rapid growth?

Governor WALZ. I could not speak to why people moved to Minnesota, other than it is a great place to live.

Ms. BOEBERT. It could be a sanctuary policy and refugee programs and temporary protected statuses. According to the Center for Immigration Studies' analysis of census data, 81 percent of Minnesota households headed by Somali immigrants receive one or more forms of public assistance compared to just 21 percent of native-born Minnesotan households. Why is that disparity so extreme under your watch, sir?

Governor WALZ. I cannot speak specifically, Congresswomen, but I would anticipate that new-generation immigrants, whether they be Norwegian or whether they be Hmong or whether they be Somali, probably on the front end as they are establishing home ownership, education.

Ms. BOEBERT. I think we should be bringing folks to our country that are going to contribute and not just siphon off of the tax dollars of Americans.

Governor WALZ. They are contributing.

Ms. BOEBERT. Governor Walz, yes or no, would stricter vetting of immigrants and refugees have prevented many of these fraudsters from entering our country in the first place?

Governor WALZ. I would not have any way to know that.

Ms. BOEBERT. Do you agree with stricter vetting processes for those who are coming to our country?

Governor WALZ. I do not care where you are coming from. If you commit fraud, you are going to jail in Minnesota. That is what I care about, and that is what I am here for.

Ms. BOEBERT. Yes or no, should Somali immigrants or any other immigrants who defraud American taxpayers and steal funds intended for hungry children be deported immediately?

Governor WALZ. That is a decision for the Federal Government. You are responsible for immigration.

Ms. BOEBERT. Governor Walz, do you know who Victoria Eileen Harwell is?

Governor WALZ. I do not believe I do.

Ms. BOEBERT. What about America Mafalda Thayer, or Thayer?

Governor WALZ. I do not believe I do.

Ms. BOEBERT. These are Minnesota women who were brutally killed by illegal aliens in your state. You do not know who they are, so I would also assume that you did not attend their vigils or speak out to their families when they were brutally killed by illegal aliens in your state?

Governor WALZ. I am not familiar with both of these, no, Congresswomen.

Ms. BOEBERT. No. Just the hard-hitting *CNN* ones. Yes or no, would you support ending Minnesota's sanctuary policies to stop these fraudsters and murderers from using your state as a safe haven?

Governor WALZ. Well, as I said on June 12, we do not have sanctuary policies, and Tom Homan reiterated that here in the past few weeks that we do not either, and that we are cooperating——

Ms. BOEBERT. Will you direct——

Governor WALZ [continuing]. As required.

Ms. BOEBERT. Thank you, Governor. Will you direct local law enforcement to fully cooperate with ICE and Federal agents and follow Federal immigration laws that are currently on the books?

Governor WALZ. They do. If they want to do more, they can, but we have a floor that they have to, and that has been proven time and time again in Minnesota over this. That is why they are leaving because we had cooperated.

Ms. BOEBERT. Okay. Final question for you, Governor. There are multiple documented reports of Somali immigrants entering sham marriages, including siblings and close family members, solely for immigration purposes. Are you aware of these reports, and what, if anything, has your Administration done to stop this kind of immigration fraud happening in your state?

Governor WALZ. States are not responsible for immigration screening, and I am not familiar with what you are referencing.

Ms. BOEBERT. You are responsible for any vetting whatsoever?

Governor WALZ. Federal Government.

Ms. BOEBERT. Okay. Well, this is happening under your watch, and there is immigration fraud, so we will do everything that we can, and hopefully, you allow your local law enforcement officers to coordinate with Federal agents when we are going after these immigration fraudsters. Thank you, Governor.

Governor WALZ. As we do.

Chairman COMER. Thank you, Madam. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Walkinshaw from Virginia.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Governor, would you agree that fraud is not a victimless crime?

Governor WALZ. I would agree with that. It is not a victimless crime.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Thank you, and it is my understanding that in Minnesota, you as Governor, you do not have the unilateral power to pardon those convicted of state crimes, but you and Mr.

Ellison, and I think one other person sit on a panel that can issue pardons. Is that correct?

Governor WALZ. Yes, with the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Thank you. In your time on that panel, can you recall ever pardoning an individual convicted of fraud?

Governor WALZ. I cannot recall. I cannot state either way.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Okay. Mr. Ellison, any recollection of that?

Mr. ELLISON. It is possible. I do not recall it, though.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Okay. I am not sure if it is true in Minnesota, but at the Federal level, if a convicted fraudster is pardoned, that pardon can wipe out their obligation to pay restitution to the victims.

[Photo]

Are any of our witnesses familiar with this individual? I know you are far away. His name is Jason Galanis. Sound familiar?

Governor WALZ. I am not, Congressman.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Jason Galanis, according to the Federal judge who sentenced him to 15 years in prison, is a serial fraudster and a conman who defrauded a pension fund in a Native-American tribe of \$80 million. I will put it in simpler terms: he stole money from retirees. Do any of our witnesses know what Federal prison Mr. Galanis is being held in?

Governor WALZ. I do not, Congressman.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. He is not, because President Trump, our fraudster in chief, the namesake of the fraudulent Trump University, the fraudulent Trump Foundation, the fraudulent Trump Organization, pardoned him and relieved him of the requirement to pay restitution to his victims. A Member of this Committee, Mr. Jordan, recommended to President Trump that he be pardoned.

[Photo]

Any of our witnesses familiar with this individual? His name is Jeremy Hutchinson.

Governor WALZ. I am not, Congressman.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Mr. Hutchinson is a former Arkansas State Senator, Republican, convicted of a multimillion-dollar public corruption scheme: embezzlement, bribes, illegal campaign contributions, conspiracy to commit bribery—Mr. Homan might know something about that—for passing legislation that benefited an orthodontist who was paying him off. President Trump's Department of Justice in his first term prosecuted him. A judge sentenced him to eight years in prison and ordered him to pay \$355,000 in restitution to his victims. Any of our witnesses know where Mr. Hutchinson is serving that sentence today?

Mr. ELLISON. I have a guess.

Governor WALZ. I have a guess, too.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. He is not serving a sentence because President Trump pardoned him, relieving him of his restitution obligation: a corrupt politician, prosecuted by Trump's Justice Department in the first term, pardoned by Trump in this term. Trump has pardoned fraudster after fraudster, denying victims—we talked about victims—taxpayers, senior citizens, children, the restitution they deserve, \$1.3 billion. That is the total that Trump's pardon fraudsters have been relieved of paying their victims. The Chair-

man called this hearing because he is concerned about fraud, about accountability. I share those concerns, but where is the hearing on the \$1.3 billion Trump has relieved his pardon fraudsters from paying their victims? Do those victims get a voice in this Congress? There is a lot of outrage today, raised voices on both sides. Will we raise our voices on behalf of those who have been victimized by President Trump's pardon fraudsters?

Governor Walz, what signal would it send if you and Attorney General Ellison and the judge who sit on this panel were to pardon some of the fraudsters who have committed this fraud in Minnesota? What signal would that send? What impact could that have?

Governor WALZ. Congressman, I believe it would send a signal that we do not take it seriously because you have to put these people in jail, and they have to serve their lengthy sentences, and they have to do restitution.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. And just hypothetically here, if you were to pardon one of those individuals, how would you explain it to the victims of that fraud—the taxpayers across the country, those individuals who did not get access to the social services they need because the money was stolen. How would you explain it to them?

Governor WALZ. I do not believe I could.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. I do not think you could either.

Mr. ELLISON. May I share, Congressman—

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Please.

Mr. ELLISON [continuing]. That, generally, when people get any kind of a part in Minnesota, they have done all their sentence, and Governor Walz is very careful to say have you paid every penny you owe people. So, that is kind of how we do pardons in Minnesota.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Well, these folks have not paid their pennies, \$1.3 billion worth of pennies.

Chairman COMER. Would the gentleman yield a question?

Mr. WALKINSHAW. My time has expired, Mr. Chairman, so it is your time.

Chairman COMER. I will give you more time if you want.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Sure.

Chairman COMER. I mean, you mentioned Jason Galanis, and that piqued my interest, and I am sure it did Mr. Biggs' as well, and you are correct. He did defraud an Indian or a Native-American pension fund. Do you know who his partner was?

Mr. WALKINSHAW. I know all the background of it. The point is he stole money from people.

Chairman COMER. All right. Would you state who his partner was? It was Hunter Biden, and Jason Galanis served in prison for how long, Mr. Biggs?

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Two years.

Mr. BIGGS. No, that is incorrect. That is false.

Chairman COMER. No, he served in prison years.

Mr. BIGGS. Many years.

Chairman COMER. And they were equal partners, and Galanis blew the whistle during our Biden investigation, and he was raped. He was raped in prison right after that, so I mean.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Will the victims of his fraud get their money back? Why did President Trump——

Chairman COMER. Well, I do not know. Maybe ask Hunter Biden. You all defended——

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Ask President Trump.

Chairman COMER. But you were not here. You were not here.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Ask President Trump.

Chairman COMER. In your defense, you were not here during Biden presidency.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Ask President Trump to get the victims their money back.

Chairman COMER. You have been here about three months, but you know more than anybody about everything, so the Chairman——

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. So, the Chair recognizes Mr. Biggs from Arizona.

Mr. BIGGS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I am glad you brought it up because of the ten partners in that fraud that you mentioned, nine of them went to prison. Do you know who the one partner was that did not go? Your buddy, Hunter Biden.

That is right. Hunter Biden did not go, and by the way, you must not have been here. I do not think you were here when I introduced all these documents earlier, before I had to leave to go to Judiciary, talking about, of the 1,500 criminals pardoned by Joe Biden in one week, two dozen of them were fraudsters that had hundreds of millions of dollars of restitution forgiven by Joe Biden.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BIGGS. No, I am going to go now to Mr. Ellison.

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BIGGS. No. No, I have had enough of you. Let us talk to Mr. Ellison. Mr. Ellison, isn't it true that when you were a Member of Congress, you sponsored the Money Remittances Improvement Act of 2014? It was H.R. 4386. Do you remember that?

Mr. ELLISON. Congressman, I think that it is accurate.

Mr. BIGGS. Yes. I mean, I get you. We all introduced lots of bills, but that bill's purpose was to give more authority to states to investigate remittance payments. Do you remember that?

Mr. ELLISON. Congressman, I believe that the purpose of that bill was to facilitate financial transactions for Minnesotans who needed them.

Mr. BIGGS. Well, in reality, you shifted remittance payment investigations to the states, and that was supported by the Somali American Remittances Association. You may not remember that, but that was.

Mr. ELLISON. Congressman, could you remind me, did that bill ever pass?

Mr. BIGGS. H.R. 4386. So, it was supported by Somali American Resistance Association, and it was so important to you that you said, "This is a great day for diaspora communities around the country, including the Somali and Hmong communities." And that is something you said, and we know that the Somali population in Minnesota supported that bill. That bill was passed, I believe, in 2014. Minnesota started identifying large numbers of remittances

payments going overseas. And isn't it true that within four years of the bill passing, more than \$100 million had been flown out of the Minneapolis Airport by Somalians? Do you know that?

Mr. ELLISON. I do not have the information on that, sir.

Mr. BIGGS. And over the last two years, the TSA has identified over \$700 million being flown out and linked to Somali travel. Are you familiar with that?

Mr. ELLISON. No, sir, I do not have the data on that.

Mr. BIGGS. Under your tenure as the AG, the amount of remittance payments going to Somalia, which, by the way, some estimates as high as 40 percent of all Somalia's GDP comes from those remittance payments, and roughly the same number, 40 percent of families in Somalia receive some economic benefit directly from remittance payments. So, moving from that, do you know Salim Said?

Mr. ELLISON. That name is not familiar to me, sir.

Mr. BIGGS. Ikran Mohamud?

Mr. ELLISON. No.

Mr. BIGGS. Abshir Omar?

Mr. ELLISON. No.

Mr. BIGGS. Okay. So, in 2021, you met with a group of Somali's business people. Those three people were there. Safari Restaurant, Partners In Quality Care, also known as Parties in Nutrition, some of their named partners, and Feeding Our Future representatives, including Abshir Omar, who said they were having difficulties because they were being investigated and that conduct is very racist, xenophobic, and Islamophobic. Do you remember that meeting?

Mr. ELLISON. Yes, I do, and I will tell you that these are people who were fraudsters. They lied to me, they lied to the judge—

Mr. BIGGS. Yep.

Mr. ELLISON [continuing]. They lied to state agencies, and that is why we contributed to them being convicted.

Mr. BIGGS. Well, let us go on from that because you may not remember some of the things you said to them specifically, and maybe we should play this video. Do we have the video queued up? If we have the video queued up, that is fine. Let us do it.

[Video shown.]

Mr. BIGGS. Because what you thought was terrible there was that these people were being investigated for fraud—

Mr. ELLISON. That—

Mr. BIGGS [continuing]. And you later took \$10,000 in campaign donations from these same individuals. Do you remember that?

Mr. ELLISON. I would disagree with that characterization entirely, sir.

Mr. BIGGS. I am sure you would—

Mr. ELLISON. No, what I was—

Mr. BIGGS [continuing]. Because it is surely uncomfortable for you, but you took \$10,000 from those same people—

Mr. ELLISON. No, that—

Mr. BIGGS [continuing]. That were ostensibly supposed to be investigated, yes.

Mr. ELLISON. No, that is actually inaccurate, sir.

Mr. BIGGS. No, it is not inaccurate.

Mr. ELLISON. It is. First of all—

Mr. BIGGS. You are entitled to say it is inaccurate, but the facts are the facts, and my time has expired, Mr. Chairman, but I do have some UC requests.

Chairman COMER. Go ahead.

Mr. BIGGS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. "Minnesota AG, Who Took \$10,000 From Convicted Scammers, Dismisses Fraud Scandal as Political Theater."

Chairman COMER. Without objection.

Mr. BIGGS. "Amy Bach Alleges Governor Tim Walz, Attorney General Keith Ellison, Knew of Minnesota Fraud."

Chairman COMER. Without objection.

Mr. BIGGS. "Walz and Omar Using ICE Operations to Distract From Fraud Scandal."

Chairman COMER. Without objection.

Mr. BIGGS. "Tim Walz Accused Of Stonewalling Key Probe as Somali Fraud Sweeps His State."

Chairman COMER. Without objection.

Mr. BIGGS. "Conservatives Blast Dems, Walz for Likening ICE Agents to Nazi Police Force."

Chairman COMER. Without objection.

Mr. BIGGS. "Tim Walz Urges Minnesotans to Resist Federal Occupation."

Chairman COMER. Without objection.

Mr. BIGGS. "Tim Walz Was a COVID-19 Tyrant."

Chairman COMER. Without objection.

Mr. BIGGS. "Anti-ICE Agitators Set Up Blockade on Minneapolis Street to Check Drivers' License Plates."

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. BIGGS. "Minnesota Attorney General's Legal Opinion Could Threaten Some County Agreements With ICE."

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. BIGGS. "ICE Restricted From Minneapolis-Owned Parking Areas Under Mayor Frey Orders;" "Minnesota Mom Jailed Over COVID Accuses Walz of Tyranny;" "Minnesota Grandma Jailed for Defying Walz COVID Lockdown Order Warns 'You Do Not Want Tyranny at This Level,'" and "Mother Ponders." And that is all.

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

The Chair now recognizes Ms. Pressley from Massachusetts.

Ms. PRESSLEY. I have been in Congress now for almost eight years, and one of the most meaningful moments that I experienced here was in the Committee on Oversight and Reform [sic] under the great chairman, Elijah Cummings. It was the first hearing to take place, that I introduced in the House of Representatives, on the epidemic that is childhood trauma. Though I represent the Massachusetts 7th, one throughline has remained true in my travels and conversations, from Massachusetts to Minnesota, to Illinois to Texas, and it is the devastating impacts of Trump's terror campaign on our Nation's children. This Administration's policies, including, but certainly not limited to, Operation Metro Surge, in my opinion, I would characterize as child abuse, child neglect, and inflicting childhood trauma. We are experiencing in real time the compounded adultifying of our children where, increasingly so, a childhood is a privilege instead of a right.

I am reminded of a conversation I had recently at the airport where a dad approached me to talk about his 6-year-old son who returned home from school, pleading and begging for his parents to give safe haven to his classmate, his best friend, for fear that if they did not do that, that he would be deported. No child should have those concerns or carry that heavy burden, but this is the reality for our Nation's children under Donald Trump's America. Frederick Douglass said it is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men. We are certainly not building strong children.

In my district, the Massachusetts 7th, Alaina was only two weeks old when her father was wrongfully taken by ICE, a trauma that she will carry for the rest of her life. Again, so far, I am speaking about the pleas of a 6-year-old, and policy, rather, the family separation of a 2-week old. In Minnesota, Liam Ramos was only at the age of five years old, was detained by ICE and sent to Texas, and he will carry that trauma for the rest of his life. There are the children that are directly impacted, then there is that secondary trauma for those who have borne witness. While in Minnesota, I met with parents who have had to establish parental patrols armed with whistles and orange vests and their cameras to try to keep their children safe. Green Street Elementary, it was just across the street from one of the murders that occurred in broad daylight under Operation Metro Surge.

Around the country, the children of Renee Good, Keith Porter, Geraldo Campos, and dozens of other children whose parents were killed by ICE agents will carry that trauma the rest of their lives, trauma in their bodies, their classrooms, their sleep. It shows up in the ways they cling to their parents at school drop-off and the silence of a child who used to speak freely, in nightmares that no child should be visited by.

Governor Walz, as a former educator and coach, you worked closely with young people experiencing traumatic events. What effect does this have on them, their classmates, and community, and you heard from mental health professionals or pediatric providers about how this is showing up in your state?

Governor WALZ. No. Well, thank you for the question, Congresswoman. First of all, I would say when I talk about Minnesota being one of the best states, if we are not first, it is usually because Massachusetts is, and I note that it is true because you care about this. And you mentioned it correctly, this is generational trauma that has been inflicted, whether it is learning loss that has happened or the trauma we have seen amongst our children.

I say that as an educator, as Governor, of the deep concern, but as a parent of seeing this, what has happened to our children. We know that mental health issues will start to show up. We know that we will see educational loss, and those have generational impacts on our economy and everything else. But I will note your colleague mentioned me being a tyrant during COVID. We had some of the lowest deaths due to COVID. Tyrant looks like children being drug from their parents, old people being drug out of their house without warrants, two dead on the streets. And your point, the world saw a piece of it on TV. I can tell you, none of us are going to be the same, Congresswoman. We are going to deal with

this, and we are going to put money into social service programs to address it while we tighten up fraud protections because the idea is, is you have all these generous programs. Yes, and our people are healthier. Our people are more educated. Our economy is stronger. So, thank you.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you. I asked unanimous consent to enter into the record a February 2026 article from *Heckinger Report* titled, "Parental Stress, Raids, and Isolation"——

Chairman COMER. Without——

Ms. PRESSLEY [continuing]. "How Immigration Enforcement Traumatizes Even the Youngest Children."

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Ms. PRESSLEY. You know, as I close, I have always taken issue with the myth that children are resilient. It is something that people say because I guess it brings them comfort, the false notion that if you hurt kids, they will automatically heal. It allows policy-makers to inflict harm and then to look away.

But children are not collateral for reckless and godless policies, and they should not be ignored. Rather, we should center children to understand the impacts of all these policies, and Governor Walz, with these remaining seconds——

Chairman COMER. I am sorry, ma'am. Your time has expired.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Okay. Well, I yield.

Chairman COMER. All right. Thank you. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Sessions from Texas.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. To my two former colleagues, I would welcome you back, and I know that this is something that is not as easily done, and I recognize that. I want to thank our Methodist preacher for being here.

I want to put in some context what you have heard today, and that is, probably to both of you, not a lot has changed up here. We are still trying to play the gotcha game. People are trying to do their job. That is what we are trying to do here. We come back and talk about children, yet we forget that President Biden, President Obama had tens of thousands, 800,000 children, that were lost by them that President Trump is still trying to find. We talk about not trusting ICE, which is a Federal component, and yet the Boston bombers caused chaos. I cannot imagine why we would not want to form up a relationship instead of saying ICE is no good, we do not want you. It is the Federal component.

So, with all that said, in fairness to each of you, you have heard what we have said today, so I would ask you, Governor, and then I will say it right up front. I was kind of hoping that you might show up, or both of you might show up, because the Methodist preacher is here and say we did not do everything right. We think there were a lot of things done wrong. We think we want to learn. We come and ask that you understand that this is something that happened in our midst.

My Methodist preacher—I am a global Methodist—my Methodist preacher meets with me pretty often and makes sure that he knows and I know, I look for balance, I look for fairness, I look for objectivity, and I know you have not been placed in a very good position now, but I got 3 minutes left. Governor, what did we do

wrong here? How do you want to set that record straight because, otherwise, it is going to be a he said/he said against you guys.

Governor WALZ. Yes.

Mr. SESSIONS. And I want you to tell me, where did we get it wrong on this side?

Governor WALZ. Well, Congressman, I appreciate that, and I do say—

Mr. SESSIONS. And you and I are friends.

Governor WALZ. We are, and I have said it publicly before. We disagreed on some issues, but we had a lot of conversations on the Floor. Look, I think I agree with you. As Governor, I have taken accountability for this. I am not going to run again. I need to spend the time fixing this. This does undermine trusting government. Do I wish there were things that could have happened earlier? Yes, but in this job, wish did not do it. I am looking into where I see it. I can tell you this, Congressman, that the safeguards we are putting in place are going to make a difference. I think other states can use them.

I think one of the things is, I asked, in the helping in the partnership piece of this, understanding that this happens in all states. I am certainly not proud this happened. I certainly understand it happened on my watch. Whether it predated me or not, I am here. I think some of the things is there are some legal changes we need around Medicaid eligibility issues that you are talking about that actually might get at this. Because I would hope, Congressman, you and I agree, these programs are valuable and they need to go to the people who need them, and we need to stop the fraud that is in there, and I am trying to explain to you what we did from the beginning. These people continue to be a moving target, and they are very sophisticated.

Mr. SESSIONS. Is there still a problem?

Governor WALZ. Is there still fraud happening?

Mr. SESSIONS. Is there still a problem, and we will say in Minnesota. I know we are not going to—

Governor WALZ. I think there is more work to be done, yes, I will tell you that.

Mr. SESSIONS. Okay.

Governor WALZ. And we are working on it. I have a package that I introduced last week. One of the things that I think is going to be helpful, and I know you are working on it up here, is the ability to use AI. It is the pre-screening. What you do not want to hear from us is, and I do not want to hear, that we are arresting people after they did it. We need to stop it before it happened.

Mr. SESSIONS. I agree with some of that.

Governor WALZ. We are moving upstream.

Mr. SESSIONS. We do need to arrest them, however.

Governor WALZ. We do, we do, but if we are just continuously chasing our tails, it is like I said, if you arrest one part—

Mr. SESSIONS. Well, I would like to keep working with you because we have got to stop this, and so if you could—

Governor WALZ. I would welcome that.

Mr. SESSIONS. If you would you put together a list that we can send to other Governors and say, here is what we did.

Governor WALZ. That is fantastic.

Mr. SESSIONS. General?

Mr. ELLISON. Congressman Sessions, let me just say thank you for your question. I absolutely think there is more that all of us can do to protect the public dollar and get the money where it was intended to go. There are all kind of ways to make sure that—

Mr. SESSIONS. Yes, but we are talking about the lessons learned.

Mr. ELLISON. Right.

Mr. SESSIONS. Are you going to show up today, as the Governor did, and say we made a mistake, I owe an apology to people, we believe that what you have tried to do today to defend? I am not trying to put you in a corner, General. I am trying to get you—

Mr. ELLISON. I am going to answer.

Mr. SESSIONS [continuing]. Because we are sitting here trying to get to where we are going to go.

Mr. ELLISON. I can assure you, Congressman, that I am here to work to improve this system, and there are improvements that can be made, and your offer to work on a bipartisan basis to solve this fraud crisis, I am all in. And if we can get out of fixing the blame and get to fixing the problem, that would be an enormous thing for me, and I thank you for asking.

Mr. SESSIONS. Well, it is my hope that you will know that being here today, we are doing our job, other people are doing their job, but we have got to get to where we can then say, and here is the problem and we will take—so, the Governor did—I accept responsibility and let us get on to fixing this because tomorrow is a new day. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the time.

Chairman COMER. Yes, sir.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield back my time.

Chairman COMER. Thank you. The Chair recognizes my friend, Ms. Talib.

Ms. TLAIB. He says that, but then he cuts me off. Thank you all for coming here. I think it is really important, and, you know, Reverend, I can tell that you care deeply about your community, and it takes courage to come before this Committee, especially when you hear so much, to me, just misinformation also embedded in racist tropes about your community. And so, I wanted to ask you, you know, I think a lot of Americans, we think about what compelled you to speak out and join hundreds of other faith leaders at the St. Paul Airport to protest against the violent ICE occupation of your community?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. Thank you for the question. Yes, I am here just as I was that day at the airport because I am representative of so many Minnesotans who are actively engaged in the work of neighboring. And I am also here, as I was that day, because there are so many Minnesotans for whom it is not safe to speak out today.

Ms. TLAIB. And I will tell you, you know, we are learning a lot. I think the whole country is learning a lot from all of you and your neighboring, and showing love and showing up for your community. And I know it took a lot of courage for even some of the elected officials to stand up and say, you know, not on our watch. You know, we talk about the fearlessness that is needed sometimes to fight for our rights, and some people will continue to gaslight folks and call us domestic terrorists to surveil us more, to try to bully

us and intimidate us to silence. And I just want the Minnesota people to know, I know my district sees you all and we say continue it. You are freeing all of us when you continue to speak up, and you are protecting all of us as well.

In response to, of course, the powerful local resistance, you know, one of the things they keep saying is it is ended, it is done. You heard my colleague from Boston, Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley, talk about trauma. It is not done. There needs to be a lot of healing, and I do not think they want to fund that or support that, but I am asking just as myself and many of us in my district are wondering, is it truthful? Are they done?

Reverend TOLLGAARD. Unfortunately, it is not over. As we heard, there are still 650 ICE agents in Minnesota. That means there is still fear and trauma for our children and for our immigrant and refugee neighbors. And as Ms. Pressley named, the trauma will go on, and we have much work to do in healing and caring for, especially those who have been most victimized in this.

Ms. TLAIB. So, I want to talk about intention. What is the intent of this hearing? What is the intent of all of it? I think intention is important because, you know, for the Chairman, if I can submit for the record article titled, "Fraud Focus: Why is Trump Granting Clemency to Convicted Fraudsters?"

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Ms. TLAIB. Because I see this, and even though you are here, you have nothing to hide, these folks are not here. I do not get to question them. I do not get to say to the guy that committed \$200 million Medicare fraud who just got pardoned by Trump. I do not get to ask Jared Kushner, you know, why does your dad go from, literally, in France, the title of the article is, "Prison to Paris." Literally, from committing fraud, he pardons his son-in-law's father, and now he is an ambassador. You see all that happening, it is like, well, what is the intention here? They are creating a world's largest paramilitary under the direct control of the President, who has made it clear that he intends to crush dissent, to crush dissent, target entire cities, and rig elections. He literally is telling us he is going to send ICE agents out on Election Day to intimidate and target our community. He is not lying, he is going to do it, and I think we need to be very, very much prepared.

At the same time, intention. Governor, seeing him and this Administration funding freeze and blaming all of these people. Like, I hope people do not blame my community for everything Trump's doing. Do you know what I mean? Like, I mean, can you imagine right now the impact of this happening? I mean, what impact is it going to really have right now? I mean, you are talking about, today, this is cutoff, and he is refusing to let go of the money that, again, Minnesota actually is supposed to rightfully get appropriated.

Governor WALZ. Four hundred thousand children lose healthcare. Pregnant women and elderly and rural hospitals will be severely impacted and potentially close.

Ms. TLAIB. It is hard because I wonder if they would do that in Kentucky where they have fraud, in Tennessee where they have fraud.

Governor WALZ. Their own numbers show that our error rate is 2.1 percent. The national average is 6 percent.

Ms. TLAIB. Oh, I know. You guys testified about it. Attorney General, even though—you know, you gave everybody else 30 seconds—I need to ask you, I mean, you are here today. What could you be doing right now? You are Attorney General. Today, if you were at work instead of here, to be honest, I mean, can you explain what is back home that you have work to do at home? Like, what can you be doing instead?

Mr. ELLISON. [Off mic.]

Chairman COMER. Microphone, please.

Mr. ELLISON. One thing I have is a Medicaid fraud bill that I am trying to get passed to increase—

Ms. TLAIB. The legislature is in session.

Mr. ELLISON. The legislature is in session, and I am supposed to meet with House caucus leaders tonight—hoping to make that so that we can do more to stop fraud.

Ms. TLAIB. Yes.

Mr. ELLISON. So, that is one thing I could be doing among 20 others.

Ms. TLAIB. Well, I will tell you, you know, I am always reminded, and please bear with me, Chairman Comer. Our amazing, you know, former Chair, Elijah Cummings, first hearing I ever had as a freshman was on the high cost of prescription drugs. It was incredible, it was powerful, it was real, and the intent there was, let us make sure people that get sick are taken care of. I am just so tired of these hearings that are just politicized in a way that is not consistent because if he is doing this, why are you targeting innocent people? Thank you.

Chairman COMER. Thank you, Mr. Tlaib. I gave you an extra minute and 15 seconds to criticize the Chairman of the Committee, so, but I do like Ms. Tlaib. The Chair recognizes Mr. Gill from Texas.

Mr. GILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the witnesses for taking the time to be here. Governor Walz, are you familiar with the early intensive developmental and behavioral intervention benefit?

Governor WALZ. I am, Congressman.

Mr. GILL. Got it. It provides services for autism patients. Is that right?

Governor WALZ. That is correct.

Mr. GILL. Got it, and when did you become Governor?

Governor WALZ. In January 2019.

Mr. GILL. In 2019, okay. So, using 2018 as a baseline, do you know what that program paid in Medicaid claims?

Governor WALZ. I do not, Congressman.

Mr. GILL. It is about \$671,000. Do you know what that program paid in Medicaid claims in 2024?

Governor WALZ. I do not have the number in front of me.

Mr. GILL. Three hundred forty-two million dollars. That is about a 500x increase over six years. Was there 500 times the number of autism patients in that time period?

Governor WALZ. I could not speak specifically to it, but I will say, Congressman, that—

Mr. GILL. That does not sound reasonable, right?

Governor WALZ. Right.

Mr. GILL. You do not think there was a 500x increase in the number of autism patients——

Governor WALZ. No, I think——

Mr. GILL [continuing]. In six years, right?

Governor WALZ. Correct, and that is why we ordered onsite visits starting back in 2024.

Mr. GILL. So, we agree that that does not sound reasonable. Would you also agree that a single taxpayer dollar wasted on fraud is a dollar too much to tolerate?

Governor WALZ. Yes.

Mr. GILL. Yep, and would you agree that as Governor, ultimately you are responsible if tax dollars are defrauded?

Governor WALZ. Yes, I would agree.

Mr. GILL. Yep. Would you also agree that calling somebody racist is a serious accusation?

Governor WALZ. If they are racist? I think it is probably accurate.

Mr. GILL. I am asking you, is that a serious accusation to make about somebody?

Governor WALZ. I think it is just an observation of reality.

Mr. GILL. All right. Well, let us go there. Is it racist for a government official to identify fraud?

Governor WALZ. No.

Mr. GILL. No. Is it Islamophobic?

Governor WALZ. To identify fraud?

Mr. GILL. To identify fraud?

Governor WALZ. No, I do not believe it would be.

Mr. GILL. How come multiple whistleblowers have said that your Administration told them not to say anything about widespread fraud across multiple agencies because doing so would be considered racist or Islamophobic?

Governor WALZ. I cannot speak to it because it is not anything I would say.

Mr. GILL. Well, that is what your Administration has said and has told whistleblowers, and as you just testified, the buck stops with you. It is what you stated in your statement whenever you announced you were not running again. Are you familiar with Faye Bernstein?

Governor WALZ. Yes, I am familiar with the name.

Mr. GILL. She is a Democrat, isn't she?

Governor WALZ. I would not know that.

Mr. GILL. She stated publicly that she is a Democrat. She has only voted Democrat in her life. She has also stated publicly that she was retaliated against and called racist, and that her work responsibilities were diminished whenever she was highlighting fraud within your Administration. Are you familiar with that? Why do you think she would——

Governor WALZ. I could not speak to specific allegations.

Mr. GILL. Why do you think she would say that?

Governor WALZ. I cannot speak for what she would think.

Mr. GILL. You have no idea?

Governor WALZ. I do not.

Mr. GILL. You would agree that the tone in your Administration comes from you ultimately, right?

Governor WALZ. The tone is that——

Mr. GILL. The tone of how you might deal with whistleblowers.

Governor WALZ. Right, and we protect them, and they——

Mr. GILL. It does not sound like you are protecting them. We heard from Representative Kristen Robbins, “We have dozens of credible whistleblower reports saying the exact same thing, that people were told not to say anything because they would be called racist or Islamophobic, or it would hurt the state.” Do you think it is racist or Islamophobic to highlight and try to stop fraud?

Governor WALZ. It is not, and I certainly would not——

Mr. GILL. It is not, but that was the message your Administration was sending to multiple whistleblowers.

Governor WALZ. I cannot speak to that.

Mr. GILL. You cannot speak to that. No, you do not want to speak to that, I think. Should whistleblowers——

Governor WALZ. I have over 40,000 employees, Congressman.

Mr. GILL [continuing]. Be retaliated against?

Governor WALZ. Pardon me?

Mr. GILL. Do you think whistleblowers should be retaliated against?

Governor WALZ. Absolutely not. They have strong protections in Minnesota and lots of pass, and the pass——

Mr. GILL. That is not what we are hearing from whistleblowers. Faye Bernstein, who, again, has stated that she is a Democrat, she has only ever voted Democrat, says that she was——

Governor WALZ. That does not matter whether she is Democrat or Republican.

Mr. GILL [continuing]. Says that she was subjected to “a smear campaign” for trying to make leadership aware of illegal contracting practices. Why do you think that happened?

Governor WALZ. I cannot speak to that, Congressman, because we do not do it, and it is——

Mr. GILL. You do not know anything?

Governor WALZ. I do know that we have strong whistleblower protections, and I cannot speak to this specific——

Mr. GILL. That is not what the whistleblowers are saying. According to another report, “There is just a continuous effort to stifle you to shut you up, and it is impossible to overcome.” Your Administration’s response to whistleblowers has also been described as “nearly unbearable retaliation.” We have heard claims that “they have been denied vacations, promotions, and that it has hurt people’s careers to speak out against fraud.” Do you think that that had something to do with the prevalence of fraud in your Administration?

Governor WALZ. I cannot speak to it, but it does not happen.

Mr. GILL. Are you going to take responsibility for this?

Governor WALZ. I supervise 40,000 employees. State agencies have their own——

Mr. GILL. You supervise a lot of employees, and as you have said, the buck stops with you, and your Administration has treated whistleblowers like absolute dirt, and that is a big reason why we have seen so much of our hard-earned tax dollars defrauded.

Governor WALZ. Look, Congressman, I told you we have strong protections. We have an office of Legislative Auditor.

Mr. GILL. This Committee has spoken to nearly 30 whistle-blowers——

Governor WALZ. And they came through the——

Mr. GILL [continuing]. Most of which are current employees in your Administration, who have intimate knowledge of what has been going on, who have all stated that they have faced retaliation for calling out fraud.

Governor WALZ. I cannot speak to them and what they felt.

Mr. GILL. My time is up. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Ms. Ansari.

Ms. ANSARI. Mr. Chairman, it is outrageous that this is what we are choosing to spend our time on the Oversight Committee. At the first one——

Chairman COMER. Fraud? Fraud?

Ms. ANSARI. At the first one, yes, fraud, because let us talk about fraud.

Chairman COMER. Okay.

Ms. ANSARI. At the first one of these ridiculous series of hearings on Minnesota, I brought up the dozens of horrific ongoing corruption scandals in the Trump Administration, but I know you are very scared of Donald Trump, so we will not be talking about those, but those are the things that we should be investigating on the Oversight Committee. Now we have another one. The Department of Justice was caught red-handed withholding explosive and credible FBI witness interviews of a woman who accused Donald Trump of sexually assaulting her when she was a minor. Shouldn't we hold a hearing on that? Shouldn't Pam Bondi be here, forced to testify why she is violating the law that Congress passed, The Epstein Files Transparency Act, nearly unanimously, along with this Committee subpoena? But since the Republican Majority instead wants to have a conversation about Minnesota, then let us do that.

The Trump-Epstein regime's deployment of thousands of ICE agents, Donald Trump's personal secret police force is a fascist disgrace. These untrained agents terrorized the people of Minnesota, violated their rights, and even shot them dead in the streets. I want to remind us all about what happened to Alex Pretti, an intensive care nurse murdered by CBP agents while trying to protect a woman that the officers were assaulting.

After his murder, Stephen Miller said Alex was "a domestic terrorist" who "tried to assassinate Federal law enforcement," a "would be-assassin," and "an assassin." Kristi Noem said Alex was "committing an act of domestic terrorism." She said, "I do not know any peaceful protester that shows up with a gun and ammunition rather than a sign." She accused Alex Pretti of brandishing a weapon, despite video evidence showing the gun never left its holster. Greg Bavino said, "This looks like a situation where an individual wanted to do maximum damage and massacre law enforcement," and Donald Trump, said Alex, "A gunman whose weapon was loaded with two additional full magazines and ready to go." He said Alex was an agitator and perhaps an insurrectionist, obviously projecting about himself. Dictators in other countries would literally

be impressed at how brazen these lies and propaganda spread by the Trump regime and Kristi Noem are.

So, Governor Walz, I want to thank you and Attorney General Ellison for putting up with all of the lying and hypocrisy from the Republican Majority. Governor, is the Trump Administration attempting to block Minnesota State and local police from investigating the murders of Alex Pretti and Rene Nicole Good?

Governor WALZ. I believe we are not getting any cooperation, and we were told we would not be part of that. Attorney General may know more.

Mr. ELLISON. Yes, Congresswoman. We have been told that we would not have access to investigative file, which would include evidence that would be relevant to the investigation in both cases. And even there is one shooting incident that was nonfatal, and we have been frozen out on that as well.

Ms. ANSARI. So, two follow-up questions.

Mr. ELLISON. We had to go to court to get the evidence preserved, yes.

Ms. ANSARI. Okay, and two followup questions and whichever one of you wants to answer, why do you think that might be the case, and is this out of the ordinary?

Mr. ELLISON. It is wildly out of the ordinary. I can tell you that our local FBI, ATF, even before Operation Metro Surge, you know, you heard about ICE matters, but you did not hear about it nearly as much as we do now. This is an extraordinary departure from what we know, and we routinely work with Federal partners and we have never had problems until now, like this.

Governor WALZ. I would just speculate that they need to take accountability for it, and I think they understood what the world saw, that this was improper and it needs to have justice for these families, and I hope those questions are being asked of Secretary Noem today.

Ms. ANSARI. And Governor Walz and Attorney General Ellison, are you committed to getting to the truth about the murders of Alex Pretti and Renee Good?

Mr. ELLISON. Absolutely, yes.

Governor WALZ. Yes. I pledged to their families we would do that.

Ms. ANSARI. Thank you. We need to hold this Administration accountable for these murders, starting by impeaching Kristi Noem for gross misconduct, lying to Congress, and failure to uphold the laws in the Constitution. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Mr. Grothman from Wisconsin.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Thank you. We will go for Governor Walz again. A major focus of today's hearing has been the misuse of Federal funds distributed through the Childcare and Development Block Grant. This program is supposed to be helping working families afford childcare, and I think the taxpayers expect these programs to be protected from waste and fraud. Most states operate these programs responsibly. The national improper payment average is about 4 percent. As you know, I kind of watch what is going on in Minnesota because it is a state adjacent to Wisconsin, and it is amazing if you are a Congressman the number of people who get

Minnesota and Wisconsin confused. But when that number climbs above the national average of 4 percent, it should be a warning sign that oversight has failed.

Minnesota's improper payment rate got up to 11 percent. That is not a small administrative mistake—over almost three times the national average. That is a system that is clearly not being monitored the way it should be. When Wisconsin had a similar program several years ago when I was in the state legislature, in 2010, we uncovered fraud in our childcare assistance program. Wisconsin did not look away. We took responsibility, implemented serious reforms, and those reforms included expanding background checks for providers, creating a dedicated fraud investigation unit, strengthening eligibility requirements, and instituting a comprehensive audit system. That would have been when Scott Walker was Governor. Because of these reforms, Wisconsin now has an improper payment of under one percent, so in other words, we almost totally wiped out the problem. It did not happen by accident. It happened because Governor Walker took responsibility and acted quickly. He thought fraud was a problem.

Governor WALZ, Minnesota had similar warning signs. Investigators, auditors, even internal officials kept raising concerns about fraud in social service systems, and it did not just cost taxpayers money. These programs are meant to help children and working families. When fraud drains millions of these dollars from these programs, that money is not reaching the people it was intended to serve. First of all, Governor Walz, when did your Administration first become aware that fraud risks were escalating in Minnesota's Childcare Assistance Program? You were kind of an outlier in the whole country.

Governor WALZ. Well, thank you, Congressman. This dates back to about 2012, that the action has been being taken. And as I stated earlier, on our first days in office, we started taking action. I would ask, if I could, on this, anything that Governor Walker did, I would appreciate if you would show us what those actions were. We are more than happy to implement them, and that is what we have started over the last seven years.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Reports indicate that some providers continued receiving payments even after the fraud concerns were raised. Was that a decision made by your Administration, and who specifically you feel did not—

Governor WALZ. I cannot speak specifically to which those were. Decisions are made at the department level, but I cannot speak to what those allegations were.

Mr. GROTHMAN. We are told it was still 11 percent under your Administration. When fraud indicators appear in a program funded by Federal taxpayers, do you believe the responsible action is to pause payments until those concerns are investigated?

Governor WALZ. I do not think it is that simple. As I said, these programs provide a really important service, and childcare is a critical one. The issue is trying to make sure the legitimate payments are made and that you are stopping fraud, so I do not think in all cases that pausing those payments is the right action.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Okay. Just in general, I will say when the fraud percentage beats 11 percent in Minnesota and we got it down

under one percent in Wisconsin, I think it is a cause for concern. I will give you another question because a little bit of this hearing wandered a little bit to what happened in your streets out there. When any agency comes to Wisconsin, any Federal agency—I have talked to several of our sheriffs, could be ICE, could be Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, could be FBI, could be Secret Service—our sheriffs always try to coordinate with the Federal agencies, ask them what they need. Do you need us to set up a perimeter? Can we help you by transporting people to the local jail? Do you just want some squad cars parked around to presumably keep troublemakers at bay? That was not done in Minnesota like it is routinely done in certainly all—

Governor WALZ. I do not think that is a correct characterization. I think Tom Homan indicated that those things do happen and have been happening.

Mr. GROTHMAN. During the time in which you had the serious riots or whatever you want to call them in Minnesota, I believe that you did not reach out for your state law enforcement to help out Federal law enforcement, in part because you are a sanctuary state and—

Governor WALZ. That is incorrect. Tom Homan indicated we are not. I do not know what to tell you, Congressman. We did. We want to cooperate. That is not what you saw on the streets.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Right. Right. We did not see cooperation.

Governor WALZ. You saw ICE agents shooting people in the head. You saw little children being drug out. You saw ICE agents indiscriminately throwing smoke grenades. And I think what the world saw was peaceful resistance and a defense of their neighbors, so this is not about immigration reform. This was about an untrained force that came in, not with the intention of immigration.

Mr. GROTHMAN. I would say that you did not have the interaction between local law enforcement and Federal agencies that is routinely seen around the country. Thank you.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes Ms. Brown.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thirteen months. Thirteen months into the Trump's Administration, and this Committee has failed to hold one hearing or one open investigation to hold this President accountable. It makes you wonder, are we the Oversight Committee or the Overlook Committee because there is no shortage of matters that demand our attention. I can share a few that come to mind.

This is a President who has turned the White House into an ATM, and in Trump's Washington, the fastest path to a pardon or a position is to donate to Trump's ballroom or Inauguration. Last year, the Trump family added billions to its net worth through pay-for-play schemes and corrupt deals. Last month, the President surged ICE into Minneapolis in an abusive operation that led to American deaths and repeated violations of constitutional rights under the First, Fourth, and Fifth Amendments. Also last month, the Administration struck shady oil deals after the Administration invaded Venezuela.

Two weeks ago, the President blocked a Michigan bridge from opening after he was reportedly lobbied by a wealthy businessman

who owns a competing bridge. Last week, the President launched a war on Iran without the consent of Congress, without an imminent threat to our safety, and without any plan presented to the American people. And right now, hour by hour, this Administration is engaging in an active and egregious coverup of the Epstein files.

Yet today, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are once again showing they are more interested in partisan politics than good governance. If you are serious about fraud, you investigate it, you prosecute it, you strengthen safeguards to prevent it. What you do not do is weaponize it. You do not denigrate entire communities with racist smears. You do not unleash abusive enforcement actions that undermine trust and due process. You do not illegally cutoff all Medicaid funding, which will lead to innocent and sick Americans dying. Dying. And you do not fire Inspector Generals [sic] and push out career prosecutors actively working to defeat that fraud.

So, AG Ellison, the U.S. Attorney's Office in Minnesota has at least six prosecutors resign due to the chaos ICE has cause. Can you briefly describe how these resignations have affected our ability to prosecute fraud?

Mr. ELLISON. Thank you, Congresswoman, and, in fact, it is a great deal more than six prosecutors. It is many more than that. In fact, one of the prosecutors who resigned in protest was one of the ones who helped to lead the prosecution of the Feeding Our Future defendants. Fifty-seven have been convicted. So, the loss of those people is dramatically harming our effort to prosecute fraud because in Minnesota, we have 87 county attorneys, the AG does Medicaid fraud, and the Federal Government prosecutes fraud that is germane in its jurisdiction. It operates as a web together, so it is not like the feds are doing it and nobody else is. They are doing the ones they supposed to do, we are doing the ones we supposed to do, and the counties are doing the ones they supposed to do.

If you take the feds out, that leaves an enormous gap, and criminals are shrewd. I mean, the reality is that fraudsters are pretty smart, and some of them are clever and know that if the prosecutors numbers are depleted, you are going to see worse behavior. And I do fear that, which is one of the reasons why we need to pass stronger legislation in Minnesota to help my office prosecute Medicaid fraud.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you, and there is deeper hypocrisy here. Donald Trump was found guilty by a jury of his peers on 34 felony counts of fraud. He has pardoned a businessman convicted of defrauding a Native-American tribe to the tune of \$60 million. He has pardoned a Florida CEO convicted of running \$1.3 billion Medicare and Medicaid fraud scheme. He has pardoned a nursing home executive who pleaded guilty to a \$38 million tax scheme. I could go on and on. In fact, over half of the President's pardons have been for wire fraud, securities fraud, tax fraud, bank fraud, and healthcare fraud, and several of these pardons have come after massive political contributions to the President. In many cases, these pardons meant victims will never see a dime of restitution. House Judiciary Committee Democrats estimate the pardons for fraud-related crimes could deprive victims of more than \$1 billion owed to them and American taxpayers. So, this President is par-

doning his wealthy donors and taking money out of the pockets of hardworking Americans. He is handing out get-out-of-jail-free cards to fraudsters while shamelessly using fraud as a pretext to go after perceived political enemies.

What I believe is simple. Whether you are a President, a billionaire, or a regular American who has committed fraud, you should be held accountable, and with that, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentlelady yields back. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Palmer from Alabama.

Mr. PALMER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing. I appreciate the witnesses being here. I do want to respond to something that was said earlier by one of my colleagues across the aisle about fraud in Alabama, and he actually raised the question why isn't the Governor of Alabama here? It is very simple. Alabama actually did something about the fraud in SNAP benefits. We acted on that immediately. I would argue that if the State of Minnesota had done that, this hearing would not be necessary.

So, I want to ask you, Governor Walz, is it true that your Department of Education was sued by Feeding Our Future for racial discrimination in approving food sites?

Governor WALZ. I do not know exactly what they were sued for, but I know there was a suit.

Mr. PALMER. Didn't the Department of Education have serious concerns about fraud, though, in Feeding Our Future and their sites as far back as 2020?

Governor WALZ. That is correct, Congressman. They brought it to the attention of the USDA.

Mr. PALMER. And didn't your Department of Education determine there was fraud occurring because of incredibly large, implausible reimbursement request?

Governor WALZ. Well, I think at the time during the COVID pandemic, there was how these meals were being delivered and what safeguards—because as you know, the USDA changed the rules on these to make it easier for food to get out.

Mr. PALMER. Yes, but one of the fraudster sites, Safari Restaurant, claimed that they served the same number of meals in one month as the entire St. Paul School District. In their transcribed interview, your Commissioner of Education said that this would be impossible. Governor Walz, you were an educator. Is it plausible for a single restaurant, whose owner has already been convicted and is in jail for fraud, was actually serving that number of meals?

Governor WALZ. I think that is why he went to prison, if I am not mistaken.

Mr. PALMER. Yes, but the question would be, why didn't the State of Minnesota—wasn't that a Federal conviction?

Governor WALZ. It was turned over by the state. It was the state that found it. The folks at the Department of Education turned it over with our Federal partners, and they prosecuted them.

Mr. PALMER. Well, when we had the hearing with the state legislators, I mean, without exception, they all testified that they were bringing this to the attention of the state, and the state was not doing anything about it.

Governor WALZ. Those legislators run the Committee, the oversight Committee. They never held a single hearing until just very

recently, and the chairwoman of that Committee is running for Governor. So, I cannot speak to why, but I can tell you that we certainly tried to address——

Mr. PALMER. But you cannot politicize something that was reported years ago. I mean, you could argue that she anticipated that you would resign or retire, or however you want to characterize it, but I doubt that was the case. I want to be as respectful as I can be, and, you know, we have served together. I am not one of these guys that is trying to score political points. I try to solve problems, but I do not think we can have a transference here of intention for one legislator that you say is running for Governor when these issues were raised years ago.

Governor WALZ. And prosecuted years ago.

Mr. PALMER. Well, not all of them because the fraud continued, and it has run into the billions of dollars now. I mean, the two people that were convicted in Federal Court, that was \$250 million, but we now know that this has gone into the billions, and the question—and, again——

Governor WALZ. Congressman, can you tell me where the evidence is on the \$9 billion because we are looking for it and we are doing what we can. I mean, all the local press and all the folks in Minnesota are saying that is not the case. You know, every dollar you put out there, if you say it could be fraud, but there is no evidence to that. And the problem with that is, and this story came out last week, people in the U.S. Attorney's Office said, when you are putting out these numbers that are not true, it undermines our ability to tackle the actual fraud.

Mr. PALMER. I did not say \$9 billion. I said that I think it is run into the billions, and that is not just in Minnesota. Again, during COVID, the fraud was massive throughout the country——

Governor WALZ. Yes.

Mr. PALMER [continuing]. Particularly in the Payroll Protection Plan and the enhanced unemployment. I think it begs the question, Mr. Chairman, of why we have not been more aggressive in going after this all over the country. The fraud that was mentioned by my colleague was SNAP benefits, and that is in California, his own state. It is \$180 million, but to California's credit, they are doing something about it. So, that is the issue here. I am not interested in scoring political points. I am trying to stop the fraud.

Governor WALZ. I appreciate that, Congressman.

Mr. PALMER. I am trying to get to a place where the public, in terms of state and Federal spending, has confidence that we are properly managing the money and, wherever fraud occurs, that we are aggressively pursuing it. I think that is the question that has been raised about how your Administration handled this. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Governor WALZ. But I would just say that is fair enough, Congressman. I think that spirit is what we are trying to get at. I do think it is nationwide. I think we should share information. I think we are being as aggressive as possible, but fair enough.

Ms. BROWN. Mr. Chairman, I would like to seek recognition for a unanimous consent request. I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record a June 17, 2025, memorandum from the House Judiciary Committee Democrats titled, "House Judiciary Committee

Democrats Memorandum Regarding President Trump's Pardons Cheat Victims Out of an Astounding \$1.3 Billion in Restitution And Fines, Allowing Fraudsters, Tax Evaders, Drug Traffickers To Keep Ill-Gotten Gains," which estimates the——

Chairman COMER. That——

Ms. BROWN. I am sorry—"Which Estimates That Trump's Reckless Pardons Robbed Victims and Let Perpetrators Walk Away Without Paying \$1.3 Million in Restitution Funds."

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Ms. Stansbury from New Mexico.

Ms. STANSBURY. Good morning. Good afternoon, as it is. Mr. Chairman, thank you for having this hearing. I know has been a long morning for everyone here as witnesses today, and it has been a long several months for the people of Minnesota. We thank you for your service.

Now, let me just start by saying at the beginning of my comments here what I said at the beginning of the last hearing that we had on this exact same subject, which is that we must unequivocally root out waste, fraud, and abuse, and prosecute any crimes wherever they happen, whether those crimes are happening in social service programs at the state level, or whether we have an out-of-control President and Administration that is committing crimes, waste, fraud, and abuse inside the White House and within our Federal agencies, including deploying thousands of armed agents into our communities, using per diems that are costing millions of taxpayer dollars every day, to terrorize our communities, to violate their civil rights, to violate due process rights, and that have resulted in the murder of two U.S. citizens.

And so, my question is, why are we not conducting oversight over that? Two U.S. citizens that have been murdered by the Federal Government.

[Photo]

Renee Good, a Minneapolis mom, murdered.

[Photo]

Alex Pretti, a Minneapolis VA nurse murdered.

[Photo]

Nurul Amin Shah Alam, a partially blind refugee in Buffalo, New York dead after being left in a parking lot by DHS without even a pair of shoes on.

[Photo]

The kidnapping of children like Liam Ramos.

[Photo]

And an Administration that has launched an unauthorized war in the Middle East with six service members dead and over 160 school children and their teachers dead and buried yesterday. Never in my life have I seen a greater disregard for the Constitution, for the rule of law, for the carelessness for human life and basic human dignity, and senseless cruelty than I have seen in this Administration, whether that is at home or abroad, and they cannot answer the most basic questions about why.

[Photo]

And meanwhile, people who should be investigating these crimes are partying and drinking on taxpayer dollars.

[Photo]

We have got the U.S. DOJ AG refusing to release the Epstein files or even acknowledge their basic human dignity.

[Photo]

And yesterday, the Secretary of DHS testifying and lying under oath in the U.S. Senate, refusing to acknowledge Alex Pretti and Renee Nicole Good's death, its murder, and the harm that she personally has caused by calling it domestic terrorism. That is what we should be investigating and the billions of taxpayer dollars that are being used to support this cruelty and out-of-control Administration.

Now, I know it has been a long day, and, Mr. Ellison, I know you have had a long day especially. I want to say thank you for your service, Governor. You have inspired the Nation by helping to organize, along with the faith community, our communities in resistance, in strength. And I agree with you, Reverend, that silence is complicity, and that is why we have to speak. And so, Mr. Ellison, I just want to ask you one question. What do you think Congress should be investigating? What should we be investigating here today?

Mr. ELLISON. Congresswoman, I would be very grateful if the Committee really dug into the use of force policy at ICE. I think it needs greater training. I think it needs, clearly, better guidelines. I think there needs to be a policy of cooperation between state and Federal investigators and in the FBI. And I think there should be a general policy that leaders not make statements about blame or guilt, you know, immediately after the tragedy, and they should try to wait and figure out what actually happened before they make those kind of statements that you identified.

Ms. STANSBURY. Thank you, AG, and I will just say this. I have heard a lot of political theater here today. I think it is disgraceful. Our job is the Oversight Committee. Our job is to oversee the Administration and the agencies that it executes on, and we are failing the American people, and this Administration is failing the world. With that, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentlelady yields back. I might add that it is my understanding the Homeland Security Committee is investigating the two deaths in Minnesota. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Fallon from Texas.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Governor Walz, do you believe the 70,000 strong Somali community as a whole has made a positive impact on your state?

Governor WALZ. I do.

Mr. FALLON. So, you would be of the opinion and fair to say that the Somali community has successfully assimilated and is making Minnesota better?

Governor WALZ. Yes. I believe they are on that path, yes.

Mr. FALLON. I am just curious by what metric you would come to that conclusion. I just looked at some hard data, and do you have any idea what percentage of the native-born Minnesotans, all races, live in poverty in your state right now?

Governor WALZ. I do not have specifically percent.

Mr. FALLON. I will share it with you. It is 8 percent. For the Somali community, it is 52 percent. How about receiving food stamps?

Governor WALZ. I do not—

Mr. FALLON. All right. I will run it down with you. It is 7 percent, and then compared to 54 percent in the Somali community. And then do not have at least a high school diploma, for all Minnesotans, it is 5 percent, Somali community, it is 39 percent. One family member at least on Medicaid, it is 18 percent from Minnesota, 73 percent for the Somali community. And receiving welfare of some form, it is 21 percent, and it is 81 percent for the Somali community. Governor, do you happen to know what the percentage is of all those who have currently been charged in this staggering social services fraud scheme were native-born Minnesotans? What percentage?

Governor WALZ. I do not have that.

Mr. FALLON. I think it was 85 out of 98, which comes out to 13 percent Minnesotan and 87 percent Somali/Minnesotan. So, I think this is an instance perhaps of where woke gets slapped by data. Governor, there has been billions stolen over 7-plus years right under your nose, and, really, there are only two explanations. It is either you were in on it, or you were not smart enough to see it. It is either criminal negligence or wild incompetence. And the only way this kind of fraud can reach this scale is if there are people in power that are colluding and collaborating and willfully blinding themselves to the realities around them.

And in Oversight, when we do investigations, it is rare for us to have whistleblowers because they face retribution and punishment and resentment, and they can be ostracized, and it is difficult and it is uncomfortable, and sometimes it is even dangerous. So, when we are having an investigation and we have even a couple of whistleblowers, it is very valuable to us because they provide invaluable insight. Do you have any idea how many whistleblowers from Minnesota or working with the Oversight Committee?

Governor WALZ. I do not. We have our own strong protections on the OLA, the independent—

Mr. FALLON. Well, it is 30. I mean, I have not seen that in 5-plus years in Congress. Thirty. Governor, on September 16, 2025, did you announce your reelection bid?

Governor WALZ. Pardon me?

Mr. FALLON. On September 16, last year, did you announce it?

Governor WALZ. I do not know the exact date.

Mr. FALLON. In September, roughly the fall of last year—

Governor WALZ. Yes.

Mr. FALLON [continuing]. Did you announce you are running for Governor again?

Governor WALZ. I believe that is correct.

Mr. FALLON. Okay, and I think you said in your quote here, “We have made historic progress, but we are not done yet,” and then just 3-and-a-half months later on January 5, you dropped out. I got to ask you why. I mean, were you tired of making historic progress?

Governor WALZ. No, Congressman, I think I have done the job for two terms and talking with my family, and I said I want to focus on doing the job, not running.

Mr. FALLON. It did not have anything to do with this epic, historic, awful fraud.

Governor WALZ. It has everything to do with trying to do the job right for Minnesota.

Mr. FALLON. The facts are your leadership and really your lack of leadership has been responsible for one of the largest ripoffs of the American taxpayer in our history. And you traded, I believe, the currency of political expediency for your integrity. And, you know, Mr. Chairman, I do not know if you know this, but it is been widely reported that in 2008, when Barack Obama was choosing his Vice Presidential candidate, he had three criteria. He wanted to make sure he picked somebody that was not as smart as him, and had less talent and charisma, and could not possibly outshine him, so he picked Joe Biden, and then Joe Biden in 2020 used the exact same criteria. He wanted to make sure he picked somebody who was not as smart as him, had less talent and charisma, and would not outshine him, and he picked Kamala Harris. And then in 2024, Governor, I think it is very evident why Kamala Harris picked you. The talent pool, Mr. Chairman——

Governor WALZ. I would not know, Congressman.

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Chairman, the talent pool is not just shallow. Brother, we have hit the shore, and I yield back.

[Laughter.]

Chairman COMER. The gentlemen yields back. The Chair recognized Mr. Subramanyam.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, I have some concerns about not just the tactics of ICE in Minnesota and everywhere. I have concerns about the fact that Renee Good and Alex Pretti were killed, and there has been no real investigation by Federal law enforcement and Federal authorities. And so, I would ask Attorney General Ellison, do you know if the FBI is actually investigating what happened?

Mr. ELLISON. Thank you for the question, Congressman. The information we have is that there was an affirmative statement by Deputy AG Todd Blanche that they were not investigating the Renee Good matter. On the Alex Pretti, we received information that was similar and that there might be an investigation, but that the state would be excluded. So, in the first one, they are not doing an investigation and we cannot have the information. In the second one, they might be doing an investigation, and the state cannot be part of it.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. And I know this is asking for your opinion, but why do you think they would want to exclude the state in the Alex Pretti investigation?

Mr. ELLISON. Well, you know, I do not want to speculate as to what somebody's motives might be, but I can just tell you this. It is a sharp departure from the norm. Normally, we investigate these things jointly, and when somebody does not want another investigator there, sometimes you might wonder if there is something that they do not want to come out.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. It is my understanding that the Federal Government is better positioned to do such an investigation and to be able to prosecute such crimes because there might be Federal immunity. It is my understanding Federal agents are typically im-

mune from state prosecution if their actions were directly tied to official duties. What is your understanding of that?

Mr. ELLISON. So, my understanding starts with the supremacy clause in the U.S. Constitution, and then there is a line of cases. The first one is something called *In re Neagle*, and then there are a number of cases after that. What it says is that if a Federal agent arguably commits a crime and is indicted or charged, that agent, the Federal agent, would have an affirmative defense of saying that I was doing my job and I was doing it in a necessary and proper way, what I was doing was necessary and proper. If they can meet both of those criteria, a court might grant their motion to dismiss. If they cannot, the matter is going to face a jury. Matter of fact, you may remember the case involving Randy Weaver in Idaho. That case actually was cleared by the Ninth Circuit to go to trial, but the local authorities decided not to pursue it.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. To prosecute Renee Good and Alex Pretti, you would need evidence, right?

Mr. ELLISON. Yes.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Has the FBI or anyone given you or been able to cooperate with you on any evidence in this case?

Mr. ELLISON. No. At this point, they have precluded the state from access to the evidence, but there is a lot of other evidence out there, and we are also pursuing all options to get access to the evidence.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Do you think with what you have now, you could prosecute Renee Good and Alex Pretti at the state level?

Mr. ELLISON. I think, theoretically, it is possible, but I would think it would be imprudent until you see the Federal file because, you know, when you are a prosecutor, you should know the whole file. You should have evaluated all the evidence before you make a charging decision or bring a matter to the grand jury.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Because my concern here is that not only are these terrible things happening to U.S. citizens, but there is no accountability, right? There is no mechanism. There is a coverup for the people who are at ICE and other law enforcement who do the wrong thing, and it is making everyone at those agencies look bad. It is making our country look bad on the international stage. And so, you know, we have legislation at the Federal level. I am a co-sponsor of the Stop Excessive Force in Immigration Act. We are trying to do things tangibly to make things better. We need some support on the other side of the aisle, but certainly we are going to push forward anyway. I guess I would end by saying, what would you ask Congress to do to help get the accountability that we are looking for, and I will ask either one.

Mr. ELLISON. I think that for anyone, Republican or Democrat, hoping to get public trust restored to immigration agents, there must be clear protocols regarding recruitment, training, and protocols on use of force. There must be an investigation, states must be involved, and there is more to be discussed.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Governor Walz, you have 5 seconds.

Governor WALZ. I would agree with the Attorney General that it is about restoring faith, that people do not trust what they are doing, and we need them to be able to do their job.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. I will now recognize Mr. Burlison from Missouri and then Mr. Timmons from South Carolina.

Mr. BURLISON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Governor Walz, we already know that the Minnesota Medical Assistance gives taxpayer dollars to people that are not here legally, illegal aliens, and we know that, in large part, your sanctuary city policies or sanctuary state policies have exacerbated the fraud that we are seeing in Minnesota. We know that just from conservative estimates alone, that during the Biden Administration, we had an estimated 15 million people come here illegally. Within your state alone, the estimates from the Migration Institute and Pew Research is that it is at least 130,000 people that are here illegally, and we know that \$250 million was stolen for the Feeding Our Future program. Are you familiar with the fact that those working for the program and individuals later convicted of fraudulent crimes met with Mr. Ellison in the, what has been talked about, the recorded conversation?

Governor WALZ. I believe the Attorney General just testified to that, yes.

Mr. BURLISON. It was a 54-minute conversation, and in it the conversation was recorded as an audio file. There was a FOIA request to get that information. He can clearly be heard pledging his support to individuals who would soon become his family's campaign donors and later Feeding Our Future criminal defendants. The ask occurs around minute 43:30. Specifically, the request for him is, in the AG's statutory role as the attorney for state agencies, to intervene on behalf of these frauds. And at 44:26, Mr. Ellison assures the fraudsters, "Of course, I am here to help," and at 45-minute mark, he says, "Let's go fight these people," these people, meaning the agencies that were looking into the fraud. Have you listened to this audio?

Governor WALZ. Today was the first time I have heard it. I am familiar with it, and I do not know if I can validate that characterization.

Mr. BURLISON. If this is true, do you have concerns?

Governor WALZ. I am not going to speculate. Like I said, I cannot characterize what it was.

Mr. BURLISON. Certainly you have heard the allegations that Mr. Ellison was working with individuals, that people were trying to reach out to him to try to avoid any kind of prosecution.

Governor WALZ. I do not know if I would characterize it like that. I could not do that.

Mr. BURLISON. How would you characterize it?

Governor WALZ. I do not know. I was not there. I just heard the clip you had.

Mr. BURLISON. How much fraudulent money has been recovered?

Governor WALZ. Oh, I do not have the number in front of me, but—

Mr. BURLISON. I have heard the highest number is \$80 million, but I mean—

Governor WALZ. That could be. I cannot verify that.

Mr. BURLISON. So, it is reported that, at most, it is \$80 million. And as we know, the amount that has been attributed to fraud in Minnesota alone is estimated, I think on the low end, the conserv-

ative side is \$9 billion. I think the Trump Administration says \$19 billion.

Governor WALZ. Congressman, I do not see anything to show that, but what I have acknowledged is one dollar is too much. I think the local people and the folks who are taking count of this show it just at about \$271 million.

Mr. BURLISON. Do you think the effort to return the money has been successful?

Governor WALZ. I cannot speak to that. I do not have any part in that.

Mr. BURLISON. I think that returning \$80 million out of a, let us say, assume it is just \$9 billion, which would be .08 percent, less than 1 percent of the money has been gotten back.

Governor WALZ. Congressman, no one is saying the \$9 billion, other than a potential for that, and that would mean every dollar that is out there, and I think that was characterized last week by the U.S. Attorney's office as saying that that caused problems because there is no evidence to back that up. But I want to be clear. That does not make it any better. I just want to be clear. I hear you——

Mr. BURLISON. Right.

Governor WALZ [continuing]. On the \$300 million. I think it is——

Mr. BURLISON. Would you agree there is more work to do?

Governor WALZ. More work to do.

Mr. BURLISON. If you are at one percent or less than one percent, there is more work to do.

Governor WALZ. I think if it is 99 percent, there is more work to do.

Mr. BURLISON. Last week you stated to the press that you have fired people who were not doing their jobs. Is that correct?

Governor WALZ. What I stated was, is that people have been put into new positions.

Mr. BURLISON. Okay.

Governor WALZ. We removed people from positions.

Mr. BURLISON. So, you did not fire anyone?

Governor WALZ. People stepped away.

Mr. BURLISON. People just shuffled the decks on the Titanic.

Governor WALZ. I think they left. They left state government.

Mr. BURLISON. Okay. All right. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes Mr. Timmons and then McGuire.

Mr. TIMMONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the witnesses for being here today. Governor Walz, under your leadership, Minnesota has become the poster boy of fraud in America. Between the Feeding Our Future scheme and massive, widespread fraud in autism and childcare programs, your tenure will be defined by immense negligence, costing taxpayers at least hundreds of millions, if not billions of dollars. In 2019, in the first months of your Administration, your legislative auditor found serious weaknesses in the Childcare Assistance Program, including inadequate attendance verification, repeat bad actors cycling through the system, weak enforcement, and employees who feared retaliation.

tion for raising concerns. Those warnings were specific, they were actionable, and they were documented, and you were already in office at this time. If, as you say, the buck stops with you, Governor, it is unclear when the buck actually stopped.

In your written testimony, you listed multiple actions you have taken to curb fraud, yet clearly they were insufficient. As Minnesota ended up with 14 Medicaid programs deemed high risk, representing over \$18 billion in spending. The buck did not stop when whistleblowers were silenced years ago. It only stopped when you realized the fraudsters were drawing attention from people that you could not intimidate into silence. Fraud of this magnitude does not happen overnight. It builds slowly, and it is the result of institutional failures and poor leadership. So, Governor, my question is simple. If the buck stopped with you, as you said, who failed between 2019 and 2022, and why were they not held accountable?

Governor WALZ. Who failed in what, Congressman?

Mr. TIMMONS. This fraud has been growing until recently——

Governor WALZ. Well, this is the thing——

Mr. TIMMONS [continuing]. And you have been Governor for many years.

Governor WALZ. No. Well, thank you for the question, Congressman, and I would disagree with your characterization, obviously. And the legislative auditor, I do not know what the time period they investigated. Those usually come months after they did it. We took office in January 2019 and immediately started acting on what the OLA, the Office of Legislative Auditor, an independent branch, started asking us to do, where we started changing the programs.

Mr. TIMMONS. That is not what the record reflects. The record reflects that there were all of these whistleblowers and they were being intimidated because alleged racism was the motivation behind the degree of enforcement.

Governor WALZ. Congressman, I have never had a chance to speak to these folks. What I will say is that, and my time in Congress proved that, strongest whistleblower protections we can possibly have. We have plenty of opportunities.

Mr. TIMMONS. We are not talking to every other state. We are talking to Minnesota because of the rampant fraud. So, look, three members of the——

Governor WALZ. Is there no fraud in any other states?

Mr. TIMMONS. Three members of the Minnesota State House of Representatives who all served on the Fraud Prevention and State Oversight Policy Committee, gave transcribed interviews that confirmed that your Administration was aware of the fraud happening in the state, yet chose not to act due to fear of political repercussions, and intentionally silenced whistleblowers who have tried to come forward.

Governor WALZ. Well, that is incorrect.

Mr. TIMMONS. Mr. Chairman, I am going to enter this in the record, “Roadmap to Program Integrity and Fraud Prevention.” It is a report, Mr. Chairman?

Chairman COMER. Without objection.

Mr. TIMMONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This report relays that several current and former Department of Human Services employees have described messaging from DHS leadership that emphasize compassion over compliance. So, the former leaders have said that DHS should be guided by 70 percent compassion and 30 percent compliance. And then in 2023, DHS, public presentation, leadership encouraged employees to embrace a 60/40 mindset. Again, that is 60 percent compassion and 40 percent compliance. I want to have as much compassion for people that need social safety nets. Like, I want to have a hundred percent compassion, but we also have to have a hundred percent compliance——

Governor WALZ. Right.

Mr. TIMMONS [continuing]. Or work as hard as we can to get there. And as you sit here today and after acknowledging how widespread and pervasive fraud is in Minnesota, how should your state employees prioritize program compliance? What is your message to people now relative to this compassion compliance ratio?

Governor WALZ. Well, I think I agree with you on this, Congressman. I do not think it is an either/or choice. We are not going to stop these programs. We are not going to stop being the top state for children in the country, but we need to make sure if we are going to continue those programs that we need to have fraud prevention and program integrity in. So, I agree with you. It is not an either/or, and it is not a percentage.

Mr. TIMMONS. In order to give the benefits to the people that need them most, we have to be good stewards of tax dollars.

Governor WALZ. That is right.

Mr. TIMMONS. And for every dollar that is stolen through waste, fraud, and abuse, that is a dollar that cannot go to people that need it most.

Governor WALZ. I agree with you.

Mr. TIMMONS. So, we need to prioritize compliance, make sure that we have the least amount of fraud possible, and with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back. Thank you.

Governor WALZ. I agree, Congressman.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. Next is Mr. McGuire from Virginia, then Mrs. Luna.

Mr. MCGUIRE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon to our witnesses. Governor Walz and Attorney General Ellison, what year were you made aware of rampant fraud in your state?

Governor WALZ. Well, Congressman, I think——

Mr. MCGUIRE. The Committee has spoken to nearly 30 whistleblowers, most of which are current employees in your Administration. Based on these transcribed interviews, you were both made aware of the rampant fraud in your state around 2019–2020.

Governor WALZ. Did they make the——

Mr. MCGUIRE. Governor Walz, do you know who Janelle Sky Hanson is?

Governor WALZ. I do not. I was going to ask you——

Mr. MCGUIRE. Mr. Chairman, I seek unanimous consent to enter into the record article from *CARE 11* titled, “CARE 11 Investigates Evicted Homeless Paying the Price for Minnesota’s Fraud Crisis.”

Chairman COMER. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. MCGUIRE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Governor Walz, Janelle Hansen, who goes by the name Sky, has autism. In June 2025, Sky, who was living in an apartment paid for by Integrated Community Supports, was evicted by police because her caregivers, American Home Healthcare, LLC, who were subletting her apartment, stopped paying their rent. This provider claimed to provide this woman with 12 hours of daily individual services and billed ICS on an average of nearly \$12,000 a month when she only interacted with them two hours per day. Because of this fraud, the woman has been homeless for eight months. In fact, while Sky is homeless, the owner of American Home Healthcare LLC lives in a high-end Maple Grove home, which has an indoor basketball court. State Medicaid billing data shows since 2022, American Home Healthcare has been paid more than \$2.2 million in public funds. That is \$2.2 million that was taken fraudulently from the taxpayers to pay for a man to live in a lavish home while people like Sky are left to live on the street.

Governor Walz, this is despicable. You have a duty to serve the Minnesotans, and you failed. You failed to protect these individuals like Sky who needed it the most. I have had constituents tell me that after seeing all the fraud that has come to light in your state, that they are not sure if they are paying taxes or if they are paying criminals.

Governor Walz, Attorney General Ellison, yes or no, does your Administration take whistleblower report seriously? Yes or no.

Governor WALZ. Yes.

Mr. MCGUIRE. Governor Walz and Attorney General Ellison, yes or no, do you believe that when faced with a whistleblower, the correct course of action is to retaliate against them and suppress their concerns?

Governor WALZ. No, of course not. It is illegal to do so.

Mr. MCGUIRE. Governor Walz, yes or no, are you aware of any instances of employees in Minnesota's Department of Human Services being threatened and intimidated with military surveillance to ensure they stay quiet about fraud?

Governor WALZ. I am not.

Mr. MCGUIRE. This is a picture of an email from Emmanuel Nowala, the DHS manager, who has since been promoted to the leadership role. This email shows clear proof that threatened employees with military surveillance including, "I did intelligence research with the Army and give them IP addresses and email addresses to track specific locations." Governor Walz, yes or no, are you aware of this email?

Governor WALZ. I am not.

Mr. MCGUIRE. Governor Walz, Mr. Nwala stated in the email that he was asked by upper leadership to hold off as they are doing their own thing on it. What did they mean by that?

Governor WALZ. I could not say. I am unfamiliar with it.

Mr. MCGUIRE. Was upper leadership doing their own military surveillance on whistleblowers to intimidate employees and to stay quiet about rampant fraud?

Governor WALZ. I do not believe they would.

Mr. MCGUIRE. Moving on. Governor Walz, yes or no, do you agree that it would be intimidation to confront a whistleblower

with photographs of their car, their house, and monitor their phone and computer, and ask which schools their children go to?

Governor WALZ. Yes.

Mr. MCGUIRE. Governor Walz, yes or no, did the DHS investigators direct you to participate in these intimidation attacks against whistleblowers?

Governor WALZ. Could you restate the question, Congressman?

Mr. MCGUIRE. Were you directed to intimidate these whistleblowers?

Governor WALZ. Of course not, no.

Mr. MCGUIRE. Governor Walz, who is Shireen Gandhi?

Governor WALZ. She is the current Commissioner of the Department.

Mr. MCGUIRE. In her transcribed interview, Ms. Gandhi confirmed that DHS used outside entities to investigate DHS staff. Governor Walz, I think it is clear to the American people that your Administration did not take whistleblowers seriously and, even further, cultivated an environment of fear to intimidate employees from going public with the truth about the rampant fraud in your state and under your failed leadership. Governor Walz and Attorney General Ellison, your incompetence and inaction to stop pervasive fraud when you were first alerted not only defrauded taxpayers of \$9 billion, but you have also failed to protect those who truly needed these services such as Sky. Because of your failed leadership, that woman was evicted from her apartment and homeless on the street for eight months. Leadership matters.

Now, Governor, you abandoned your troops before deployment, right before they deployed. You told your law enforcement not to cooperate with Federal agents, which led to a lot of the problems in your state that you do not see happening around the country, and you abandoned Minnesota by allowing this fraud to continue. And so, I am so glad that you have decided not to run——

Governor WALZ. Congressman, that is untrue.

Mr. MCGUIRE [continuing]. For reelection as Governor, and with that, I yield back.

Governor WALZ. Congressman, did you do 24 years in the military, because I did. Was that not long enough for you?

Mrs. LUNA. I am sorry. You are now interfering with my time——

Chairman COMER. The Chair——

Mrs. LUNA [continuing]. But as a veteran, he is a veteran, too, I do not think that you need to compare service. No one is discrediting your service, but I think they are discrediting your ability to lead your state to protect against fraud, sir.

Governor WALZ. My credit was being questioned, and I did 24——

Mrs. LUNA. So, with that, Chairman, I would like to have my time.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Mrs. Luna from Florida.

Mrs. LUNA. Thank you, Governor Walz.

Governor WALZ. Chairman, I would ask the ability to——

Mrs. LUNA. My line of questioning is not for you. Please do not interfere with the witness' time. It is for your Attorney General.

Chairman COMER. He did not ask a question, so it is Mrs. Luna's time.

Mrs. LUNA. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to be very clear about why we are here today and why both of you should be concerned. I have already sent criminal referrals to Attorney General Pam Bondi recommending that both Governor Walz and Attorney General Ellison be investigated and prosecuted under 18 U.S. Code 371 and 18 U.S. Code 2. The U.S. Attorney Office estimates up to \$9 billion in taxpayer money has been stolen on your watch, Governor Walz. Not a rounding error, not a typo, \$9 billion, and both of you knew.

Mr. Ellison, there is a widely reported recording of a meeting between you and Feeding Our Future on December 11, 2021. At that meeting, those individuals that you were speaking to told you that the state investigators looking into fraud were acting in a "racist manner," and your response was, and I am quoting directly from the recording, "Let's just go fight these people." I want to ask you, what do you mean by "fight these people?"

Mr. ELLISON. Congresswoman, first of all, this matter I have responded in writing to this Committee.

Mrs. LUNA. Mm-hmm.

Mr. ELLISON. I have written an op-ed about this matter. I have gone through several committees, one in the state, one in the Fed, one in the Senate—

Mrs. LUNA. Mm-hmm.

Mr. ELLISON [continuing]. Now here today, and it is very clear that these people were clearly liars. They were lying to me. They lied to judges. They lied to the state agencies. They were fraudsters. Everyone agrees that they are fraudsters, and, look—

Mrs. LUNA. If I could, just because I limited on time, though, I want to see, and I understand what you are stating. You are saying that you were essentially lied to, but in responding to them, and the reason I am questioning on this is because I had the privilege of questioning some of your state legislators that were Republicans, and they did feel that both you and the Governor were covering up what was happening with the fraud. So, I want to specifically, who were you referencing when you said, "fight these people?" If you could, just keep it short.

Mr. ELLISON. Congresswoman—

Mrs. LUNA. Was that your own state?

Mr. ELLISON. Congresswoman, these people represented themselves to be business people who were having difficulty with the bureaucracy.

Mrs. LUNA. Okay.

Mr. ELLISON. They contacted me and they wanted to know, you know, can you possibly help us. What I did is investigate their claims and then worked with the Federal authorities to see 57 of them convicted of crimes—

Mrs. LUNA. Okay.

Mr. ELLISON [continuing]. And about, I think, more than 80 now indicted. So, these people presented themselves as someone needing help and honest business people. They were not what they claimed to be—

Mrs. LUNA. Okay. So, just—

Mr. ELLISON [continuing]. And we helped them get convicted as they well should be.

Mrs. LUNA. Thank you for clarifying, but just to be clear, it would be the bureaucracy, would you say, within your own state? You were saying fight these people as in the bureaucracy within your own state, correct?

Mr. ELLISON. Congresswoman, I was in Congress for 12 years.

Mrs. LUNA. Thank you for serving in Congress.

Mr. ELLISON. And I did constituent services all the time——

Mrs. LUNA. Okay.

Mr. ELLISON [continuing]. Working with people.

Mrs. LUNA. So, I am not going to get anywhere on this question. That brings me to my next thing. Do you believe that it is racist to investigate someone of fraud because they are of Somalian descent? Yes or no.

Mr. ELLISON. Ma'am, I believe that anybody who commits fraud of any background should be investigated and held accountable.

Mrs. LUNA. Okay. Well, I would actually agree with you on that one, so thank you for clarifying. But to be clear, those individuals that you told the Department of Human Services, were basically, it was racist then if you were looking into it for fraud, you took that meeting, you made that promise, and then it turns out that the billions of dollars in fraud continued. And I hate to bring this up because I am a parent, but your own son also received donations from those same individuals. Imam Omar, the man that invited you and is listed a partial owner of an entity that was used to launder over \$40 million in Feeding Our Future funds.

I would say that you did mislead the public. Whether or not you, at the time, realized what they were up to, the fact is, is that you were then presented with the evidence, and it does feel, and according to your own state legislators, that you did not take that seriously enough. In my opinion, if you have that——

Mr. ELLISON. I will disagree, ma'am.

Mrs. LUNA. I am telling you what my opinion is. I do not believe that that was a question, but I do believe, based on the recording, based on the fact that you were personally tied to it, and based on the fact that your family then had ties to it as well, seems a little sus. Aside from that, though, you are telling the American people, essentially, that maybe you did not know about it when dozens of your own employees were afraid being labeled as racist or Islamophobic if they stayed silent. And so, I just want to be clear about something. You stated and you agree that anyone should be investigated based on, you know, regardless of their background, but the fact is that your own employees came forward and were actually afraid of actually looking into that fraud because they did not want to be labeled as Islamophobic or as maybe as even xenophobic.

So, you dismissed this, as President Trump said, as politicizing the issue when \$9 billion is not a political talking point. It is an embarrassment. The American people see what is going on, and this is fraud. I would say, and I would also advise the Attorney General to look into our criminal referrals. I do not believe that you guys could say that you did not know what was happening because, frankly, even if, let us say, giving you the benefit of the doubt, you

might not have known, you guys still chose to turn a blind eye to it. Thank you, Chairman. I yield my time.

Chairman COMER. The gentlelady yields back, and before I recognize Mr. Langworthy, our last questioner, I want to say Congressman Jack is on the Rules Committee, and everyone knows that they put in long hours. He is actually managing the Floor. If he does not make it back in time after Mr. Langworthy, I want to put into the record Representative Jack is leading debate on the Floor, but will submit his questions for the record. So, with that, I recognize Mr. Langworthy from New York.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Governor, you have served as Governor of the State of Minnesota for nearly seven years. Why did it take you until 2023 to launch an investigation under an Inspector General into this massive fraud that has been uncovered?

Governor WALZ. I do not believe that timeline is correct, Congressman. As I said, we were making changes, and this has been being worked and these cases have been brought forward years before.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. But your Administration did hesitate for years to fully investigate this fraud. Was it because you were concerned about, you know, you are the de facto leader of the Democratic Party of Minnesota as the Governor. Were you concerned about the political consequences within the Minnesota Democratic Party's voter coalition?

Governor WALZ. No.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Did that lead to you making that mistake, because trying to—

Governor WALZ. Yes.

Mr. LANGWORTHY [continuing]. Listen to the answers today and come up with a conclusion as to why you would turn a blind eye to this for so long when so many people from your partners in government across the aisle, but also people at the street level saw this fraud going on in plain sight.

Governor WALZ. Well, we did not, and I know that the rest of the country saw this recently, and what I would ask you, Congressman, is what benefit would there be to that? Just assume there are no ethics involved, which I have a long history here of doing that. There is certainly no benefit in taking money from programs that I have advocated for that make Minnesota the best state to live. And so, we worked it from the beginning. And look, these folks continue to move. They are a moving target. We went back to the legislature asking for more tools. We went back last year and asked for more tools, and now what is great is Republicans are actually supporting those things that we put forward. So, as soon as we—

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Well, Governor, Republicans came to this Committee last month and testified to the fact that they have been trying to get people's attention in power in Minnesota for a long time.

Governor WALZ. I would disagree with their characterization.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Well, so you state that, unequivocally, there was no political consideration based on constituents in the Democratic Party to turn a blind eye.

Governor WALZ. Absolutely not. Absolutely not.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Now, that is interesting, Governor, because your first reactions in December 2025 were to call taxpayer conspiracy theorists and dismiss concerns about the \$9 billion in fraud as white supremacy. And, you know, on December 23, you stated, "This is what happens when they scapegoat, and this is what happens when you no longer hide the idea of white supremacy." You immediately went there, and——

Governor WALZ. I believe I was speaking about the ICE invasion and Metro Surge. I am unfamiliar with where you are quoting from.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. No, this is when this fraud was uncovered. Knowing now that those people were correct, would you apologize to those constituents for classifying them?

Governor WALZ. I am unfamiliar with what you are asking for. I have heard today attacks on the Somali community that I would view as racist trope thrown at the Somali community.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Okay. Governor, I understand you need to deny and deflect, and, you know, your stories are pretty legendary at this point, but while you were looking the other way at fraud that took place on your watch, you and your ticket mates in the Democratic Party in Minnesota get somewhere between 80 and 90 percent of the vote in Somali-heavy precincts. In your reelection, the gentleman sitting next to you won his last election by a mere 21,000 votes. It seems to me and conventional wisdom here would be that you were willfully ignorant to these crimes in return for a community support.

Governor WALZ. That is totally false, Congressman. That accusation is totally false. I won by, I do not know, ten points, hundreds of thousands of votes.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. He won by 21,000.

Governor WALZ. But that accusation, throwing that around, we came here to help and work with you to try and find solutions to the problem.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. We are talking about \$9 billion in fraud. Your entire state budget is only \$65 billion. I mean, this is a massive problem.

Governor WALZ. Do you have the spreadsheet on that Congressman on the \$9 billion?

Mr. LANGWORTHY. You have rattled off about ten different numbers today. You clearly do not have a handle on the numbers either, and you need a serious accounting effort in the State of Minnesota right now.

Governor WALZ. Congressman, I have given you the numbers to the best of my ability.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. It is my time, not yours. Do you believe that your inaction in the first term to prevent fraud and the Childhood Nutrition and Childcare Assistance Programs gave the green light to other scammers to commit housing and Medicaid fraud in your second term?

Governor WALZ. No, I do not believe that.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. And once again, your words say one thing, and your actions say something different. You came into office after several multimillion-dollar fraud scandals on the heels of a 2018

report alleging that over \$100 million was being defrauded from taxpayers annually, and you did nothing, and in 2020——

Governor WALZ. That is not correct——

Mr. LANGWORTHY [continuing]. After hearing about potential fraud with Feeding Our Future, you did nothing.

Governor WALZ. That is incorrect.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. And, Governor, you knew and did nothing to stop autism payment fraud. Its annual expenses inexplicably increased from \$6 million to \$192 million in just five years, and you did nothing to stop housing stabilization, Medicaid fraud, which has topped \$100 billion, and you did nothing to stop daycare fraud, an issue that is already costing taxpayers millions when you were sworn into office. Are you familiar with Article VIII of the Minnesota Constitution?

Governor WALZ. I am not, Congressman, but I will give you this. Doing nothing, you are in the right job for that in this Congress. I disagree with that entire characterization. No, I am unfamiliar with that.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. It seems like you have created a State of Minnesota that you are free to come and set up shop——

Governor WALZ. It ranks at the top of almost every category.

Mr. LANGWORTHY [continuing]. And make fraud.

Governor WALZ. It ranks at the top of nearly every category and quality of life.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. A real big, bold one after what we have uncovered here today.

Governor WALZ. I think the country has seen what Minnesota is made of.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Article VIII states that Minnesota officers, including the Governor, may be impeached for malfeasance or nonfeasance in the performance of their official duties. While billions of dollars of taxpayer money were allowed to be lost to fraud, whistleblowers were ignored. It is extremely well documented, and those people were punished and you had a direct political benefit to this fraud. That is an impeachable offense. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The gentlemen yields back, and I think you heard the bell. I know votes are being called. So, the Ranking Member and I have deferred any closing statements until we come back.

I want to thank our witnesses for being here. We appreciate your testimony. Hopefully, you all will read the Committee report and protect the whistleblowers, and, hopefully we can hold some people accountable who have committed fraud.

Pursuant to the previous order, the Committee will recess for Floor votes. We plan to reconvene right after the vote series.

The Committee stands in recess. Thank you all.

Governor WALZ. You want us back?

Chairman COMER. The witnesses can be excused. Thank you all. [Recess.]

Chairman COMER. I am going to gavel the Committee back to order. I know there are some Members that are still coming back from the Floor, but we are going to go ahead and go through the bills, and then we will vote on them if there is any debate.

First motion is a Krishnamoorthi motion pertaining to the Homeland Security Secretary. The motion is debatable. Do any Members seek recognition on the Krishnamoorthi motion? Anybody seek recognition? The Chair recognizes Mr. Biggs.

Mr. BIGGS. This is for Secretary Noem. Is that correct?

Chairman COMER. This is for Secretary Noem.

Mr. BIGGS. So, she has been testifying down and is continued on in Judiciary, and it is, quite frankly, hard for me to imagine that there would be anything new that my colleagues across the aisle would want to ask her. So, it just seems to me like this is—

Chairman COMER. Would you yield to a question, Mr. Biggs?

Mr. BIGGS. Yes. Sure.

Chairman COMER. Did anyone during your Judiciary hearing today ask about Minnesota and all of that?

Mr. BIGGS. Yes, Mr. Chairman, to both of those, Minnesota and all of that, so.

Chairman COMER. Okay. So, she answered all those questions.

Mr. BIGGS. Yes, Mr. Chairman, she did, and I thought she was also cooperative because a number of my colleagues across the aisle asked her for more information. She is going to provide more information, and it just seems to me like this is deleterious and duplicative, and it would be a waste of time. So, with that, I would oppose this subpoena and yield back.

Chairman COMER. Okay. All right. The gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes Mr. Krishnamoorthi.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTH. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Look, I think that in this Committee, we have obviously touched on topics that are covered in other committees, including immigration, including other matters that have overlapping jurisdiction. But what has happened with ICE and CBP and DHS, not just with regard to excessive use of force and the Operation Midway Blitz or Metro Surge, but also the waste of money and government resources merits its own kind of examination in this Committee. So, that is why of all the committees, I think this one has the broadest jurisdiction and the one that is most concerned about rooting out waste, fraud, and abuse, and we have seen that in the DHS.

Chairman COMER. Okay. All right. The gentleman yields back. I am next going to recognize Mrs. Luna, and I think she may have an announcement.

Mrs. LUNA. Oh, well, thank you, Chairman. First of all, I think that we are the greatest Committee in Congress, and so I think that we have purview over every single branch, division, et cetera. So, I want to talk to everyone, and I think that these are all valid concerns for Members of Congress to want to speak directly to the secretaries. But I did also, too, do what some people do not do in Washington, and I picked up the phone and called Homeland, and Secretary Noem has agreed to have us, all the Members, over to Homeland to answer any questions that we may have. So, that option stands, and I will be taking full advantage of that not next week as we are out of session, but as soon as we get back. And so, with that being said, I think that that pretty much says that there is no need for a subpoena. She will come in, and she will answer questions and/or have us over there, and you have stated that you would coordinate.

Chairman COMER. Very good.

Mrs. LUNA. So, I yield. Thanks.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Mr. Burchett from Tennessee.

Mr. BURCHETT. I was going to ask Mrs. Luna, will there be food?

Mrs. LUNA. I think we can arrange something.

Mr. BURCHETT. All right.

Mrs. LUNA. Maybe Chick-fil-A, if everyone tired of Chick-fil-A.

Mr. BURCHETT. I am so dadgum tired of chicken.

Mrs. LUNA. Okay. Maybe some vegan?

Mr. BURCHETT. Give me a pizza with some meat on it.

Mrs. LUNA. Vegan is good, you know.

Mr. BURCHETT. No.

Chairman COMER. Any other Member seek recognition on the Krishnamoorthi?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. All right. All those in favor of the Krishnamoorthi motion, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, signify by saying no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it, and the motion is not agreed to.

Mr. GARCIA. Yeas and nays, please.

Chairman COMER. Okay. A recorded vote has been ordered. All votes will be rolled to the end of this debate, which hopefully will be pretty soon.

The next motion is the motion by Ms. Mace referencing Pam Bondi, the Attorney General. This motion is debatable. Do any Members seek recognition?

I will comment on it. Or do you wish recognition?

I had a phone call with the Chief of Staff for the Attorney General, and the Attorney General has offered to give Members a briefing, a few at a time to come into the Department of Justice and get a briefing on where they are with respect to Epstein documents and anything else pertaining to that. So, I am certainly interested in getting a briefing from the Attorney General.

Mrs. LUNA. I also think that maybe we have questions about Anthony Weiner, but that is separate.

Chairman COMER. That what?

Mrs. LUNA. Anthony Weiner's laptop?

Chairman COMER. Me?

Mrs. LUNA. Just in general.

Chairman COMER. Okay.

Mrs. LUNA. I think she will be willing to answer any questions.

Chairman COMER. All right.

Mrs. LUNA. Thank you.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes the Ranking Member.

Mr. GARCIA. Thank you. I want to support Representative Mace's motion for the Attorney General. Look, the American public have significant questions about the DOJ and their process for releasing of the files. I think the Attorney General has gone to speak obviously to other Committees. I think it is important that she is in front of our Committee. She can directly answer questions about

the release of the files, about transparency, of ensuring that victims and survivors are protected. And so, we certainly support Representative Macy's motion as it relates to bringing the Attorney General here to have a hearing in this Committee, and if there is other opportunities to speak with her, we would welcome those as well.

Chairman COMER. Any other Members seek recognition?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none. All those in favor of the Mace motion, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, say no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it. The motion is not agreed to.

A recorded vote has been ordered. All votes will be rolled to the end of the debate, okay?

Now, the next motion, Number 3 of 4, is Ms. Mace, the Mace Number 2 pertaining to her issue, and I will yield to Ms. Mace.

Ms. MACE. This would be a subpoena for information on the Sexual Harassment Slush Fund. I want those documents and information related to it and Members that were included in it.

Chairman COMER. Okay. The Chair recognizes the Ranking Member.

Mr. GARCIA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have some comments on Representative Mace's motion, and then I would want to offer just a slight amendment to it, which I think would help protect certain staff, and I just want to just kind of clarify first. I want to appreciate the actual effort. I think that, obviously, there should not be funds to protect any Member of Congress that has been engaged in any type of sexual harassment or abuse of anyone, so I do appreciate that effort.

Now, we have heard some concerns from the Office of General Counsel that the breadth of this motion covering Members, Senators, staff, Library of Congress staff, Government Publishing Office (GPO), Government Information Online (GIO), Capitol Police, and other entities, and employees covered within the actual motion makes it more likely that the Office of congressional Workplace Rights could push back based on some confidentiality language. Also, there is some concern from our Members that it does not protect staff enough, that there could be a chilling effect on staff. I understand the intent of the motion. So, Congresswoman, I just want to add, if you would be willing to accept this amendment, we think this would clarify this.

Mr. Chairman, I would move the Committee issue—I am sorry, let me look here. Oh, Mr. Chairman?

Ms. MACE. Can I copy the language because my language redacts names of victims of witnesses.

Mr. GARCIA. Correct. Correct. There are still some concerns. Let me just offer the amendment to see if you are amenable to it.

Mr. Chairman, I move the Committee—I am sorry. One second. Where did it go? Right here? Here it is. At the end of your motion—

Ms. MACE. They are trying to cover for their pathetic floor vote just now.

Mr. GARCIA. So, Representative Mace, at the end of the motion, we would add this language, and I am happy to pass this out, which we are putting out right now. At the end of the motion, we would add, "The awards and settlements will be limited to a payment made for an award or settlement in connection with the claim alleging a violation committed personally by an individual, who at the time of committing the violation, was a Member of the House of Representatives, including a delegate or resident commissioner to the Congress, or a senator." Are we okay with that?

Ms. MACE. Yes, I am fine with the language, yep.

Mr. GARCIA. Okay. That is something that we believe that we could support. This amendment, of course, would limit this to Members, Senators, and with that, I would recommend that we vote yes to support this amendment.

Chairman COMER. Officially making an amendment?

Mr. GARCIA. That is the amendment to add to the motion.

Chairman COMER. Mr. Garcia would like to amend the motion basically to exclude staff.

Mr. GARCIA. So that we can actually focus this on who I think the Representative is trying to get to, which is Members and Senators.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chairman, he is using language out of, basically, Rule 23 of the House Rules, so I am fine with that, limiting it to House Members, Senators, et cetera. I am good with this.

Chairman COMER. Okay. So, the amendment has been offered. I guess the debate is now on the amendment to the motion. I saw Luna then Biggs. Luna?

Mrs. LUNA. All right. I support Representative Mace's subpoena here as well as the amendment to it, and I just think it is really disgusting how this institution protects itself because you all, just half of them, voted to send this stuff to House Ethics where you know it is going to die. We know that Members of Congress are using taxpayer dollars to pay off sexual harassment. We just had a Member of Congress literally sexually harass a woman that then lit herself on fire, and you guys all protected him. You guys all protected, my own side, your side.

And so, if you guys want to talk about victims, if you want to go out and virtue signal, and then you guys are going to kill her stuff on the Floor and then try to pass it, yes, of course we should subpoena all of this stuff. But just I am not going to sit here and play games. I think it is a complete fraud. I think that is why the American people hate us. I think the midterms are coming up, and everyone should go on record for this, and I hope that Members are exposed for this. I hope it goes back, I think, to the 70s because it is wrong that it is happening. It is wrong that we cover up for it. It is wrong that we cannot center our own side because people are busy making deals because you guys do not want to center your side. It is a deal that has been cut, and people hate us for it. So, yes, I support it.

Ms. MACE. Thank you, Representative Luna.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Mr. Biggs.

Mr. BIGGS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question because I want to make sure that I understand it. On the second line of the motion, where it talks about for the awards or settlements paid, that seems to me that it would exclude allegations which have been unproven or unsubstantiated or unresolved through an award or settlement. Is that right?

Ms. MACE. Yes, the word, "allegation," would include allegations, yes, not just things that have been completed. It is allegations.

Mr. BIGGS. But it does not say that. It says——

Ms. MACE. Oh, it is just final settlements.

Mr. BIGGS. Yes. It says awards or final settlements.

Ms. MACE. Yes.

Mr. BIGGS. So, I just want to make sure that that is the case.

Ms. MACE. Yes, correct.

Mr. BIGGS. Okay.

Ms. MACE. And I am good with the amendment.

Mr. BIGGS. I am all in on the underlying, and I am actually okay with the amendment, although I do think it narrows it more than perhaps I would like to see, but I will yield it back to you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Mr. Khanna, then Ms. Boebert.

Mr. KHANNA. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to recognize Representative Mace's courage, first, in standing up for the disclosure of the Epstein files so we do not protect pedophiles, and now she is saying the same thing. Let us not protect people who sexually harass in the U.S. Congress, and she is saying——

[Applause.]

Mr. KHANNA. And she is saying let us have Pam Bondi tell us why half the files are still hidden. I do not understand how anyone on this Committee cannot vote yes on both of those motions. It is about transparency. It has nothing to do with being a Democrat or a Republican. It is about going after predators and people who are sexually harassing, and that is what the American people expect, and I appreciate Representative Mace's commitment to that transparency.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Ms. Boebert.

Ms. MACE. Thank you, Mr. Khanna.

Chairman COMER. Boebert.

Ms. BOEBERT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank Congresswoman Nancy Mace for introducing this privileged motion. I think at this point, this is something that should be introduced on a weekly basis. I am absolutely disgusted that we could not even get to 50 Members of Congress who want immediate transparency. Don't we all campaign on transparency? Don't we all go out and tell the American voters that we are leaders and that we are going to get justice for them, that we are going to do right by them, and then we hire their daughters to come work for us, and your tax dollars, millions and millions of dollars has been used in this slush fund as hush money to silence victims who have been sexually harassed, sexually abused by Members of Congress. And then Congress is going to do exactly what it does best—investigate itself—and we know that none of that ever goes anywhere.

The American people demand transparency, and this does not just pertain to a ranch in Arizona or New Mexico or an island down in the Virgin Islands. This is happening right here in our Nation's Capital, and we should be held to the highest standards. And to every Member who voted to send this to Committee where you know this was sent to die on the House Floor just moments ago, I hope you have a darn good reason to tell your constituents why you were not going to stand up for the victims. And I am glad that we are doing something about it here in the Oversight Committee. I am glad that this motion was made here so we actually have another chance at transparency.

But again, these are your tax dollars. These are your tax dollars that were used to silence victims. They have been settled with victims. And to the Members who voted against this, go home and tell your daughters what you did today. Go home and tell your daughters what happens in the workplace, no matter where it is, in your hometown, in your Nation's Capital, and tell them what you did to help continue to cover up decades of corruption. I am absolutely in favor of this motion. Thank you, Congresswoman, for bringing this up. I yield.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Mr. Donalds, then Mace.

Mr. DONALDS. Thank you, Chairman. This is really more a question on the, I am assuming, an amendment to the motion?

Chairman COMER. This is the Garcia Amendment to exclude staff.

Mr. DONALDS. All right. So, I guess my question for Mr. Garcia is, why are we going to make a limitation on staff? If congressional dollars have been utilized for the purposes of, essentially, trying to cover up or cure harassment that has occurred, why are staff members being exempted from that level of transparency?

Mr. GARCIA. No, I think that is a good question. So, in our conversations with the Office of General Counsel, I think the one concern, and it has been brought up by some Members as well, is that there are some staff in congressional offices and other places, they have made settlements for a variety of different reasons. And the concern is that they, in a process of disclosure, could be unprotected from their settlement process that they agreed to, and the Office of General Counsel is unclear that they would have protected in those cases. And so, that is the concern. At the end of the day, I think the intent is this is for Members of Congress and for Senators, so that is the one thing that we are trying to clarify.

Mr. DONALDS. And I—

Mr. HIGGINS. Does the Ranking Member yield for a question?

Mr. DONALDS. Hold on, and I appreciate that, but I guess what I am trying to understand is if that is the standard for a staff member, that there was a settlement based upon the reasonings that you said, but that same level is not for the Member, whether for the Member, whether they are a current Member or a previous Member that has been in this body. I guess I am just trying to understand what the limiting principle is for what we are trying to accomplish because if the goal is transparency to make sure that harassment that has occurred on Capitol Hill is now transparent, but that is only for elected Members, current and past, but does not deal with staff members, both current and past, then I fail to

see how the level of transparency is being arrived at with the motion.

Mr. GARCIA. No, I appreciate it. Can I say one more thing? I think this is a good back-and-forth. I think the other issue is there is some concern that staff members that have, on their own, agreed to a settlement, and if there is additional disclosure in a settlement that they negotiated for a variety of different reasons, if they were the actual victim, that this would cause a chilling effect in small legislative offices.

Mr. DONALDS. No, I understand that, but by that logic, that would occur throughout the entire Capitol Complex under that logic because if you are going to say that in a small legislative office, well, let us be clear: half of the House has small legislative offices. If that is the case, would not that same logic proceed to the Floor of the House and the Floor of the Senate? And mind you, I am in favor of the motion, I am in favor of transparency, but I am trying to ascertain, are we trying to create a limit to that transparency for the stuff that, to be blunt, is just hot topic, or are we trying to have transparency?

Mr. GARCIA. No, can I respond one more time? So, I actually think this is an important debate as a piece of this. I am going to support the motion. We want to support the motion. As Democrats, we know what she is trying to get at here. We want to support it. What we are trying to do is address a real concern of some of our Members and the offices that we are talking to about could this have a chilling effect on certain small offices that have gone into settlements? That is what we are trying to eliminate. I think the focus here is on Members of Congress and Senators. I think this amendment tries to address that. Either way, we are going to support the final motion. I certainly am. And so, I just wanted to pass it along. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. Mr. Donalds, would you yield for a few seconds?

Mr. DONALDS. Yes, sir.

Chairman COMER. I just want to say I agree with you. I think if we are going to do this, we do not exclude anyone. If we are going to disclose the settlement, let us disclose every penny where it went, even if it went to staff because at some point, people are going to say the amount of money that was paid out, and I have no idea how much was paid out. I do not know a single person that was paid, other than maybe the former Member from Texas a few years ago, but they are going to say a dollar amount, and everybody is going to assume it was all Members. Well, it could have been 25 percent Members, 75 percent staff, or it could be a hundred percent Members. I say disclose the whole thing. So, I oppose the Garcia Amendment, but I yield back to you, Byron.

Mr. DONALDS. I mean, Chairman, I guess my question would be for the original sponsor of the motion, Ms. Mace. I guess I am trying to understand where we are taking this, and when it comes to the transparency aspects, I am a hundred percent for that. We should do that.

Ms. MACE. Then vote for it.

Mr. DONALDS. But Nancy, I am not saying I am voting no. Like, I am for it, but I am trying to understand why is it okay to say just the Members and not staff if those things—

Ms. MACE. It is “Congresswoman Mace.” I do have a title like everybody else in this room. We are talking—

Mr. DONALDS. Come on, Nancy. I mean, we are just trying to have a conversation.

Ms. MACE. It is “Congresswoman Mace.”

Mr. DONALDS. I am trying to get an ascertainment.

Ms. MACE. I have earned a title, and I watched the majority of men in this body just vote down a measure—

Mr. DONALDS. Nancy, I have—

Ms. MACE [continuing]. To not disclose sexual harassment records—

Mr. DONALDS. Congresswoman Mace, I have never disrespected you at all.

Ms. MACE [continuing]. Of Members of Congress.

Mr. DONALDS. I am not being disrespectful. I am trying to get an ascertainment.

Ms. MACE. You just disrespected me as a woman.

Mr. DONALDS. No, I did not. You are taking it too far.

Ms. MACE. Do the taxpayers pay your salary?

Mr. DONALDS. I am trying to get an understanding of that what we are doing here. That is all I am saying.

Ms. MACE. The taxpayers pay our salary—

Mr. DONALDS. The core question—

Ms. MACE [continuing]. And taxpayers paid out these settlements.

Mr. DONALDS. Reclaiming my time now.

Ms. MACE. Well, you are over time now.

Mr. DONALDS. The core of the question is, why is it okay for a limitation just to Members if these dollars have been paid on behalf, potentially, of staff, both currently on Capitol Hill and previously employed on Capitol Hill.

Ms. MACE. Look, I am in favor of—

Mr. DONALDS. If we are seeking transparency, what is the limit?

Ms. MACE. I am in favor of full disclosure, but if the other side of the aisle is concerned about legal limitations in disclosing and it not working, then I am okay with focusing on just on Members of Congress of both bodies, the House and the Senate. If you would like to do your own amendment or do your own subpoena afterwards, then do that too, but this thing has to pass. I mean, the American people—we expect the American people to be held accountable to a totally different standard, and now we are saying, oh, because we do not have staff included, we are just going to vote this thing down. I am talking about Members of Congress, bodies in this House, bodies in the Senate. That is where the focus should be because the taxpayers are paying our salaries, and if this thing fails because of a technicality, then that is a failure of the American people, is where I am going with it.

I want this thing to pass. I would like it to be unanimous. I would like both parties to vote for it, especially after the abject failure we just saw on the Floor just now.

Mr. DONALDS. Well, I am a minute and 30 over, so I am going to reclaim. All I am going to say, if there is a technical concern, then what we are saying also is that the technical concern is not universal, that we are now picking and choosing what the technical concern is. And if we are going to now lay motions for this transparency, I would just say we should actually examine. According to what the Chairman is saying, are we going to be consistent, or are we not, and that is all I am saying. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes Mr. Min from California.

Mr. MIN. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have a brief comment, and I do not particularly have any skin in the game on this one. I voted no on the motion to refer earlier, but I would just say there is a very clear difference between those of us who are Members and our staff, which is we are public figures. We run for office. Our staff did not choose to be in the limelight. They did not choose to take on this burden. So, when you look at what private companies do, what government officials and staff do in other situations, they are typically not disclosed in the way this bill would do. I think we are unique in that we are running for office every two years. I think that we have additional responsibilities and a higher moral calling and a higher moral level we have to adhere to because we are so powerful.

So, I support the motion because I think there are legitimate legal issues with disclosing staff. At the same time, I support the base motion, whether or not this amendment passes.

Mr. BIGGS. Would the gentleman yield.

Mr. MIN. With that, I yield back my time.

Chairman COMER. The gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes, I think Dr. Foxx, then Clay Higgins.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Chairman?

Chairman COMER. Yes?

Ms. FOXX. As someone else said, I do not really have a big dog in this fight or anything, but if Mr. Garcia might take a friendly amendment to his amendment. If there is concern about transparency related to non-Members, could we ask in the amendment that we get a report on an amount of money that might have been given out in relationship to non-Members? And then if there seems to be a real problem there, that that could be then looked into by this Committee. I am just—

Mr. GARCIA. I do not have a problem with that at all. I think that is a fair request. I think that gives the Committee opportunity to take a look at that number and see if there is other action that needs to be taken.

Chairman COMER. So, let me get this straight. You are going to make an amendment to the amendment, and your amendment is that we have to disclose how much money was paid out to staff.

Ms. FOXX. Correct, and then—

Chairman COMER. Yes.

Ms. FOXX [continuing]. If this Committee thinks that is a sizable enough amount—

Chairman COMER. I think that is good. If you would yield, I think that is good because I do not want a number to come out and everyone to assume a hundred percent went to Members. It could be a hundred percent Members, or it could be—

Ms. MACE. Well, to Mr. Donald's point, my staff just told me that a fair share of the settlement funds were for non-Members.

Chairman COMER. Okay.

Ms. MACE. I do not know if it is 50 percent. I did not have that information, with Capitol Police settling sexual harassment claims, allegedly. I have a sheet in my office for Ms. Foxx after this that goes through—just so everybody knows, this only goes up to 2018 because this program was ended after 2018, so this is more historical. But my staff just told me a fair share of the settlement payouts, in some years it was \$4 or \$5 million dollars, were to people who are not Members of Congress. So, I just got that piece of intel.

Chairman COMER. You support the Foxx amendment to the amendment.

Ms. MACE. Repeat it again? What was the amendment to the amendment?

Ms. FOXX. Well, what I would suggest, Congresswoman Mace, is that, in order to sort of deal with the transparency issue, I would like transparency, too, but that we go forward with the Garcia Amendment so we are focusing only on Members, but we ask whoever it is we are asking to provide the total amount of money that had been paid out for—

Ms. MACE. I am fine with that.

Ms. FOXX [continuing]. People other than—

Ms. MACE. And I actually have that list. I have that list by year, but I am good with that amendment. If you want to do an amendment to the amendment, I am fine with that, and I have a spreadsheet, so.

Mr. GARCIA. We would support that.

Chairman COMER. Okay, and we are drafting the amendment up.

Ms. MACE. And walk humbly, Mr. Donalds.

Chairman COMER. So, we are going to move—

Ms. MACE. Walk humbly, Mr. Donalds.

Chairman COMER. If anyone else wants to talk about the amendment to the amendment, I will recognize them. It is going to take staff a few minutes to draft this up. Mr. Burlison.

Mr. BURLISON. I am getting a little bit confused, but I just want to make sure, and I do not know who would be able to answer this, but as long as—and, you know, and I did not even think about this until this conversation happened. But as long as the public is able to figure it out whether it was the Member who was the one victimizing and the reason for the harassment or a staff-on-staff situation. I just want to make sure that that is—

Chairman COMER. Right.

Mr. BURLISON [continuing]. Able to be ascertained in whatever is released.

Chairman COMER. Yes.

Mr. BURLISON. Mr. Garcia, do you understand my question?

Mr. GARCIA. I do, and I think that is why we are making the amendment as well, is we want to be very clear this is about Members of Congress and Senators. And I think that Representative Foxx's amendment clarifies that we would get a report on all other settlements with numbers so that we can then have information to make any additional motions.

Mr. BURLISON. I do think that that is good because if you have a continuing problem in an office, even if the Member is not the one doing it——

Mr. GARCIA. That is right.

Mr. BURLISON [continuing]. But they are not having oversight of their staff in a proper way, then that is a problem. But I just want to make sure it is transparent, whatever we are releasing, that, you know, whoever the victimizer is, whether it is the Member or their staff.

Chairman COMER. All right. Okay. Any other Members?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. So, do we have it typed up yet? I know we do not. The amendment, can we do that or not? Does anyone object if we go and discuss the Bell motion? Do you object, Ms. Tlaib?

Ms. TLAIB. No, just for clarification.

Chairman COMER. We are trying to type it up. That is why we are——

Ms. TLAIB. I know.

Chairman COMER. Okay.

Ms. TLAIB. Are we exempting chief of staffs and things like that? As an attorney that worked on these kinds of cases, sometimes it is management positions that are considered staff, but, you know, the Member looks the other way kind of thing. So, I am just cautiously saying that I think Congresswoman Foxx is right in looking at an amount, but really, should it be based on an amount or should it be based on whether or not this person had a supervisor position that is supervised by a Member? Does that make sense? So, the Member is fully responsible for their chief, right, and I just feel like, you know, some of the horror stories I have heard is a Member knows, they kind of look the other way, and allow the person managing their staff get away with it.

Chairman COMER. It sounds like——

Ms. TLAIB. Because I am all for protecting——

Chairman COMER. You oppose both amendments, but support the bill.

Ms. TLAIB. No, I support it.

Chairman COMER. I just want to be——

Ms. TLAIB. I want to do it.

Chairman COMER. I think most people support the bill.

Ms. TLAIB. But I also——

Chairman COMER. I am just saying the——

Ms. TLAIB. I also as a——

Chairman COMER. You oppose excluding staff, and if you——

Ms. TLAIB. Well, this is the thing, as a person that——

Chairman COMER. And I feel that way, too.

Ms. TLAIB. As a person that was sexually harassed at work, I had a supervisor who reported back to someone else, and probably if I had known it would get information, I probably would not have ever reported it. So, I get what our Ranking Member is saying because, especially when you are younger, okay? We are at a time in our lives for my fellow sisters in service here, but for younger staff members, this is scary to think about any of this information coming out because no matter what you all think, it will impact their future prospects. And especially if it is a small staff, they are going

to figure out who it is. It is just a ripple effect. So, I just want, as we draft this, be very cautious in making sure we are not protecting people.

The goal is to have people that are fully ones responsible and making sure and preventing this from happening, and that is the Member, the Senator, and the House of Representatives Member, but we got to make sure that, you know, in other situations where a lot of this stuff can be enabled by the Member and not addressing these issues. But at the same time, Chairman Comer, I do worry about victims and folks coming forward——

Chairman COMER. Right.

Ms. TLAI [continuing]. Not wanting to come forward because of what we are trying to do. And we are trying to do this because people are getting away with it, and Congresswoman Mace is right. People are getting away with not being held accountable, and paying off folks, and looking the other way and, again, probably repeating their abuse afterwards.

Chairman COMER. All right. And since, now that Ms. Talib yields back, the amendment is typed up. Everyone should have the amendment to the amendment, and I will read it. The Foxx Amendment, “included will also be an annualized list of the amounts of awards and settlements paid to or on behalf of non-member staff.” So, that is the amendment to the amendment. Does anyone else want to debate the amendment to amendment? Dr. Foxx?

Ms. FOXX. Well, the only thing I would like to say is I think Ms. Talib is right about threats to younger women. And if a report comes back that has a lot of money attached to it, says there is a lot of money, then this Committee can go ahead and do some investigation. My point was, let us give an opportunity——

Chairman COMER. Right.

Ms. FOXX [continuing]. For the Committee to do more if it needs to, but I think Mr. Garcia’s amendment is a good amendment to narrow it now so we can move on. I think it is the best of both worlds, I hope.

Chairman COMER. Okay. So, seeing no more, we are going to vote on the——

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Chairman.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Comer, can I just say—oh, are we voting on the whole thing right now?

Chairman COMER. No, no, no. We are voting on the amendment to the amendment. That will be the process. Were you seeking recognition, Clay?

Mr. HIGGINS. Yes.

Chairman COMER. Okay. So, all those in favor. Oh, you have a——

Mr. HIGGINS. I was seeking recognition.

Chairman COMER. Go ahead.

Mr. HIGGINS. I would just like to remind the Committee and those present that we are once again presenting to the American people that this is the way the Oversight Committee pursues a subpoena, and this is not the way the Oversight Committee pursues a subpoena. We are the Majority, and we generally will work with the Minority party for an appropriate subpoena to be pre-

sented by this Committee. And, like, every time we have a hearing now, an opportunity to be recognized is going to be some sort of grandstanding subpoena, whether by the Majority or the Minority. I think it is beneath the dignity and the procedures of this subpoena process that is longstanding established by this Committee and the hard work that the Committee staff does to accommodate the desires of a Member on either side of the aisle to pursue a particular subpoena.

This is not the way we normally do it, although this is becoming the norm. And let me say that this amendment, as it is being pieced together, is poorly assembled, and nobody really knows what this thing is or what the impact will be. The good lady stated that there could be absolutely some impact on staff, and people will figure out who is who because of small staffs and when the incident took place.

And finally, let me say that the original motion to subpoena references a date of December 12, 2018. Let me clarify. I had to ask what was the significance of that date because that is when a law was passed that changed the process to what we have right now. But Americans watching this are saying, oh, you mean there is no process in place on how to appropriately handle a complaint like this, and there is. It is an administrative process that goes to General Counsel set up by the House since 2018 that handles this. America, a Member is basically not involved. Now, I have never been sued like this. I have been sued one time through the administrative process here in Congress is because I escorted the little fellow away from a press conference one time.

[Laughter.]

Mr. HIGGINS. It was not a complaint from a staff Member. So, I do not have intimate knowledge of the way this mechanism works, but I do know that Members have very little to do with it. It is handled by General Counsel, and then it will go to a district court maybe if it passes through the preliminary review—that is what it is called right now—by General Counsel of the House. Then it can get to a district court where a Member may have his day in court to defend himself or whatever.

So, I am opposed to this process, Mr. Chairman, of just thrusting subpoena upon the Committee for debate like this that does not have to happen. I understand that people have different motives going on with why they support this and I do not know how I am going to vote, but this thing is like woven together from three different pieces right now. You have the original motion, which nobody really understands the impact of, you have an amendment to the motion, then there is an amendment to the amendment of the motion, and we are not sure what we are voting on right now, but we know we are all supposed to vote yes because it has been thrust upon us like this. I yield.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. Well said, Mr. Higgins.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chairman, I would like to respond.

Chairman COMER. I am supposed to recognize Krishnamoorthi next. Krishnamoorthi?

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. Mr. Chair, can we vote?

Chairman COMER. I would love to vote, but we have more Members seeking recognition. Does any other Member seek recognition? Mr. Turner and then Mr. Donalds. Okay.

Mr. TURNER. I just want to affiliate myself with Mr. Higgins' statement. I was resisting saying anything about this whatsoever, but this is a circus. This process degrades valid legislative processes. It reduces what is supposed to be substantive legal processes that were debated and adopted by Congress without any reference to any historical substantive legislative processes that have happened before Congress, and this is not how subpoenas or legislation is supposed to be amended or addressed.

Now, regardless of whether any of these issues in the end are valid or substantively important, this is not how they are to be handled in addressing them. This becomes a circus. If this Committee is going to take up amending this legislation or addressing this issues it is addressing, we should be having a hearing on them. We should open it up. We should not be doing it in this manner, but we are at this point now, Mr. Chairman, and we are well down the road, but this has become a circus, and it is unfortunate.

Chairman COMER. Well said.

Ms. BOEBERT. Sexual harassment is pretty unfortunate, too.

Mr. TIMMONS. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes, I think, Mr. Timmons.

Mr. TIMMONS. Mr. Chairman, this is going to revictimize victims. It is not possible to redact the information to a point that would preclude anybody that has half a brain about how this place works of figuring out who the person was that got the settlement, whether it was the Member or the chief or some other staffer within. I do not know what the answer is to this. I am all for transparency, but, I mean, if somebody is living their lives, this goes back eight years. So, if you got somebody that something happened to ten years ago and now they are going to have to start answering questions for it? They probably want their life to just go on as it is.

I mean, we did not take the necessary steps and a number of victims were revictimized because of how we went about with the Epstein files. So, I think maybe we should learn from that and just get this right. I do not know what the answer is. I am all for whatever transparency. If there is a victim out there that would love to make a big deal about this ten years later and hold somebody accountable further, great, knock it out. But I think for every one of those people, there is going to be another person that would prefer to never think about whatever happened again and enjoy the money they got. So, I do not know what the answer is, but, I do not think voting on—I mean, this is going to create more problems, and I will definitely affiliate myself with Mr. Higgins' remarks. This is not how this is supposed to happen.

Chairman COMER. Well said. Mr. Donalds and Mr. Sessions?

Mr. DONALDS. I actually have a clarifying question on the Foxx Amendment because as I read that to amend the Garcia Amendment, in my reading, and I am not a lawyer, but I am trying to understand this on the fly, it actually invalidates both amendments and we are back to the original motion because if we are not going to produce an annualized list of the awards paid to or on behalf of non-Member staff, which non-Member staff, I am assuming, would

be any other employee in the Capitol Complex not in a Member office. That is what that says to me in lay terms. I think what we are actually doing is we are getting back to the original motion of Ms. Mace, so I am just trying to get clarity on that, Mr. Chairman, before we vote this thing out.

Chairman COMER. I cannot clarify. I agree with some of the earlier statements. This is not how we are supposed to operate. But,—it is still Byron's time. Are you still talking or—

Mr. DONALDS. I just want to know if somebody wants to answer that.

Chairman COMER. Anybody want to clarify?

Mr. DONALDS. Or anybody who has any thoughts on that. Anybody.

Mrs. LUNA. If I could just say, I think they are going to print it out and vote your conscience, but I say do not support sexual freaks or deviants and support the amendment, and let us get it passed. Thank you. I yield.

Mr. DONALDS. But let us—

Mrs. LUNA. No to freaks, Byron.

Mr. DONALDS. Well, hold on now. Here is what we are going to do now. I think it is important to understand exactly what we are releasing. Like, I was fine with the original Mace motion, and then we were told, no, we cannot do that because there is a chilling effect.

Chairman COMER. Right.

Mr. DONALDS. But the Foxx Amendment now kind of undoes some of the chilling effect, the language that the Garcia Amendment does. So, I do not think it is just as simple as saying, well, just vote it out and be done. I think if we are going to do this, Members have to think very clearly about what we are actually letting through. I am fine with the original motion as it is. That is my position.

Chairman COMER. Great.

Mr. DONALDS. And I just think that both motions really countermand each other to a degree.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Chairman?

Chairman COMER. Dr. Foxx?

Mr. DONALDS. I yield to Mr. Biggs.

Chairman COMER. So, okay. Mr. Biggs, there are still 3 minutes, yes.

Mr. BIGGS. Yes. I am just trying to see if I could help clarify that if you deleted the term, "non-Members," and you just put "on behalf of staff of Members of the Senate or House of Representatives," you know, you are talking about the staff of Members, would that assuage your concern? I mean, I get what you are saying, and this does kind of get messy, I think. I do think the lawyer in me is saying, well, maybe we should get some precision in speaking, and this might be a little bit more precise than the generic Foxx Amendment. So, anyway. I yield back to you.

Chairman COMER. All right. Ms. Mace, would you—Dr. Foxx, do you have anything to add, Dr. Foxx?

Ms. FOXX. Well, I would just say, I think Mr. Garcia's amendment is pretty clear. It is going after information about a settlement made on behalf of a Member of Congress, whether it is to a

staff person of a Member of Congress or anybody else. I do not think you have to say that it is a staff person here. It just says alleging a violation committed by an individual who was a Member of Congress or a delegate or whatever. And then all I am doing to assuage the concern about whether or not it casts too wide a net in terms of people other than Members is to say, okay, well, we will get a list of amounts of money paid out to other people, not staff members, and then see if it is warranted to proceed. I am just trying to move us off the dime we are on right now and then see what else needs to be done. Nothing precludes further investigation.

Chairman COMER. The Chair recognizes—Mr. Sessions, did you seek recognition?

Mr. SESSIONS. Yes, sir. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, probably only this top row here back were there some ten years ago when this was a big issue. Oh, Andy was here. Okay. Well, it was a very difficult issue. It was in the papers. It cost Members their jobs. Some of it was true. Some of it was untrue. It really did not matter. You were guilty if your name even appeared anywhere near it. There were some good people who got hurt in that. They took their lumps and they moved on. But there was an agreement that if you could, and this was by men, women, both sides, that if you could engage in this without public scrutiny. I think the fear at the time was it would hurt someone that claimed this, and you wanted to protect them also. And I just think that we should get into a circumstance, perhaps like Chairwoman Foxx has said, let us go in and take a look at this to where we know what we are talking about before we do it.

But I do not think in any way that I would be for protecting someone if they should not be protected, but there were things that happened that we learned about at the time that were unintended. And even the person who was harmed said, well, he may not have meant it and maybe he did not, but I took it that way. And so, I am just simply saying, I just think we ought to have a better idea about what we are talking about here before we go in and assume that there was a right and a wrong because it was meant to protect people at the time. It was not a compromise. It was by agreement, that at the time we did this, that there was agreement to it.

Mr. TIMMONS. Will you for one second?

Mr. SESSIONS. I would yield.

Mr. TIMMONS. I just want to point out that Congresswoman Mace thought that it was appropriate to say, "With only redactions allowable for the personally identifiable information of victims, alleged victims, and witnesses." That is an illusory caveat because any settlement that was made, you are going to have the quarterly disclosure of the office. You are going to see who was there for one quarter, then who was not there the next. So, this is an illusory redaction, protection of victims and alleged victims, and I just think that we need to be aware of that. If we are going to do this, I mean, this is going to revictimize victims and that sentence should not be in there because it is pointless, and it does not actually do what she is trying to accomplish.

Mr. SESSIONS. And I think that is correct, and with great respect to Nancy, she just learned some things today about the motion, the issue, the ideas that she is pushing, and I think it ought to be

thought about a little bit. And I think that we should revisit it, but with some facts and factors that are known and understood. I watched good people on both sides that got caught up in this, and we tried to work out of it by agreement, not because we compromised. I yield back.

Chairman COMER. Yield back. Any other Member seek recognition on this or we are going to vote? Ms. Mace, you want to speak on the amendment to the amendment or——

Ms. MACE. I will wait.

Chairman COMER. You will wait? We are going to vote on the amendment to the amendment. Okay. Are you good with that? I want you to be happy. All right.

All those in favor of Dr. Foxx's amendment to the amendment, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, no.

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the ayes have it, and the amendment to the amendment is agreed to.

Now we will vote on the amendment, as amended, the Garcia Amendment as amended by Dr. Foxx.

All those in favor of the Garcia Amendment, as amended by Dr. Foxx's amendment, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed, no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the ayes have it, and the amendment, as amended, is agreed to.

So, now we are back to voting on the Mace Number 2 amendment [sic], as amended.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed say no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the ayes have it. The motion is agreed to.

Now, the last vote is the Bell motion. Mr. Bell, you want to explain your motion? I do not even remember what it was.

Mr. BELL. Yes, Mr. Chair. My amendment was to bring in Gregory Bovino to this body. We think it is about accountability. It is about exactly what this Committee should be doing. There are operations in Minnesota that all of us should have questions about, and I think this is a no-brainer. This is exactly what we should be doing as an Oversight, getting those questions answered.

Chairman COMER. Any other—anyone else seek—Ms. Mace?

Ms. MACE. [Off mic.]

Chairman COMER. It passed.

Ms. MACE. I know.

Chairman COMER. Okay. Anybody else seek recognition on the Bell motion?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, all those in favor of the Bell motion, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman COMER. All those opposed say no.

[Chorus of noes.]

Chairman COMER. In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it.

Mr. GARCIA. Recorded vote.

Chairman COMER. A recorded vote has been requested. All votes will be rolled to the end of the debate.

Now it is the end of the debate. We can vote on the bills, right, vote on the motions. Okay.

So, the question is on Motion Number 1, the Krishnamoorthi motion. Members will record their votes using the electronic voting system.

The clerk will now open the vote on the Krishnamoorthi motion.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members voted who wishes to vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Seeing none, the clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

The Clerk. Mr. Chairman, on this vote, the ayes are 19. The nays are 24.

Chairman COMER. The nays have it, and the motion is not agreed to.

Okay. The question is now on Motion Number 2 from Representative Mace. This deals with Attorney General Bondi. Members will record their votes using the electronic voting system.

The clerk will now open the board.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members—and remember, the Attorney General has offered to come in and give briefings.

Mr. GARCIA. Briefings or a hearing?

Chairman COMER. Briefing. Okay. Have all Members—

Mr. GARCIA. There is no commitment for her to come in as far as I understand it.

Ms. STANSBURY. Are we not closing the vote because you do not want the Attorney General to come in front of the Oversight Committee, because it is pretty rudimentary.

[Pause.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members voted to wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. The clerk will close the vote and report the vote total.

[Pause.]

Chairman COMER. Yes. Report the vote total, please.

The Clerk. Mr. Chairman, on this vote, the ayes are 24. The nays are 19.

Chairman COMER. The ayes have it, and the motion is agreed to.

The question is now on Motion Number 4 from Mr. Bell. Members will record their votes using the electronic voting system.

The clerk will now open the vote on the Bell Motion.

[Voting.]

Chairman COMER. Have all Members recorded been recorded who wish to be recorded?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Does any Member wish to change their vote?

[No response.]

Chairman COMER. Seeing none, the clerk will now close the vote and report the vote total.

The Clerk. Mr. Chairman, on this vote, the ayes are 19. The nays are 22.

Chairman COMER. The nays have it, and the motion is not agreed to.

In closing, I want to thank our witnesses once again for their testimony today.

Also, the next item of Committee business is ratifying the new Subcommittee roster. The clerks have distributed the roster electronically.

I ask unanimous consent the Committee approve the appointments and assignments as shown on the roster.

Without objection, the Subcommittee roster is approved.

With that and without objection, all Members have five legislative days within which to submit materials and additional written questions for the witnesses, which will be forwarded to the witnesses.

If there is no further business, without objection, the Committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:40 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

