

NOMINATION OF HON. MARKWAYNE MULLIN

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE
ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

NOMINATION OF THE HON. MARKWAYNE MULLIN
TO BE SECRETARY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

MARCH 18, 2026

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NOMINATION OF HON. MARKWAYNE MULLIN

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2026

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD-342, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Rand Paul, Chair of the Committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Paul [presiding], Johnson, Lankford, Scott, Hawley, Moreno, Ernst, Moody, Peters, Hassan, Blumenthal, Fetterman, Kim, Gallego, and Slotkin.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR PAUL

Chairman PAUL. The hearing to consider the nomination of Markwayne Mullin to be Secretary of Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will come to order, and I am assuming will commence when he arrives.

[Pause.]

Good morning, everyone. I entered the Senate the same year that Representative Gabby Giffords was shot. I knew then that the State of political rhetoric was encouraging violence. I think it is imperative now more than ever that the leaders in our country disavow violence and lead by example.

Through the years, I have personally been exposed multiple times to political violence. I was in the right field batting cage when the crazed shooter unleashed nearly 200 shots at our congressional baseball practice. I will never forget Steve Scalise valiantly trying to drag his body away as the gunman continued.

Later that year, a Trump-hating felon attacked me from behind in my yard. I was just straightening up from picking up a tree limb. I was wearing noise cancellation headphones. Never saw him coming, running pell-mell down the hill. I was struck in the back. The force of the blow sent us through the air nearly 10 feet, down the hill, until his shoulder impaled me as we hit the ground. Six of my ribs were broken. Three of the ribs were completely separated such that for weeks the ends of the ribs would grind upon each other. My lung was damaged. For weeks I could inhale but not have the rib strength to exhale. I developed two pneumonias. The pain was such that I could only sit up in bed by tying a rope to the foot of the bed and pulling myself up. But even then, the pain was that of a thousand knives.

Over the year of recovery, I began to cough up blood. I underwent removal of part of my lung. Complications led to an infection

in the space between my lung and chest wall. I spent a week in the hospital having the infection lavaged every six hours through a chest tube.

Recently, Senator Mullin, if you have time to listen, you were confronted by constituents that were angry because you voted against my amendment to stop all funding for refugee welfare programs. Instead of explaining your vote to continue these welfare programs for refugees, you decided to transfer the blame. You told the media that I was a “freaking snake” and that you completely understood why I had been assaulted.

I was shocked that you would justify and celebrate this violent assault that caused me so much pain and my family so much pain. I just wonder if someone who applauds violence against their political opponents is the right person to lead an agency that has struggled to accept limits to the proper use of force.

You might argue you were mad and upset about being confronted by your constituents. But Senator Mullin, your constituents are justifiably upset with you. By now, most of America knows that the Somali welfare fraud in Minnesota stole over \$9 billion. But instead of defending your vote, you vote to continue these refugee welfare programs, you chose to lash out at me.

You went on to brag that you had already told me, to my face, that you completely understood and approved of the assault. That is a lie. You have a chance today. You can either continue to lie or you can correct the record. You have never had the courage to look me in the eye and tell me that the assault was justified, so today you will have your chance. Today, I will give you that chance to clear the record. Tell it to my face. If that is what you believe, tell it to me today. Tell the world why you believe I deserve to be assaulted from behind, have six ribs broken and a damaged lung. Tell me to my face why you think I deserved it.

While you are at it, explain to the American public why they should trust a man with anger issues to set the proper example for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Border Patrol agents. Explain to the American public how a man who has no regrets about brawling in a Senate committee can set a proper example for over 250,000 men and women who work at the Department of Homeland Security.

Senator Peters, you are recognized for your opening comment.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR PETERS¹

Senator PETERS. Thank you, Chair Paul, and thank you, Senator Mullin, for being here today. Congratulations on your nomination. I certainly appreciate your willingness to meet with me as well as my staff as we consider your nomination to serve as Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security.

I would also like to welcome your family who is joining us today, and to thank all of them for your commitment to public service. We do it as a family, as you know.

The Department of Homeland Security is a complicated organization with challenging operational dynamics. As everyone is well

¹ The prepared statement of Senator Peters appears in the Appendix on page 63.

aware, many components within DHS are currently operating without funding.

Let's be clear. Democrats are committed to funding the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), and the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) while we negotiate much-needed ICE reforms. We tried to pass those bills by unanimous consent (UC) multiple times over the past two weeks. Unfortunately, Republicans have blocked those bills each and every time. Yesterday, the White House sent a letter laying out their latest offer, but the devil is always in the details.

Administrative action is not enough. We need to pass real reforms into law. If Republicans really do agree with us that TSA and other personnel need to be paid, then they should join us and pass the bills to pay them today—we can do that—while we continue to negotiate needed ICE reforms.

And let me be clear. These are very straightforward reforms that we are asking for. We just want ICE to follow the same rules that our local police and our local communities follow every day.

But DHS has faced management challenges since the start of the Trump administration, and over the past year many of those challenges have unfortunately only increased. As soon as President Trump was sworn in, he made deep cuts to counterterrorism offices and programs, forced out or reassigned key personnel, and redirected the focus of limited remaining counterterrorism resources away from the serious threats that we face, and toward targeting the President's perceived political enemies.

The Administration has also gutted our Nation's main cybersecurity agency, once again forcing out or reassigning highly talented personnel, slashing budgets, and limiting the agency's work to help private companies address significant cyberattacks, and protect Americans from criminal hackers, and support secure elections.

The Administration has also taken an axe to FEMA, cutting staff, and freezing or delaying critical grant funding for everything from emergency food and shelter after a disaster, to flood mitigation programs and security grants for nonprofits, including houses of worship.

All these cuts and reassignments have been made at the expense of vital missions, including the core terrorism prevention and response mission the Department was created to address. In doing so, the Trump administration has broken trust between law enforcement and the communities they are intended to protect, a break that will have a generational impact on public safety and security.

And now, after President Trump's reckless war of choice against Iran, the threats to our Nation have never been higher. In my home State of Michigan, just last week, we saw both a major medical device manufacturer get hacked by an Iranian-backed group, and a horrific violent attack on Temple Israel, a metro Detroit area synagogue.

President Trump's unilateral and unchecked executive actions have put Americans at risk, and we need a steady, qualified leader at the Department of Homeland Security to address these serious threats. How the Homeland Security Secretary responds to a crisis

sends signals to everyone, from the Department's own personnel, to the American people, and to the entire world.

It is not the role of the Secretary to be a cable news commentator in the wake of a crisis. The Secretary's role is to lead the response and work to ensure the Department that they are leading is not actually the cause of the crisis. A Secretary who jumps to conclusions without the facts, as we saw in the case of Renee Good and Alex Pretti's killings, only worsens the situation and actually makes us less safe. This is a role where temperament matters, where judgment matters, and where experience matters.

We have seen under Secretary Noem's leadership how shortcomings in these traits can compound the challenges that already come with leading a large and complex department. And now more than ever, we need a DHS Secretary who is a steady hand, who will provide thoughtful leadership, follow the facts, tell the truth, and hold agency officials accountable when they need to be held accountable. We need a DHS Secretary who is committed to the rule of law and who will protect and cooperate with independent oversight, whether that is from the Inspector General (IG) or from Members of Congress. We need a DHS Secretary who is free from distractions and conflicts of interest that only undercut the Department's work, and also break trust with the American people.

Senator Mullin, I appreciate you being here today to answer our questions about these concerns and your experience and qualifications for the job. While I am interested in hearing more about your vision for leading the Department, I do have reservations about your readiness to take on such a significant role at such a critical time.

I hope you will provide us with substantive answers today, and candid recognition of where this Administration has fallen short on safeguarding our homeland security as you seek to lead the Department as our Nation faces ongoing security threats and war with Iran.

Chairman PAUL. Senator Mullin is to be introduced today by Senator Lankford. Senator Lankford, you are recognized for your introduction of our witness.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR LANKFORD

Senator LANKFORD. Chairman Paul, thank you.

Markwayne, I am proud that you are here. I get the honor of getting a chance to be able to recognize and introduce my friend, Markwayne Mullin, my fellow Senator from the State of Oklahoma and somebody that I have seen work incredibly hard to be ready for every single task you have ever taken on and to be able to not only do it, but do it well.

There are a lot of folks that think they know you. I actually get to know you, and I have had the opportunity to be able to serve beside you for now over a decade and have seen your tenacity in your work effort.

Folks may not know that the first time we really got to know each other, ironically enough, was around a natural disaster, a FEMA event. It was Briarwood Elementary in 2013, when a tornado came right through the heart of Oklahoma. You had literally just been elected a few weeks before that and had just taken the

oath of office. The Oklahoma delegation all gathered together at the very tragic event there at Briarwood Elementary. While we were meeting with the principal and meeting with teachers and families and walking through the debris field that was that elementary school, we turned around to be able to look for Markwayne and for a minute we could not find him because in one of the debris piles there was water shooting out of the middle of it, and his plumber instinct said, "I got to go find that and figure out how to solve that."

While everyone else was shaking hands and meeting people, he was digging through the debris field to find a way to be able to shut off the water that was shooting through the middle of that destroyed elementary school. I remember smiling and thinking he is a guy that does not mind getting his hands dirty to actually go solve the problem. Where there is a problem he can solve, he is going to do whatever it takes to actually solve it.

Markwayne grew up in a very small town in far eastern Oklahoma, ironically named Westville, in the easternmost part of Oklahoma. Just 1,300 people call Westville home. He grew up in a family of modest means. I think that would be safe to be able to say, the youngest of seven children in a family that just didn't have much. His dad ran a very small plumbing company that then Markwayne took on and grew into being one of the largest plumbing companies in the entire State.

He married his high school sweetheart, one of the smartest things he ever did, at just 20 years old, and he and Christie have developed a family that is a beautiful family of three children they had naturally and three children they chose, that they adopted and took them in. It is a remarkable family and a remarkable success that you have actually led through a lot of hard work and a lot of love and tenacity. He is a person of faith that is not afraid to be able to talk about his faith in Jesus Christ, but he is also a person who has deep respect for all people.

Markwayne has served in Congress for 14 years, 11 years in the House of Representatives, three here in the Senate. He has passed legislation that he will now be charged with actually implementing it in the order that was actually passed. He served on the Appropriations Committee here. He has served on Armed Services (SASC). He has served on the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee here, and he has done an incredible job in the work that he has done with Indian Affairs. He is somebody who has the rare gift of bringing people together on both sides of the aisle.

The one thing I would say to every single person on this dais, regardless if you are a Republican or Democrat, if you want to sit down and talk about an issue, he is glad to be able to talk about it and to be able to work it out, and has very good relationships in the House and in the Senate, and he is not afraid to ask questions when he does not know the answer, and to be able to research things. He and I have often talked about being up late, both of us working on researching through an issue to try to be able to learn more about it, because the crazy thing about being in Congress is you do not know everything. You have to do the work, and Markwayne is not afraid to do the work.

Over the past year and a few months, we have seen incredible progress on our Southern Border. Our Southern Border, 18 months ago, I think we forget what it looked like, 12,000 people a day illegally crossing our border, just being waved in. No vetting, no background checks, 12,000 people a day. That is not happening anymore. Our numbers are down on the Southwest Border 96 percent.

So you walk into an agency that has finally restored some order to our Southern Border, but there is a lot of work still to do with FEMA, with other areas of Homeland Security, and a very large agency with 250,000 people that are actually under your leadership there. I am confident that you will be able to take those things on.

Not only am I confident, the National Border Patrol Council has already sent a letter in strong support here. Mr. Chair, I would like to ask unanimous consent to insert into the record the National Border Patrol Council,¹ their letter of support, leadership of the Cherokee Nation, their strong support. Then my fellow Senator, Katie Britt, has an opening statement who I would like to also submit for the record, with unanimous consent.²

Chairman PAUL. Without objection.

Senator LANKFORD. Thank you. This is a person that actually lives what we affectionately call in Oklahoma, the Oklahoma standard, that when hard things actually occur, you step up and you serve your neighbor and you find ways to be able to help people to do the hard things that have to be done. Markwayne, I appreciate your leadership. I appreciate your willingness to be able to step up in a season where DHS needs a leader to be able to step into that role and to be able to help our Nation in so many different complicated areas, especially at a time when right now we cannot even get funding to DHS. We have to be able to have good solid leadership there.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman PAUL. It is the practice of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee (HSGAC) to swear in witnesses. Would the nominee please stand and raise your right hand.

Do you swear that the testimony you will give before this Committee will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you, God?

Senator MULLIN. I do.

Chairman PAUL. Senator Mullin, you are recognized for your opening statement.

TESTIMONY OF THE HON. MARKWAYNE MULLIN,³ TO BE SECRETARY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Senator MULLIN. I think before I can start my opening statement I have to address the remarks that the Chair made, calling me a liar. Sir, I think there is everybody in this room knows that I am very blunt and direct, to the point, and if I have something to say, I will say it directly to your face. If you recall back in my House days, we actually did have this conversation because of remarks that I have made. You were in a room. I simply addressed that I

¹The letter from the National Border Patrol Council appears in the Appendix on page 163.

²The opening statement of Senator Britt appears in the Appendix on page 166.

³The prepared statement of Senator Mullin appears in the Appendix on page 66.

said I could understand because of the behavior you were having, that I could understand why the neighbor did what he did.

As far as my terms as the snake in the grass, sir, I work around this room to try to fix problems. I have worked with many people in this room. Seems like you fight Republicans more than you work with us. I did address those remarks. I did explain your gimmicks by the amendment you put forth. As far as me saying that I invoke violence, I don't. I don't think anybody should be hit by surprise. I don't like that. But if I do have something to say, everybody in this room knows I will come straight to you. I will say it publicly, and I will say it privately, but I will never say it behind your back. So for you to say I am a liar, sir, that is not accurate.

I got proof to say that because you have spent millions of dollars in my campaigns against me because we just don't get along. However, sir, that doesn't keep me at all from doing my job. I can have difference of opinions with everybody in this room, but as Secretary of Homeland, I will be protecting everybody, including Kentucky, as much as I will my own backyard in Oklahoma.

It is bigger than the partisan bickering that we have. It is bigger than the political differences we have. The truth is, I have a job to do, and I don't like to fail at anything, at all. So I can set it aside if you are willing to set it aside. Let me earn your respect. Let me earn the job. I won't fail you. I won't back down from a challenge, and I will also admit when I am wrong.

I am not perfect. I don't claim to be perfect. I make mistakes just like anybody else. But mistakes, if you own them, you can learn from them, and you can move ahead, and I will make that commitment to you.

Ranking Member Peters, Chairman Paul, I do thank you for this opportunity. It is a humbling experience, a kid from Westville, Oklahoma, that grew up with a dad that worked hard. He set the work example for all of us, and all my families and my siblings, we all work hard, and I am proud of the family we have. But to say that a kid with a bad speech impediment would one day sit up here in front of you, and be nominated to be the Secretary of Homeland, it was humbling enough to be selected by Oklahoma to be their U.S. Representative when I didn't even know how to tie a tie, and 10 years later to be able to be called a United States Senator and serve with all you guys.

I respect every one of you guys. I do. Regardless of if I have an opinion about you or not, you were elected by your State, and I respect that. I may disagree with you but I respect it, because we all make decisions based on two things: the way we were raised, which never changes, and our life experiences, which constantly change.

For me, to be able to have the love of my life behind me, somebody I literally fell in love with in third grade, I knew I was going to marry her in eighth grade. She didn't know that. We had to work through that process. But at 18 years old—and I was 19, she agreed to marry me—I didn't have anything. I was on a wrestling scholarship, living in a dorm. She was cheering at Northeastern State University. I think she fell in love with my truck, because my truck was pretty cool.

But the truth is we didn't know what we didn't know, but we did know we loved each other. I haven't been perfect. I apologize to her

quite often, send her flowers all the time. But I still am humbled by the fact that we have to enjoy this walk together. We have had God on our side and her right beside me. To our six children who have been on this adventure with me, what an adventure it has been.

We have a saying in our family, you are never going to change anything you are willing to tolerate. That is how we live our life and that is how we move forward. Regardless of what is in front of us, we always take it on as a family.

Now, I am not scared of a challenge. I am scared of failure. I will work hard, each day. I will work hard to make the 280,000 employees at DHS, with the 22 agencies that is underneath me, proud. I will show them somebody that no one will outwork. I will work beside them every single day, to not just secure our homeland, but to bring peace of mind and confidence to the agency.

My goal, in six months, is that we are not in the lead story every single day. My goal is for people to understand we are out there, we are protecting them, and we are working with them. My goal is to make every one of you guys proud. My goal, for those that don't support me, will regret not supporting me.

But we have to get DHS funded. We have to. My friends, we have to set the partisan side down, and we have to realize that we are putting our homeland and the peace of mind at risk for the American people. Sometimes it is political theater. Sometimes it is true differences. But what we do know is that we are playing with fire.

We have 280,000 DHS employees right now that are on day 30 without pay, and they are still showing up every single day to do their job. That is a dedicated group of people. We should all be proud of them. We should all be working together, and we should all be trying to fund them.

I pray, that we can get past this, that once this hearing is over and once we go through this process—I get it. I guess some of it has to be political theater. I understand it. I have to really pray about my attitude. But I will say, once it is over, I hope we can work together and get them funded, so when I walk in, if I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, if I walk in as Secretary, that these guys are ready to go to work day one.

God bless you. Thank you so much for this opportunity, and I look forward to your questions.

Chairman PAUL. It is the standard practice of this Committee for the Chair to ask nominees the following question.

Do you agree, without reservation, to comply with any request or summons to appear or testify before any duly constituted committee of Congress if you are confirmed?

Senator MULLIN. I do.

Chairman PAUL. We will now proceed to seven minutes of questioning.

The record should show, and I think will show, a lack of contrition, no apology, and no regrets for your support. You completely understand the violence that was perpetrated on me. You are unrepentant. The only thing you quibble about is whether I met you somehow when you were in the House. I don't think we ever met when you were in the House. This idea that the only thing you are

upset about is not that you were for violence, what you are upset about is that I called you a liar, because you said it to my face, which is really more about this machismo that you have.

When in Oklahoma the media asked you about the refugee welfare programs, the programs you voted to continue funding, it was this whole idea that you were going to transfer it because you were uncomfortable. Your anger, low impulse control, causes you to then go after and decide that you are going to go after me as well. You say you completely understood that I was assaulted from behind, had six ribs broken, and part of my lung removed, and that was just fine. That is something that you, I guess, approve of as far as resolution of political problems.

When I talked to you privately on the phone, there was no apology. You just said, "We can let our political difference go by." And you said a few minutes ago, "We can just set it aside." Well, political differences we can, but when you say that you agree with a felon, a Trump-hating felon who attacked me, somehow you think I am just going to set that aside. Oh, it is no big deal. I lay in pain for two months, had six ribs broken, three of them separated, grinding upon bone-on-bone for months, had part of my lung removed, and you think that is great and to be extolled. I mean, the sheer lack of any kind of self-awareness that you are going to be leading thousands of men and women who will have the use of force, and there have been great questions in our country about how that will be used, and you think a violent attack is just fine.

I guess my first question is, do you think that justifying that kind of violence sets a good example for the men and women of ICE and Border Patrol?

Senator MULLIN. Mr. Chair, first of all, I did not know the extent of your damage. When the phone call was made, I made it to you and I tried to talk to you. You did not engage at all. In fact, you said, "Get your paperwork in. It has to be three days in between me and you."

Chairman PAUL. You offered no apology.

And you offer no apology today and no regrets. Haven't heard the word apologize, haven't heard the word regret, haven't heard I misspoke and it was heated and I made a mistake. I haven't heard any of those words.

Senator MULLIN. Sir, actually it wasn't heated and I am not apologizing for pointing out your character.

Chairman PAUL. Good. So you are jolly well fine, and you want the American public and the people up here to vote, that may or may not vote for you, to know that you supported the felonious, violent attack on me from behind.

Senator MULLIN. I did not say I supported it. I said I understood it. There is a difference.

Chairman PAUL. So that means you really did not approve of it. Just completely understand it. What do you think most people would interpret, completely understand to be? Support for or a condemnation of the violence?

Senator MULLIN. Sir, as I said, we can have our differences. It is not going to keep me from doing my job as Secretary of Homeland Security. I am going to secure Kentucky and take care of Kentucky as much as I am Oklahoma.

Chairman PAUL. If this were a one-off, it would be one thing. If you just disliked me so much that you approved of violence against me, people could just write it off, “well, maybe they hate each other.” But really there is a pattern of this. Let’s go ahead and roll the tape.

[Video plays.]

So no regrets. In fact, even after your anger had cooled, you were still bragging that if he had only been brave enough to stand up, you would have jumped over the dais and taught him a lesson because that is how men should settle their differences. Do you think fighting as a resolution for political differences is a good example for the men and women of ICE and Border Patrol?

Senator MULLIN. As you can notice over my shoulder here is my good friend, Sean O’Brien. Both of us have had conversations, both of us have shaken hands, and both of us agreed we could have done things different. Sean is someone that has become a close friend. We talk all the time. I have been on his podcast. We have talked through this. That is how you handle your differences. Not like this, Chairman.

Chairman PAUL. I am glad you guys are friends now and that you have reconciled, but really it does not get to the real point whether or not you think violence is the way we settle things. In the days after the fight, you said, and I quote, “Sometimes people just need to be punched in the face.” Is that still your opinion that political disputes can sometimes and often only be resolved by violence?

Senator MULLIN. No, I do not always agree with that. I do not believe in political violence. I have made that very clear. But sometimes people do need——

Chairman PAUL. Unless perpetrated on me.

Senator MULLIN. Theoretically speaking, sir, I get it. It is about character assassination for you. That is the way this game is played. I understand it. You are making this about you, which is fine, but that does not keep me, as Secretary of Homeland Security, from making——

Chairman PAUL. It is character assassination when you were the one lauding the assault. Who do you think started that character assassination? I am just repeating what you have done in character assassination. I am repeating your support for the assault. So that is somehow something I started?

Senator MULLIN. No, sir. What I am saying is you are adding a lot to it.

Chairman PAUL. In the days after the fight, you did many interviews in which you justified the violence as historically justified by precedents, such as caning and dueling. Is it today your opinion that the caning of Charles Sumner was not only justified, but argues still for resolving our political differences with violence?

Senator MULLIN. What I was simply pointing out is some of the rules that still apply to this body. For instance, dueling with two consenting adults is still there. I was pointing out what is still——

Chairman PAUL. It has been illegal for 170 years. There is no precedent for legal dueling. Even then they fled the country. Do you realize that the man that beat Charles Sumner with a cane, he beat him till he was unconscious. You know why no Senators

intervened? Because his friend held a gun on the other Senators, and he kept beating him and beating him until he crushed his skull. That is what you are is the precedent of the Senate, and that is what you live by. That is a very dangerous sentiment.

After a half a dozen victory lap interviews where you pointed out that the union guy was just lucky that fear kept him from standing up, Dana Bash asked you if you have any regrets about bringing violence to a Senate committee, and you replied that you have no regrets. Today you have said you have no regrets about being happy, being completely understanding why I was attacked from behind. You had no regrets about instigating a brawl in a Senate committee hearing. Are those still your opinions?

Senator MULLIN. Mr. Chair, you are going to have your opinion. I am going to have mine. As the Secretary of Homeland Security, I am going to bring peace of mind and security to this country, and I am going to stay laser-focused on that.

Chairman PAUL. Senator Peters.

Senator PETERS. Senator Mullin, you have made several public statements suggesting that you were involved in Special Security Forces or combat operations overseas. In 2023, you said in a Senate Republican Conference podcast, and I say, I will quote, "There's another side of my bio that I don't ever talk about, nor will I. I had to go do something overseas."

On March 2nd of this year, you told Fox News interview, "War is ugly. It smells bad. If anybody has ever been there and been able to smell the war that is happening around you and taste it and feel it in your nostrils and hear it, it is something you will never forget."

On March 3rd, in a podcast interview, you stated, "I did special assignments outside of the Department of Defense (DOD), now Department of War (DOW). I never wore the uniform or the flag on my shoulder, but I might have been in the same area."

Your statements in public interviews and your responses to the Committee, are quite frankly, are confusing and they are inconsistent. I would like you to clear this up. You are under oath. We can clear it all up right now. First, I would like to ask unanimous consent to enter into the record my letter to you on March 11th,¹ and your addendum to the Committee of March 12th,² regarding any overseas special assignments.

Chairman PAUL. Without objection.

Senator PETERS. My question for you, sir, is before your time in Congress, other than on vacations with your family, have you ever traveled to a foreign country?

Senator MULLIN. No.

Senator PETERS. You have never traveled to a foreign country?

Senator MULLIN. Outside of vacation or mission work, no.

Senator PETERS. OK. Your Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) report does show some travel. I think it was to Georgia and Azerbaijan. You marked that that was not for tourist?

Senator MULLIN. Are you referring to August 2021, when we went to go get the Americans out of Afghanistan?

¹The letter from Senator Peters appears in the Appendix on page 171.

²The Bio Questionnaire addendum appears in the Appendix on page 197.

That is what that travel was for, which we did clarify that.

Senator PETERS. OK. So you have traveled. You have traveled to Azerbaijan and Georgia. That was in your FBI report, although you just said you have never traveled.

Senator MULLIN. Sir, I thought you were referring to a different time, but in 2021, it was well documented. In fact, it was all over the news, and I actually did say that, and we put that down on the report. But that was us, which was all over the news, trying to go with an extremely experienced team.

Senator PETERS. OK. I have other questions. Thank you. You have traveled overseas, despite your previous comment. Were you ever an employee, volunteer, or otherwise involved with the Department of Defense, State Department, or other U.S. agency or contractor for any of those departments?

Senator MULLIN. No. Senator, I think there is a misunderstanding here that I could clear up if you want me to clear up for you.

Senator PETERS. Please.

Senator MULLIN. OK. So, which this is official trip and it is classified, but in 2015, I was asked to train with a very small contingency, and go to a certain area, which was scheduled for 2016. During that time, I had to meet certain training qualifications, and had to go through Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape (SERE) training. The training and stuff was kind of fun. The SERE training was absolutely awful.

I have spoken generally about my experiences, but I have never spoken specifically on details, dates, or the mission. That was official, and there was nothing in the report to the Committee. Actually, it said, "You do not have to claim any official trips." Like I said, that was an official trip that is classified.

Senator PETERS. This is an official trip while you were a Member of Congress?

Senator MULLIN. Yes. In 2015, 2016, I was a Member of Congress.

Some of it may be public, but it would be very small. Most of it, because of my recollection, which we are going back 10 years, I think there was only four people read in on it.

Senator PETERS. So, where was that trip?

Senator MULLIN. I just said, it is classified, sir.

Senator PETERS. It is classified. The letter that we sent to you said that we need to have information of any of these activities.

Senator MULLIN. It said not official trips. Your paperwork was very clear, excluding any official trips. This was an official trip as a Member.

Senator PETERS. We have more questions we are going to have to ask. In the FBI report, I asked, "Is there anything in that report that is classified, that you were involved in any kind of classified operation at all?" And there is none.

Senator MULLIN. It was also said, "excluding official duties." It says that, and you guys have the paperwork in front of you and it always says, "excluding official duties." We had this Committee come to us and ask the same questions. We talked about doing mission work. We talked about doing mentorship, but they said, "Offi-

cial duties that was in your official capacity does not have to be talked about.”

Senator PETERS. So, where did you smell war?

Senator MULLIN. Sir, I just said that this was classified, and that the dates, locations, and mission, I have never spoke specifically details about.

Senator PETERS. We can get that information. Mr. Chair.

Senator MULLIN. That is fine. You are welcome to get it.

Senator PETERS. We will want to find out more information about that.

Senator MULLIN. That is perfectly OK, Senator.

Senator PETERS. It is important to have the truth here and that you are portraying yourself in a truthful way.

Senator MULLIN. Sir, I am not portraying myself in any way other than you are asking the question, and I said I would try clearing it up for you.

Senator PETERS. Well, we will continue to work on that.

Senator MULLIN. Thank you.

Senator PETERS. After DHS officers shot and killed two American citizens this past January, you joined top administrative officials in publicly blaming and disparaging the victims. Following the killing of Renee Good, Secretary Noem called her a domestic terrorist. You, sir, you called Alex Pretti, “A deranged individual that came in to cause max damage.” Could we expect those kinds of quick responses if you are confirmed as Secretary? Would you be basically—well, you did, you responded as Secretary Noem. Are we going to just expect that same behavior all over again?

Senator MULLIN. No, Senator. I have a deep amount of respect for you. We have had our differences, but I do respect you. I think I said this privately when we had a conversation. Those words probably should have been retracted. I should not have said that, and as Secretary, I would not. The investigation is ongoing. Like I said, there is sometimes I am going to make a mistake, and I will own it. That one, I went out there too fast. I was responding immediately without the facts. That is my fault. That won’t happen as Secretary.

Senator PETERS. So, you regret that statement?

Senator MULLIN. I already said that. Yes, sir.

Senator PETERS. Would you want to apologize to the family of Alex Pretti?

Senator MULLIN. Sir, I just said I regret those statements.

Senator PETERS. Is that the same as an apology?

Senator MULLIN. I have not seen the investigation. We will let the investigation go through, and if I am proven wrong, then I will absolutely.

Senator PETERS. How would you characterize your relationship with President Trump?

Senator MULLIN. He is a friend.

Senator PETERS. How frequently have you spoken with him in the past year?

Senator MULLIN. Often. Most of the time about my family. If you want to explain the friendship, I will tell you. My wife will tell you the same thing. When someone loves your kids when they are going through a difficult time like we have, the amount of out-

pouring of support from the President and the friendship we saw going back to 2000, or 2020, was quite remarkable. And so I speak to the President from a friend level more than I do a policy level.

Senator PETERS. OK. I have more questions, but my time is up.

Senator MULLIN. Thank you, Senator.

Senator PETERS. But we will be doing it in a second round. Thank you.

Senator MULLIN. OK. Thank you.

Chairman PAUL. Senator Moreno.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR MORENO

Senator MORENO. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Senator Johnson, Senator Lankford for letting me skip the line. I have to unfortunately go to Dover for the dignified transfer, so I appreciate taking the time.

It is not often that I get to ask questions of somebody who I have known for a long time; in politics, 2½ years is a long time. I have gotten to know you as a friend, as a colleague. I have seen you interact as a dad. I have seen you interact as a husband. I just want the American people to know you are a good man.

Senator MULLIN. Thank you.

Senator MORENO. That does not always get through all the political shenanigans. Maybe you are not going to replace Shakespeare as the next greatest orator on Earth. You talk from the heart, and that is OK. You are who you are. I think that is what you do not apologize for is just being yourself.

Sometimes we are imperfect. You don't do the 20-person focus group every time you say a word, and I think that is what people like about you, Markwayne. I appreciate you being here. I honestly just have one question for you. Do you pledge to support and defend the United States of America (USA) nearly as much as you would protect and defend your family?

Senator MULLIN. Without doubt, sir, yes.

Senator MORENO. I am going to ruin everything for the audience. You will be confirmed. You will have the job, and you are going to make this country safer and better. For that, I thank you and thank your family for supporting you.

I will use the rest of my time now to make a little case to the American people. We have 260,000 families that have not received a paycheck in over a month, 260,000 American citizen families who have not received a paycheck in over a month. None of those people are in charge of policy. There is not one of those families that makes policy decisions, for the most part. That is on the people here. There is not a single human being on this dais that has missed a paycheck. Every single one of us has gotten a paycheck the last 30 days and before that, and yet we sit here and we do political theater.

I said to my colleague, Senator Britt, the other day, that in my 14 months here I have only felt ashamed of this chamber once, and that was last Thursday, when you saw the ultimate political theater, colleagues going, "Let's fund TSA." "How about the Coast Guard?" "Oh, that's a different person that's going to talk about that." "How about FEMA?" "It's a different person that's going to talk about that."

You cannot have it both ways, by the way. You cannot have Democrats saying, “I can’t believe the Trump administration is cutting government employee numbers”—by the way, over 300,000, we haven’t missed a beat—and yet at the same time, not pay people who are actually showing up for it. That seems decently incongruous. We cannot say President Trump is not defending the homeland. He is absolutely doing that every single day, and yet we are allowing these agencies to not be funded.

I have tried really hard to learn how this place works. This is all very new to me. I remember many Democrats saying to me, “We have the constitutional duty to fund agencies through appropriations.” Then we have a separate piece where we argue policy differences. But we should never marry both together, because when you marry both together, you don’t hurt us, you don’t hurt the people here in D.C., you hurt the men and women who are going to work every day to defend this country, and that is a disgrace.

I actually do not know how you would sleep at night knowing that you are hurting families like that. People cannot make their rent payments, cannot make their mortgage payments. Their cars are being repossessed. They are having to tell their kids they cannot send them to dance recitals because they did everything right in life except got a job with the Department of Homeland Security, so that a politician can make a 30-second video online and then use it to fundraise for the next election. That is disgusting.

Let me just say this. What are we not talking about? The Ranking Member said, “Oh look, we said we fund—.” He is not paying attention right now, which is fine. We said we are going to fund FEMA. When you guys are done talking, I will continue, if you like. Are you done? OK, thank you. It is extraordinarily disrespectful.

All right, so moving on. You have said you are going to fund all these agencies. Here are ones that you have not funded—U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), near and dear to my heart. That is how I became a U.S. citizen. We have defunded the agency that allows legal immigrants into this country? That is insane. Never hear the Democrats talk about that—3,300 employees go to work every day, trying to process legal immigrants. They don’t need the paycheck.¹

I am going to skip the second one, go to the third one—Biological Nuclear Threat Prevention. That seems important. That seems like an agency we should fund. Two hundred employees not getting a paycheck. That is OK with the Democrats. The next one, 60,000 employees for U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP). People who are inspecting packages, they work with your teamsters, work with Customs, they are not getting paid. How do you look at those people in the face and know that you are doing that?

Now let’s talk about Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 7,000 special agents that are stopping transnational criminal organizations (TCO), drug smugglers, and human traffickers. Are you, on the Democrat side, asking not to fund that? Because ultimately what this is about is defunding ICE and law enforcement. Are you suggesting that we not fund an organization that attacks transnational organizations?

¹ The chart submitted by Senator Moreno appears in the Appendix on page 173.

Be specific. Be specific when you say you do not want to fund ICE. I want you to say the words, "We do not want to fund 7,000 special agents that are in charge of stopping transnational criminal organization, drug smugglers, and human traffickers."

This job is not complicated. The American people send us here to get things done, and yet for the third time in six months we have shut down this government with total impunity. They will go home, and just make social media videos, and try to blame Republicans. It is a disgrace. It is even more of a disgrace, honestly, that you talked about the respect that Senator Mullin shares.

You guys have side conversations, don't listen, and that is fine. You do not have to. But what I am going to do now is I am going to leave. I am going to go pay respects to three soldiers who died so that we can have the liberties that we enjoy here, and you guys continue with political theater, personal attacks, whatever you can do.

I know that is a good man. I will vote for you. Our Republican colleagues will vote for you. You will get confirmed. You will do a great job, and you will make this country proud, Markwayne. Thank you. And thank you for standing by a great American.

Chairman PAUL. Senator Hassan.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR HASSAN

Senator HASSAN. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Before I start with my remarks and my questions, just with regard to Senator Moreno, who has left the dais, the American people should know this. ICE is right now funded with more money than it is had in past budgets. The partial limited shutdown that we have right now has nothing to do with ICE. Meanwhile, Democrats have consistently over the last week moved to fund the rest of the Department of Homeland Security, and the Republicans have blocked that funding. Let's just be clear about what is happening here.

Now, I want to congratulate Senator Mullin and Christie for the nomination. I know your family is very proud, and I know how much you love them. I also want to thank Chair Paul for speaking so openly about a really difficult thing, which is the actual physical impact of violence, and in this case, political violence. It is a hard thing to do, but it is a really important thing to do at this time in our country's history, so thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Department of Homeland Security was created in the wake of the September 11th terrorist attacks with a clear mission: to keep our country safe, secure, and free. The Department's work includes counterterrorism operations, disaster recovery, physical and cyber protection of critical infrastructure, and immigration enforcement. The stakes for the success of the Department of Homeland Security could not be higher, and that is also why Granite Staters and Americans of all stripes have been deeply concerned about what they have seen from the Department of Homeland Security under this Administration. People have been rightfully outraged about the lawlessness from the Department's leadership, which has not only resulted in the death of two American citizens, but has also led to the hollowing out of agencies like FEMA.

To Senator Mullin and my colleagues, what happens here in this room today is not nearly as important as what happens at our bor-

der, on our streets, in our communities, and in our businesses tomorrow and every day thereafter.

Senator MULLIN, I am going to start with a question I have asked every one of the President's nominees. If directed by the President to take an action that would break the law, would you follow the law or follow the President's direction?

Senator MULLIN. Senator, thank you for the questions and thank you for the concerns. First of all, I have enjoyed working with you on several different issues. We have had very blunt conversations. To answer your question, the President would never ask me to do that.

Senator HASSAN. Certainly everyday Americans who have served on juries would disagree with you about that, and the example he has set calls into question that answer.

Senator MULLIN. Senator——

Senator HASSAN. Sir, I have limited time, as you well know.

Senator MULLIN. OK. Go ahead.

Senator HASSAN. In the past 14 months, Secretary Noem has fundamentally broken the American people's trust in the Department of Homeland Security. The top priority of whoever leads this Department next must be to rebuild this trust. If confirmed to lead the Department, how will you be different from Secretary Noem?

Senator MULLIN. Senator, I think I have said this in a private conversation too. I love Secretary Noem's family and I consider them friends, but everybody has different leadership styles. Throughout my businesses, when I would have to transfer one manager to the next or one executive to another area, and now you bring in a different one, they all have different management styles. My management style is empowering people. As I said in my opening statement, I want to protect the homeland, I want to bring peace of mind, and I want to bring confidence back to the agency.

I am not going to be the smartest guy in any room I walk into, but I know how to get talent and I know how to bring those people together——

Senator HASSAN. Let me interrupt you again. I am sorry, sir——

Senator MULLIN. That is OK.

Senator HASSAN [continuing]. Because our time is limited. But let's be really clear. What Secretary Noem did was give the green light to lawless behavior. Are you going to give the green light to lawless behavior?

Senator MULLIN. I will operate within the parameters and the policies and the laws that you guys set for me.

Senator HASSAN. And the Constitution of the United States?

Senator MULLIN. Of course the Constitution.

Senator HASSAN. The Fourth Amendment, among other things?

Senator MULLIN. Of course, the Constitution of the United States. I will swear to uphold that when I get sworn in. But be very clear, I do not get to choose the laws that I enforce. You guys pass the laws. I enforce those laws. The reason why we have not——

Senator HASSAN. Right, but shooting a protestor who was exercising his First Amendment speech and carrying a lawfully licensed gun is not a lawful behavior.

Now, let's move on to another issue. Granite Staters pushed back hard against ICE's plan to build a detention center in Merrimack, New Hampshire, and despite poor communication from the Department, eventually Secretary Noem canceled the plans for this facility. Senator, will you ensure that the Merrimack plan remains off the table, or will you consider restarting it?

Senator MULLIN. Ma'am, I have not seen the facts behind it. As I stated when we spoke in your office, I will work with you on this. We want to be good partners in your State and in your community. I do not know the strategic purpose of it. I do not know what has happened, so it is hard for me to state something that I have not got briefed on. But I have made this very clear to you in private and here too, I will work with the community leaders and make sure that we are delivering for the American people what the President set out.

Senator HASSAN. I appreciate that. In followup conversations with my office, ICE refused to comment on opening new facilities elsewhere in New Hampshire. They have said they will not do it in Merrimack, New Hampshire. But will you commit to me that ICE will not open any new facilities in New Hampshire or elsewhere in the country without the support of the local community?

Senator MULLIN. Ma'am, I will work with the local community, and I will work with you and your office. I will not be able to speak to that until I understand the risk and the reason behind delivering the mission that is set in front of us. We got to protect the homeland and we are going to do that, but obviously we want to work with community leaders. We want to go be good partners. We are going to work in your State as hard to make sure we build relationships and work in that manner.

Senator HASSAN. Look, I will be here for a second round of questions because I have a lot more, but let me just point this out. Americans want to secure their country.

Senator MULLIN. I agree.

Senator HASSAN. We all love this country. We all know we need to be safe, secure, and we all want to be free together. The people of New Hampshire will take into consideration a request by ICE and the Federal Government to do its part, but transparency and local control and respect of local people throughout New Hampshire and throughout the country is an essential piece of our democracy. What I have been hearing from ICE and from other DHS folks is, "The pushback's too hard." You either can make the case for these facilities and explain how you are going to support the local community and deal with the fact that they will lose property tax dollars, for instance, or if you cannot make the case, it should not be built.

I really would encourage the Department and all of us to remember that this is a government of, by, and for the people, and if you cannot make the case to the people, you should not be doing it. Thank you.

Chairman PAUL. Senator Johnson.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHNSON

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Markwayne, I am going to use my time completely different than how I was going to when I walked into this hearing. I cannot top what Senator Moreno, the comments he made about how unconscionable it is that we are not funding and we are not providing paychecks to those 260,000 men and women that you will be soon leading. Other than working with no labels, we do not serve on the same committees, have never gone on a Congressional Delegation (CODEL) together, and that is oftentimes how you get to know our colleagues. I do not know you as well as some of the other people on the dais here.

Certainly within conference we have seen each other interact. We share a couple of things in common. I think we are both pretty passionate about our love for this country, about trying to fix the enormous messes left behind by President Biden and Democrats. We wear our emotions on our sleeves.

But I will say that I have been here 15 years, and I have been through a lot of confirmation hearings, I have listened to a lot of nominees, I have heard a lot of introductions. If one of your first decisions as a nominee was to pick the person to introduce you, you could not have done a better job. The introduction from Senator Lankford was probably one of the most genuine and heartfelt I have ever heard. I will say your opening statement was probably one of the more genuine and heartfelt testimonies I have ever heard, if not the most.

I am looking behind you at the people who have come here to support you, your former colleagues in the House, Chairman Smith, a former Speaker of the House, Senator Britt. But I see Josh Gottheimer there. He is not a Republican member of the House. He is a Democrat. I have seen you interact with him, trying to get some permitting reform.

Please briefly, because I want you to tell another story here yet, but just talk a little bit about your relationship with Josh and other members of the House.

Senator MULLIN. Josh and I, we may not always agree on every issues, but he is a friend. Our relationship started back in 2017, when he thought I was a staff member running a workout group because I have been running a bipartisan workout group that started actually with Speaker Kevin McCarthy and Jason Smith 13 years ago. I still do that to this day.

When he came in in 2017, Joe Kennedy, who is also a friend of mine, he approached me when I was on the House floor and asked me, "Why is a trainer in the gym on the House voting?" And to which Joe Kennedy laughed and said, "He's a member from Oklahoma." After that, we became friends. In fact, our daughters are writing a book together about bipartisanship.

But when Josh asked me to join a bipartisan group called No Labels, that is when we really started seeing that there is a lot of common ground that we can work together.

Yes, as I said in my opening statement that we all make decisions based on how we are raised and our life experiences. Josh and I was raised different, just like everybody on this dais is raised

different than me, and we have had different life experiences. But we all believe in that flag right there behind you.

What I say is, as long as you love that flag as much as I do and you are willing to die for that flag like I am, we can work together. We can set the differences aside, and we can work together. Josh represents that too. Just for him being here, you guys know, he has a primary in New Jersey. He is not a Senator who has six years. He is up every two years, and he is here. That is a friend, that says, "Hey, my political differences are beside, I still like you."

I cannot tell you how many members on the Democrat Party, which I love and respect and I understand the politics, have come up to me since this nomination say, "Hey, I love you, but I am running for this office, but I am running for this office, but I am up for reelection, I would be killed in my State. In most cases, I would support you, but—" And it drives me crazy. But when you see a real friend like that, run through fire for the guy.

Senator JOHNSON. Again, this is a nomination hearing. From my standpoint, when you are trying to select somebody to run an operation, you want somebody with integrity, somebody with that passion toward the mission, keeping this Nation safe, having this love for this country. It is also, I think, incredibly important that when you are serving the Administration, you have a good relationship with the President. It does not work so well. I know you have a good relationship with the President.

You told me a story, and I want you to repeat that story, of your son who was grievously injured, and a visit that the President of the United States made to that hospital. I want you to tell the story, because I think it is important that people understand why you are loyal to President Trump. I would like them to hear a different side of President Trump as well. But I think also that will serve you well as his Secretary of Homeland Security. But just tell that story.

Senator MULLIN. Ron, I am going to try getting through without crying. It is not about President Trump. It is about my son. My son was a really world-class athlete, and January 17, 2020, which mind you was an election year, he had a really serious brain injury. Woke up 26 hours later and he was a different kid. We almost lost him. For 26 hours, he had extremely low pulse. There was a time that they thought that they lost his pulse altogether.

When he woke up, he was just different. Here you had a world-class athlete that wrestled all over the world since he was 12 years old and he could not touch his nose. He could not walk without shuffling his feet. He had short-term memory loss. He could not control his muscles. Could not add five plus three. He was in high school at that time. Had to learn how to read, walk, everything.

The President found out about it and he gave me a call immediately, and one thing that the President joked about was, he said, "Let me get this straight. He doesn't know who you and Christie are, but he knew I was?" Because the only question he got right is who the President was, and he said, "Trump," with his cocky grin on his face.

The President didn't understand the severity of it, but he heard it in my voice and immediately he went to work. I told him we had to get to Bakersfield, California to the Center for Neural Skills,

which was one of the best neural rehabilitation places in the world. The President offered to take us in his personal plane. This is the President of the United States. I said, "Sir, we can't fly. We got to drive."

We get there and he called almost every day for two weeks checking on Jim. Then he says, "I am going to come see him." Now, this is the middle of the election. This is Bakersfield, California, really not an area he has got to go campaign. He took the time to come up there and see Jim. The center told us that the short-term memory loss, something would trigger it. Some big event would eventually trigger where he would start retaining stuff. Until then, he was still having issues.

The President arrived. Of course, there was cameras and everybody around. Of course, no one in media ever talked about it, which was funny, because the President called him on stage and talked to him.

Then we went to the back, and the President did not talk to me. He did not know I was in there. I mean, he did not even care if I was in the room. Here is a guy that is bent over, and his ties about as long as my son, because my son, it stunted his growth, and so he is 5'3" the rest of his life. His team came to him twice and said, "Sir, we got to go. We got to go." On the third time they came over to him, he looked at them and he says, "Hey, I guarantee you that plane won't leave without me." For the next 15 minutes, he did nothing but love on my son.

That one incident jogged his memory. From then on, he started retaining things. Jim's attitude went from this, "We are going to get through it," to this, "I am going to get through it." Every week, if not most days, the President would call and ask how he could help, ask is his buddy doing, how is Jim doing. He didn't do it for publicity. He didn't do it for any show. He was running one of the toughest elections he had been in, and the guy was still that concerned about my son.

When we got released for a little bit—we had to go back—the President said, "Come to Mar-a-Lago and see me." We go down there and it was amazing. When we are leaving—dang it. I hate getting emotional. See, if I talk about my kids, I get emotional. Other than that, you cannot make me cry. But my kids can make me emotional.

Senator JOHNSON. That is actually a good thing.

Senator MULLIN. Yes. So anyways, he grabbed my son and he said, "Do you know why I love your dad? Do you know why I love your dad?" Christie tells the story better than I do. He goes, "No, sir." He goes, "Because he loves you. Because of you. Because of you." Man, he didn't do it for any other reason. I mean, here is the President of the United States, and he did it just because he cared. When you want to say why he is a friend, yes. We were acquaintances before that. We have been friends ever since.

Senator JOHNSON. The American people needed to hear that. Thank you.

Senator MULLIN. Thank you.

Chairman PAUL. Senator Blumenthal.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR BLUMENTHAL

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, Senator Mullin. Thank you for being here today. Thank you to your family for your service and theirs. I hope that you will be as emotional about the children who are presently detained at Dilley and other camps in the United States of America, where they have been subjected to conditions that would outrage and have angered many Americans.

We are here because of a lawless and reckless agency, that has broken into homes without judicial approval, shot United States citizens, detained them without any cause, and sometimes killed them. I am looking for real substantive reform in that agency, as you and I have discussed when you came to talk to me, a break with the past, with former Secretary Noem and with the White House, Steve Miller, and others who have used Kristi Noem, in effect, as a puppet to implement lawless policy.

I welcome that you have stated you regret your statement after the killing of Alex Pretti. You said on Fox News, "Unfortunately, an individual, a deranged individual that came to cause max damage with a loaded pistol, with an extra mag that was completely loaded, and shot and killed." And you regret that statement, do you not?

Senator MULLIN. I have already said that, sir, yes.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. What about what you said about Renee Good after she was shot and killed? You appeared on Cable News Network (CNN), and you were asked whether you believed the shooting was justified. And you replied, "Absolutely." Do you regret that statement as well?

Senator MULLIN. Senator, it is very clear that an officer had to make a split decision in that case as a car was running toward him and did strike him. At that point, that car becomes a lethal weapon. There was another officer obviously giving her verbal commands to stop the vehicle.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. So you are saying, and I apologize for interrupting you, but you do not regret that statement?

Senator MULLIN. I am saying that the investigation is going on, but what we have seen—my understanding, Senator—

Senator BLUMENTHAL. There is no investigation, Senator. In fact, that was my next question to you. Don't you think there should be an investigation?

Senator MULLIN. My understanding is that there is. I will find out if I am able to get confirmed. But those are two different instances.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. In fact, the Department of Homeland Security and the Trump administration has blocked State and local investigation of the killing of Renee Good. I hope that you will permit that investigation to go forward.

Senator MULLIN. Senator, State and local investigation does not investigate Federal. FBI does that through the Department of Justice (DOJ). I believe the FBI is looking at this case.

I do want to say something to you. What you said about the terrible conditions that this Administration is putting in kids, but what you left out is that they have actually recovered over 160,000 kids that were trafficked or lost during the Biden administration.

What is inhumane is the 12,000 to 13,000 individuals coming across the border every single day and we are not having tracked the kids. At one time the number was up to 385,000. And that is sad.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Let me move on, Senator Mullin, because you said that you were going to be, and I am quoting you, “blunt and direct and to the point.” So I regret that you do not retract that statement about Renee Good.

But I want to ask you about a statement that was made regarding the Pretti killing by Steve Miller in the White House. He said, that “Pretti was a domestic terrorist” who, “tried to assassinate Federal law enforcement.” Don’t you think it was irresponsible and reckless for Stephen Miller to post that claim on X without any evidence, just as you have retracted your statement?

Senator MULLIN. Senator, I believe that question is better asked to Stephen Miller, not myself. I cannot speak for him.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Stephen Miller also said, again on Fox News, “Under President Trump’s leadership, we are looking to set a goal of a minimum of 3,000 arrests for ICE every day.” If you are confirmed, are you going to be directing ICE to arrest 3,000 people a day?¹

Senator MULLIN. Sir, once again, I cannot speak for Steven Miller, but I can say the President has tapped me to be the Secretary of Homeland. I will lead that Department, and I will lead it——

Senator BLUMENTHAL. So will you continue that arrest quota of 3,000 people a day?

Senator MULLIN. No quota has been set for me, sir.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. In effect, it is a quota if the White House directs the DHS Secretary to arrest 3,000 people a day.

Senator MULLIN. The President of the United States sets the policies, and I will be working with the President. If you have a question for Stephen Miller, please ask him.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. I really regret that you are going to stick to those same policies and practices and condone the statements of the White House that are so demeaning to someone who was a victim of lawlessness and recklessness by an ICE officer.

Senator MULLIN. Senator, I did not say that. You are putting words in my mouth.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Let me ask you then a different question. ICE has been breaking into people’s homes without any judicial warrant. The sanctity of our homes is absolutely critical. I think you would agree with that point. It is the law that a judicial warrant is required to forcibly enter someone’s home.

Kristi Noem acknowledged in her testimony, in response to my questions, that at least 28 break-ins have occurred. My Ranking Member leadership on the Permanent Subcommittee of Investigation (PSI) has produced a report that shows probably many more such break-ins have occurred, the result of a memo last May from the acting director, Todd Lyons,² and it is behind me now, that instructed ICE agents to break into homes. I understand that during your staff interview last week you said that there would be no

¹ The picture submitted by Senator Blumenthal appears in the Appendix on page 174.

² The ICE memo submitted by Senator Blumenthal appears in the Appendix on page 175.

more such break-ins into people's homes without a judicial warrant.

If confirmed, will you commit to me, the Chair and Ranking Member of this Committee and the American people that ICE will no longer instruct agents to break into people's homes without a judicial warrant?

Senator MULLIN. Sir, you are using the word, "break into people's houses," very loosely. However, I have made it very clear to the staff, and I think when you and I spoke, that a judicial warrant will be used to go into houses and a place of businesses, unless we are pursuing someone that enters in that place. I have not mixed words with that and I have not changed my opinion about that.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. A whistleblower testified to our hearing that, in fact, ICE agents have been instructed as part of their training, to forcibly enter, I know you do not like the word break-in, but forcibly enter is breaking into somebody's home, bashing down the door, terrorizing children, instructed them to adopt this policy.

Will you commit that no longer will ICE agents or CBP agents be instructed to forcibly enter people's homes without a judicial warrant?

Senator MULLIN. Sir, I have already answered this question for you. I said we will not enter a home or a place of business without a judicial warrant, unless we are pursuing the individual that runs into a place of business or a house.

Chairman PAUL. Senator Lankford.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you.

Chairman PAUL. Thank you.

Senator LANKFORD. Markwayne, right now, is FEMA currently funded?

Senator MULLIN. No, sir.

Senator LANKFORD. Is CISA currently funded dealing with cybersecurity?

Senator MULLIN. No, sir.

Senator LANKFORD. How about TSA?

Senator MULLIN. No, sir.

Senator LANKFORD. U.S. Secret Service (USSS)?

Senator MULLIN. No, sir.

Senator LANKFORD. Coast Guard?

Senator MULLIN. No, sir.

Senator LANKFORD. Customs and Border Protection?

Senator MULLIN. No, sir.

Senator LANKFORD. The Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Office?

Senator MULLIN. No, sir.

Senator LANKFORD. Customs Professionals?

Senator MULLIN. No, sir.

Senator LANKFORD. This is something we got to get resolved. We can complain all we want to about where things are, but we have an argument and a disagreement on policy areas, and a quarter million Federal employees and their families are the ones that are suffering because of our argument.

There is a way to solve this. We have talked about it a lot. We should just stay here until we are done. Just keep arguing it out

until we have actually solved the problem. But instead, we broke last weekend. Everybody flew home right past the TSA agents that are not getting paid while we flew home. Why didn't we stay to be able to try to get things resolved? That is my encouragement, and it has been my encouragement all along. We should not walk away from a disagreement when there are families all over the country that are the ones suffering for it.

Unfortunately, the State of Oklahoma is pretty familiar with natural disasters, as you know well. You and I have been in multiple different natural disaster scenes. There is a lot of work that has happened at the border so far. The border has moved from 12,000 people a day illegally crossing the border and being released into the country, unvetted, unchecked, to now a handful of people even attempt to cross our Southern border. Those that are arrested and detained, as is the law.

FEMA is still an undone project, and I am not blaming that on Kristi. There is a lot to get done on it. But you are going to walk in with a project going on with FEMA right now. Love to get your ideas and your thoughts. You are very familiar with this area and have great experience on it. What are your thoughts on how to be able to get FEMA into a better place so that people are not waiting forever for a response?

Senator MULLIN. FEMA was never designed to be the first responder. That is the states. FEMA was designed to be the assistance to the states when the disaster reaches certain levels. Which we need to discuss those too, because I think some of the levels are unrealistic, especially Senator Hassan and I have talked about this, that sometimes in rural areas, they are not able to meet those thresholds.

But working with the State, allowing the State to have their emergency response, FEMA is simply helping write checks and assuring that they have the capability and the manpower if need be. But for the FEMA to walk in, like FBI walking in on a crime scene and taking over, no one is going to care more about their backyard than the people that live there in that State. I think there are a lot of good ideas. In meeting with so many of you all, there were so many great ideas on how to make FEMA work better.

It has a great mission. I think people at FEMA want to do their job, but we can be more effective and be more direct and speed it up. Taking years to get reimbursed is not acceptable. Taking honestly months to get reimbursed is not acceptable. See, small municipalities, they cannot afford it. They do not have that tax base to do it. They are already going through a struggling time, which means they are probably losing tax revenue, especially if it hits their town.

We have a lot of work there. I do believe that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. That means we are going to look at each one of the 22 agencies that fall underneath DHS and say, "How can we deliver the mission better for the American people?"

Senator LANKFORD. That is great. That would be a huge help to everybody. Talking about the length of time it takes to get a response, you have been a part of, as I have, on the nonprofit security grants that are out there. We have some locations that are

higher risk than others. Synagogues and temples have been one of those very high-risk locations that are out there. Last week in Michigan, we had another situation where an absolute terrorist drove a vehicle packed with explosives into a Jewish daycare, intending to kill as many Jewish children as he possibly could. That was his intent, was to be able to do that. That location happened to be one of the locations where there has also been this nonprofit security grant to help harden that facility.

We have multiple challenges here. One of them is when the decision is made, they make a request, go through the paperwork, get approval to be one of those locations that we say, "Hey, we need to harden this location." Once the approval is done, it may take months to over a year just for the dollars to actually come on it because there are more bureaucratic hoops to go through.

As you are dealing with things like contracts that are out there and the way decisions are made, or FEMA, that is one of the areas I would encourage you to take a look at, and I know you are very passionate about. How do you fix the issue where approval has been done and everyone is saying, "Great, can we get to work?" and the Federal Government says, "No. No, you cannot actually get to work. You got to wait some more before the actual work can actually begun to be do that?" How does that get fixed?

Senator MULLIN. We got to streamline the process and cut out the redundancies. The Senator from Michigan and I had a long conversation about the amount of paperwork, once you are approved, to get the funding flowing and then the paperwork that is followed up on it is way too cumbersome.

There is a better way to do this. Some of these policies I have to work with you guys on. Some of these grants were written with checks and balances, which we all got to be very cautious on how we spend the taxpayer dollars. Things that I can change, things that I can cut out on the redundancy part of it, I will work with. Things that, as the Senator and I talked about, things that it may take you to make changes on, we will bring it to your attention. I will work with you and we will see how we can make it better.

Senator LANKFORD. Great. As you know, Oklahoma has been one of the leaders in counter-drone. This is a big issue, of course, as a country. Every high school football game, every college football game, every gathering of people for every festival and gathering across the country has now become a risk location for drones and drone mitigation.

FBI cannot be everywhere. We do not want them to be everywhere. We do have to figure out some process. As you begin to think about this issue—it is a tough one to be able to deal with, but it is a basic national security issue as well that is going to land on your desk pretty quickly, especially with the Olympics coming, with Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) coming, all those things that are happening. We got to be able to figure out how to do counter-drone and to be able to not just identify, "There it is," but to also mitigate the risk. What are your initial thoughts?

Senator MULLIN. Yes, and I would love to speak about that. With funding, talking to some of our agency heads, with a lack of funding right now we have people quitting because they got to go to

work. Meeting these demands are even going to be tougher. We just talk about FIFA, for instance. Then you talk about 2028, which is going to be the busiest year of DHS in history because we have the Olympics and we have the Presidential election going on.

It will take four months once funding comes in to start replacing those that we have lost for training before we can get them out in the field. We do not have four months with FIFA. How do we expect these people to stay on the job and work? We are losing institutional knowledge. We are losing people we have already trained. It is going to be difficult to deliver this mission.

The way that I understand is we are behind in EOA Specialist (EOAS) and we are behind in FIFA right now on actually delivering the mission that we have to. We are also behind in reimbursing local communities that is also working with us. That is going to have to take a tremendous amount of focus and partnership.

Like I said in my opening statement, failure is not an option, so we have to deliver. But sometimes when you have to rush like this, especially trying to get people on the job because we just quit funding them for the third time in less than a year, and we expect these people to keep working, it puts the mission at risk. We have a lot of work to do here.

Senator LANKFORD. Yes. Thanks for stepping up. Christie, thank you. This is a strain on the family, and everything else right now. So thank you all for stepping into this role. I look forward to supporting your nomination.

Senator MULLIN. Thank you.

Chairman PAUL. Senator Kim.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR KIM

Senator KIM. Thank you, Chairman. Senator Mullin, thanks for coming out here. Secretary Noem said in a Cabinet meeting about almost exactly a year ago today that we should be eliminating FEMA. Can you commit to us here that you do not support that approach and you would not attempt to eliminate FEMA?

Senator MULLIN. As I said, I think it needs to be restructured, not eliminated.

Senator KIM. I think there is going to be bipartisan support for reforms. I think we all understand that. We certainly saw a lot of problems when it came to Superstorm Sandy. I asked Secretary Noem to work with us, especially as they were going about their FEMA Review Council. I will be honest with you, that never materialized. We did not see the kind of engagement here that we are ready to have. We have a bipartisan group of Senators that want to come up with reforms. Is that something you can commit to working with us on?

Senator MULLIN. Senator, I think all of us that has been either in the House or in the Senate always complain about the outreach of agencies. I will make a commitment to you that I am going to have the best. It is going to take a couple months to stand it up, but we are going to have the Leg Affairs shop that you are going to know who the person is. We are going to work with you. Most importantly, I think everybody on this dais has my personal cell phone. That cell phone is not going to change. If you call me, you

are going to get a response. If you text me, you are going to get a response.

Senator KIM. When we have this FEMA Review Council report finally come out, is that something you will come to us first and engage with us on, rather than just implementing it straight out from the Executive Branch on your own?

Senator MULLIN. Senator, I am pretty sure that you guys set the policies and the mission for FEMA. For any serious changes, it may take actually policy changes, and I will be in your office talking to you about it.

Senator KIM. Yes, I appreciate that. But we have seen a lot of significant problems happen. For instance, we saw about 2,400 staff cuts at FEMA. Again, we are not talking about the reforms, but we are talking about those that are trying to respond to these disasters every single day. I wanted to ask if you are confirmed if you will stop these dangerous staff cuts that have reduced FEMA's disaster readiness?

Senator MULLIN. Senator, I am not trying to play politics, but what has been the biggest disaster is not funding them three times in a year. However, some of these agencies underneath the current Administration, not some, all of them got very bloated with having too many employees in place.

Senator KIM. Do you think there is still too many staff at FEMA?

Senator MULLIN. Senator, I cannot answer that. When I get there, we will be adequately staffed to respond to our Nation's disasters.

But it is going to take some time to get there, because like I said, people are quitting today because they are not getting paid for the third time in a year. We cannot allow that to take place.

Senator KIM. I agree, and I hope that we can move forward on that. But one thing that has demonstrated a lack of priority by this Administration is the fact that we never actually had a full nominee for FEMA. I just wanted to ask, do you agree that we need an actual nominee to be a full FEMA Administrator that has real experience in emergency management?

Senator MULLIN. Absolutely. We are already looking at some, in the case that we do get confirmed, which I am hopeful we do. We are making that a priority in each one of our agencies. But, the confirmation also has to go through you and we know how partisan that can be.

Senator KIM. I get it, but at least we can get a nominee before us. I think that that is something I hope to take away, that that is a commitment you will make.

Senator MULLIN. Honestly, by the experience that I have had, which has been an interesting experience, it is a lot to ask someone, and they got to be fully committed. If they go through this process, it is tough. So I would ask you, if I do do this, give them a fair shake. For me, a lot of you guys are not giving me a fair shake to even earn your support. If I bring somebody else in to you, maybe you will give them a fair shake and you will actually work with them. Because I am going to find somebody that is capable of doing the job, that is smarter at me at doing the job, that has experience doing the job. But when they come to your office and ask for your support, do not tell them it is politics. Do not say, "I can't."

Do not say that, “Hey, I supported the previous one, but I got burned on that one so I can’t support you. Just give them a fair opportunity and you might actually like the person we choose.

Senator KIM. Look, it is not just about the person. It is about the policies writ large. And what we saw before, for instance Secretary Noem had this policy that required her approval for anything that was going out the door, grants, funding over \$100,000. I will be honest with you, it was disastrous. It held up so much of the funding to FEMA and other parts of DHS.

Senator Peters and I did a review of this. Over 1,000 FEMA contracts, grants, and disaster assistance awards were delayed. I wanted to ask you if you can commit to revoking this \$100,000 policy by Secretary Noem?

Senator MULLIN. Sir, we talked in your office about that. Absolutely. That is called micromanaging. I do not know if the Secretary put that in or someone else did. I am not a micromanager. We put people in. We empower them to make decisions. What is required to come up to my level, we will make decisions. We will have a very clear line of communication with every one of our agency’s heads on their authority that you gave to them within their parameters, and we will discuss. But we are also going to be very responsible for the taxpayer dollars.

Senator KIM. It is just adding so much red tape though.

Senator MULLIN. Yes. I agree.

Senator KIM [continuing]. I mean, especially when it came to disaster response with the Texas floods.

Senator MULLIN. I agree.

Senator KIM. I want to switch gears here. This is something that you remember we talked about, but we have this effort right now, ICE has purchased a warehouse in Roxbury, New Jersey. It is a facility the size of eight football fields to house over 1,500 detainees. Never once did an ICE official go and talk to the local mayor, talk to the local law enforcement, assess the situation alongside the locals. I just wanted to ask you, is that fair that DHS is imposing these types of large-scale detention facilities without local engagement and input?

Senator MULLIN. Sir, being from small rural Oklahoma, it is a big impact, and the community should be visited with. Especially when you start taking a warehouse off, it takes it off the tax roll which can make a huge impact, and you got to deal with impact aid if they are eligible for it. Then you got to talk about infrastructure. One thing I do know is construction. When you start talking about infrastructure on these places, a warehouse sprinkler system is much smaller than when you are housing individuals there. If you say, I think you said the town was 60,000 people, and I believe you said this was—

Senator KIM. Smaller than that.

Senator MULLIN. Is it smaller than that?

Senator KIM. About 22,000 people, of which the detainees and the staff there would constitute about 10 percent of the population of that town.

Senator MULLIN. Yes. And realistically, most municipalities do not have the capacity in their infrastructure for waste and water. It is important that we are talking to the communities. If we are

having additional needs, we can work with the cities, we can work the municipalities. But we should always communicate with them.

Senator KIM. I agree with that, and this town has only 42 full-time police officers and a volunteer fire department. Does that sound like the kind of town that has the resources to take on a warehouse of this magnitude?

Senator MULLIN. Sir, I do not know the circumstances behind this, other than what you and I talked about. I committed to you when I visited with you in your office, we will talk. I even said let's you and I get on the phone with the mayor. If I am confirmed, I will make a trip out there and see it for myself, because it is a big concern of yours and we want to address those concerns. Listen, if it is not practical, there may be a specific reason why it is there. If I cannot explain that to you, then that is a different story. But if there is a specific reason and I can explain it to you to make it make sense, let's talk about it. But if not, then maybe we can be better partners moving forward.

Senator KIM. I am glad that you commit to talking about it. There are some documents I asked ICE to send us about their evaluations of the warehouse. We have still yet to get it. Will you commit that that is something that we can get?

Senator MULLIN. If the documents are available, yes. But I have also offered something much better. I will go with you personally and look at it.

Senator KIM. That is something that the local community will appreciate. I hope that you will reassess this warehouse.

Senator MULLIN. As I said in my opening statements, we want to protect the homeland, but we also want peace of mind and bring back confidence to Department of Homeland Security. All this means that we got to work on that. I will work on that.

Chairman PAUL. Senator Scott.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR SCOTT

Senator SCOTT. Senator Mullin, congratulations on your nomination. This is a great honor that you have. And you have a great background, so I know you will work your butt off in the job like you do everything else.

President Trump was elected to secure our border, crack down on sanctuary cities, and keep our country safe. I want to thank the President for his leadership and Secretary Noem's help. Incredible progress has been made. Our streets are safer, our borders are respected, and the jobs we have created are going to people in this country legally.

Now, as a result of Democrats' partial shutdown, in the fourth week TSA agents are not getting paid. Everybody in the Senate's getting paid. I have had a bill since I got up here, if we do not pass budgets, we should not get paid. I have had one of my Democrat colleagues say, "I have a mortgage. I have to get paid."

Think about all these people. TSA agents are not getting paid, airport lines are in gridlock, we got FEMA grants stalling, Coast Guard counterterrorism operations are shrinking amid rising Iranian threats to our homeland. My understanding is ICE agents are getting paid, but not ICE leadership is necessarily getting paid.

Last week, two terrorists boldly and hatefully attacked our citizens right here on our home soil, killing at least one person. The President's decision to stop the nuclear weapons and the ballistic missiles was a reason. What he is doing is making sure we do not get these attacks on our soil. It was only as a result of brave actions of a class of future military officers, citizens, and law enforcement that stopped these tragedies. They could have been massacres.

Still, even as Americans are losing their lives, my Democratic colleagues are refusing to fund DHS and give them what they need to uncover and stop plots like these and protect the lives of our families and neighbors. It seems like that is our job up here.

Senator Mullin, how do you view Senate Democrats recklessly holding DHS funds hostage at the expense of our national security interests amid threats from Iran and its proxies?

Senator MULLIN. Senator, it is unconscionable. How can you sit there with a straight face and say that, "We're trying to take care of the American worker," when you are choosing to not pay 260,000 people and you are affecting their families. We have heard the stories of families having to stand in terrible lines for basic needs or getting a loan. Like I said, this is not the first time. We are a month into this. They just came out of a 43-day shutdown that they were probably just recovering from. Yet, we are still going to sit there with a straight face and say it is not about politics?

Senator SCOTT. So in sanctuary cities, local authorities can decline ICE detainers, which means that criminals are released back into the community rather than transferred safely into ICE custody. First off, I cannot imagine anybody elected that wants criminals back in their community, but that is happening. This creates opportunities for illegal fugitives to relocate or re-offend, like in the tragic murder of Kate Steinle. It also forces DHS officers to go into neighborhoods to root out violent criminals, which is way more dangerous for everybody. Not only does this cost the taxpayer more, but also increases the risk for everybody involved, including bystanders, DHS officers, and potential future victims.

We are seeing this play out right now just a few miles away, where local officials in Fairfax, Virginia, are refusing to turn over an illegal immigrant who was arrested for groping 12 underage students. The local elective wants to put that person back out in the community, that is not even here legally. Instead of turning him over to ICE, Fairfax County prosecutors are trying to get him released. This is just one example of how sanctuary city policies choose to put illegal aliens over American citizens. How do you plan to deal with sanctuary cities like Los Angeles and Chicago to remove criminal illegal aliens?

Senator MULLIN. Sir, it has been a difficult conversation that has been had with these sanctuary cities. As I said going on, we do not get to choose which laws we enforce. As elected officials, you should not choose which laws you enforce. We are not asking them to go out there and enforce immigration. We are just saying be good partners with us. If we have to serve judicial warrants, let us go serve the judicial warrants. If you pull over somebody that is wanted, that is in the country illegally and it is a municipality, we are

saying just hold them. At least let us do a background check on them and see who they are.

And working with the municipalities are going to be vitally important, but also you got to take a look at if they are not willing to enforce Federal law and work with us, then where is the taxpayer dollars going to? Ideally, I would like to go in there and talk to the mayors. I would like to go in there and talk to the sheriffs, talk to the police chiefs, say, "What is your concerns? How can we get past this?"

Because the President has made it very clear. He wants to protect the streets for every American. He wants to restore law and order to every city. I do not think that should be controversial, but some people have, for political purposes, or maybe they didn't like the tactics.

Either way, I find it really hard to believe that law enforcement in those communities do not want to do their job. So maybe we sit down and we just work it out. It is like I tell my wife all the time, sometimes when she gets mad at me—and I am right, she is wrong, by the way—but sometimes when she gets mad at me, I have to apologize because I simply say—that was a joke by the way, for everybody that is married. But I have to apologize. Sometimes I tell her, I said, "Honey, it is a misunderstanding. We still love each other. We still want the best for our family." And these law enforcement, and I would even say these mayors, they still love their community. They still love their cities. They still love this country. So maybe it is a misunderstanding we can work by.

I am going to start with that. That is what I am going to start with. If we have to do something different, then we will, but that is where I am going to start at. It is a misunderstanding, but we are going to force the Nation laws and make sure we protect everybody in their city and hopefully work with them and never work against them.

Senator SCOTT. Senator Mullin, as Secretary of Homeland Security, do you have any ability to ban funding to sanctuary cities that ignore the Federal laws meant to make citizens' lives safer, but then turn around and ask for Federal money for added protection?

Senator MULLIN. Sir, that would be a last option, but at the end of the day, taxpayer dollars have to be used for the right purposes. If people are refusing to enforce the Nation's laws, then I think it is really hard to justify why we are sending them taxpayer dollars that are coming out of Oklahoma, or coming out of Florida, or coming out of Kansas or Arkansas when they are making that decision. But I will say that is not going to be my first, or second, or even third approach, but that would be my last resort.

Senator SCOTT. Congratulations to the nomination. Good luck.

Senator MULLIN. Thank you.

Chairman PAUL. Senator Fetterman.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR FETTERMAN

Senator FETTERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hello, Senator Mullin. Thank you for coming in today. Americans don't like chaos, you know. America definitely didn't like the kinds of chaos during the Biden administration at the border. As a Democrat, I was alarmed that there were up to 300,000 encounters at our border

once a month. That puts that in perspective. That is the size of Pittsburgh showing up at our border. That is not sustainable, and that is not manageable, and it is making it possible for us assimilate. Now if you care about immigration, as I deeply do, you cannot possibly provide the American dream for people when the size of Pittsburgh showing up at our border once a month. That needs to be brought under control. And that happened. I signed up that as a Democrat.

The second part is rounding up all of the criminals and deport them. I cannot imagine why we cannot agree with that as well, too. That is another thing that I signed up.

One name that often doesn't come from my side is Laken Riley. I grieve for Renee Good and I grieve for Alex Pretti, but I also deeply grieve for Laken Riley and their family. Now all three were failures of our government there in that circumstance. As I was proud to be the co-sponsor of the Laken Riley Bill, because we have to address that.

Two things must be true here. We need to have a secure border and we have to round up and deport every single criminal in our Nation. I cannot imagine why that is critical or controversial for anybody. So that is what I am trying to find a way forward. Now you and I have had conversations on this and that is your commitment to focus on those things. I believe that is effective, accurate, correct?

Senator MULLIN. Yes, sir.

Senator FETTERMAN. Yes. Now, another thing. I know there's a lot of hard, personal feelings here and absolutely, it is terrible what's happened. Political violence, it is rampant now. But also President O'Brien's here not for round two. He's here because he fully supports your commitment, correct? Yes. Round three. OK. Yes. So it is about letting it go and moving on. I have done that too.

When I was in the hospital and things were touch and go, I know there were unkind things said about me, but I can just say that it is better to just let it all go and to find a way forward. That is the time that we are in right now, in our country on that.

Now, people might describe you in those kinds of moments, but I am going to describe you. We got a chance to get to know better when we joined a CODEL to Turks and Caicos. Correct?

Senator MULLIN. Yes, sir.

Senator FETTERMAN. Yes. We did that. We did that because Americans were looking at over a decade in prison because they had a couple random bullets in their luggage. Those Americans ran the gamut of a Black grandmother from Florida, I believe, Florida, and Pennsylvania that live in Western Pennsylvania, that I did, and I was able to welcome him at the airport when he returned there. That was about a commitment to working together. Imagine just because a couple random bullets, accidentally, they were looking at over a decade in prison. Now we worked together and now not one single American really faced that kind of thing. So that is about committed to working together, so now.

Also as a Democrat, I made me the only Democrat that refused to shutting our DHS down. Some people might say that that does not mean I have any less commitment to reform ICE. That is just

categorically not true. But it is a strange devotion. I don't understand why you would shut the entire agency down just because you want those kind of reforms on ICE that has absolutely no impact on ICE and does not force any of those things. I refuse to do that and I refuse to punish those union members that are working. Now especially parts of that, it is true, it is like the cybersecurity agency is part of DHS?

Senator MULLIN. Yes, sir.

Senator FETTERMAN. Yes. That is currently that is on the shutdown. Now two of the top agents of cyberattacks come from Iran and China. They must be elated to know that that part is all shut down, because that is part of this shutdown that does not bring any reform to ICE, that I want any less than other Democrats here. The difference is I refuse to punish and make our Nation less secure part of that.

For me, I came in here and I committed to come here with an open mind and I am going to continue to do that. It is not going to be about gotcha moments for me. It is about just saying my experience with you has been consistent kindness and professionalism. The first time I met, it was you and your wife behind you when I was here at the orientation here in the Senate. Even before you got the call for the big job, we were even discussing about getting together and having dinner as family. That is an ongoing relationship because that is also part of the fact here in this town. You got to get along and find a way to work together, and now we have to come at it and just let things go in the past for that.

Finding a way forward, that is my responsibility to represent Pennsylvania. Now for you, I just want to thank you for showing up. Now I am going to engage and I am going to remain with an open mind throughout all this as I made to my friend here, and I am going to do that. Thank you for bringing your family here too, and I look forward to hearing for the rest of my colleagues' views on you.

Senator MULLIN. Thank you, Senator.

Chairman PAUL. Senator Ernst.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR ERNST

Senator ERNST. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Christie, for being here as well.

Senator Mullin, I have to say, I am just going to be blunt, very honest with you. I hope that the President is watching. I am going to say to the President, I am really upset that he has made your nomination. Why? Because I will be losing you from the Senate one of the best friends that I have here, truly. But in that same accord, I am so grateful to the President for making your nomination to Department of Homeland Security.

We have had a lot of discussion here. I know just as Senator Fetterman said, there are a lot of differences and opinions on the politics surrounding DHS. Senator Fetterman mentioned that he grieves for all of those that we have lost. Those protestors, we grieve the loss of young women, young men that we have seen at the hands of those that have migrated illegally into the United

States of America. We grieve them all, and I think we can acknowledge that, and it is important that we do that.

We are in really trying times right now. One of the things that I want to focus on right now is the bipartisanship that you have had with so many members in the House, in the Senate, the relationships that you have outside of this body, because I think it is really important, because we get into political fights all the time, and we are all trying to score points back and forth. Bipartisanship is not very sexy, but I think we need a lot more of it.

Josh Gottheimer was here today. I respect him so much. The fact that you remain friends today is incredibly important. I noticed you also gave Joe Kennedy a shout-out. I sent him a picture I took of you from the dais because I know Joe really well, as well.

There are so many relationships that we have in this body, and I wish more people would see that we have those relationships, we carry them in our hearts. It means we are better people because we open our minds to listen. To that point, I want to thank you, Mr. O'Brien, for being here as well, because what started out as a very big difference between you and Mr. O'Brien, you found a way to both of you come together to share thoughts and ideas and turn something really good out of that discourse. I think more people need to learn how to do that.

To all my friends sitting here in the dais and those that are watching, is that this is how America works, where we are able to take differences and come together and not just shout at one another, but come together and figure out a way forward. That is what makes this country such an incredibly brilliant country, is that we can recognize those differences.

I want to talk a little bit about a trip that we took last year. So many folks know that you serve on Armed Services. I serve on Armed Services. We do congressional delegation visits. A little over a year ago or about a year ago, Senator Mullin led a congressional delegation visit into a country that had not been visited by an official delegation trip in 15 years. Along on that trip, I was also there. Chairman Smith was on this trip as well, as well as Democrat Jimmy Panetta of California. We went to Syria. We sat down with the President there, al-Sharaa, for his first official visit from the United States of America.

Now, a lot of people will say, "He was a member of al-Qaeda. What are you doing sitting down with somebody that was a member of al-Qaeda?" It is the same reason we sit down with people that we have differences with, is to find a way forward.

Senator Mullin, I would like you to talk a little bit about that trip and why you believed it was important that we do that.

Senator MULLIN. Thank you. Thank you, Senator. You are right. The President of Syria was not really somebody we should have a lot of common ground with, and we actually talked about that. Him and I talked about that. I had a very blunt relationship about it. But the fact is our world is different and there's different leaders for different countries and different places, and you have to understand the region and the area they are in.

We are not in the business of necessarily picking the leaders, but when we do, hopefully there is a way that we can work it out. If you remember the President at the time, he said, "When I was

younger, I was fed a lot of propaganda." I am paraphrasing this. He says, "But when I was in American prison in Iraq," he started looking at things different. Then he also went on to say, "Yes, I was affiliated with al-Qaeda, but it is much like you guys being affiliated with Russia." It was interesting to me how he went through the history.

He said, "It's much like you guys being affiliated with Russia and China in World War II and look where you are at today. Sometimes in war, when we are fighting for our country, I left Iraq and came back and fought for Syria because that is my home. We had the most diverse population in the history of the world in Damascus, and I don't want the foreign influence. After I got out, I realized my fight is for my country, not for this necessarily organization, but for me to get resources, for me to get fighters, for me to be able to fight for my country." Hopefully, even though he said, openly, "I never planned on being President of the country. I was just wanting to get my home back. I find myself here." He was very open. He says, "I have made mistakes." I said, "I have made mistakes too." I said, "We're not perfect, but if we can work together to be a trust but verified," he says, "I want a relationship with the United States. I want to have that relationship."

That is not common for somebody with al-Qaeda ties. That is somebody that says, "Yes, my past is my past, but I am looking to the future." I think we all have past. In past, we can learn from. We learn from successes and failures in our past. But if we can grab the past that we made a mistake on and say, "Yes, that's a mistake. I am not going to make it again," that is a lesson. That is where wisdom comes from. If you can also learn from your successes, then that is also where wisdom comes from, and that is considered someone that has the potential to be a leader. I would rather work with those leaders like that than to continue to see the civil war that was going on, and in some cases still going on in Syria.

Senator ERNST. Yes, and thank you. I just use this because my time has expired, just to demonstrate how we all have such significant differences. We can come from different backgrounds. But I have been on a lot of congressional delegation visits, folks, a lot in the 12 years that I have been here. But to watch Senator Mullin lead this delegation and to be able to speak to someone that is far different than we are and bring our countries that closer together, I know that he will do that with every one of us serving in Congress. I know you will represent us very well. You will represent the Administration very well. You will make our country safer.

Thank you, Senator Mullin. Thank you, Christie, very much for your friendship as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman PAUL. Senator Slotkin.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR SLOTKIN

Senator SLOTKIN. Thank you. Thanks for being here. Thanks for our conversation yesterday. I want to just actually add on to what Senator Lankford was saying and just focus on the attack we had at a temple that is very close to my heart in Michigan, a place I know well. Last week, we had an antisemitic attack meant to terrorize not just that synagogue, but the entire Jewish community.

I think the light is really blinking red, and that is the feeling for the Jewish community. Just as an objective statement, the Jewish community is 10 times more likely to be the victim of a hate crime than all other religious groups combined. That is not a political statement. That is a factual statement from FBI data.

We talked about the need to work together. The Jewish community is spending about a billion dollars a year privately securing their own institutions. No religious group should have to spend that amount of money that could be going to lots of other things on their own security in the United States of America.

I would just ask your help in reforming the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) so it is agile, so you do not have to win the grant and then still do 100 pieces of paper, maybe even looking at a rapid reaction fund, but certainly asking for some sort of task force. I am thinking about the community in Australia that went to the Australian government, the Jewish community, and said, "We are seeing just a real uptick in threats. We are terrified." Then we have Bondi Beach and a very horrible thing.

Can we just agree in public again in a bipartisan basis to sit together to reform this program and figure out how we manage to sit down and talk to you, figure out what we need to do. I know this is very personal to you, and that is great. We may have some differences on some political views, but this is not one. You and I will be laser-focused and get this resolved if it is possible. But yes, I would absolutely welcome an opportunity to work with you on this.

Senator MULLIN. Senator, you have a wealth of knowledge from your service in the intel community, and you will know this issue probably better than me. I would welcome the opportunity to sit down and talk to you, figure out what we need to do. I know this is very personal to you, and that is great. We may have some differences on some political views, but this is not one. You and I will be laser-focused and get this resolved if it is possible. But yes, I would absolutely welcome an opportunity to work with you on this.

Senator SLOTKIN. Great. I appreciate that. I think, in general, your position or your future position as Secretary of Homeland Security sits at the fulcrum of these big issues we are having as a country, just big cultural issues. The use of law enforcement in our streets and where our rights begin and end, and then our elections, our democracy. Given the importance of that, I think it is important that we state really clearly where you are on those two issues.

I think first and foremost on the use of ICE, my State voted for Donald Trump in 2024. A lot of people supported the President's immigration agenda, but then they watched with their own eyes, not filtered through a news source. They watched with their own eyes, American citizens killed in their streets for protesting. They saw children caught in the crossfire and being teargassed. They saw people randomly being pulled out of their cars and walking down the streets because they happened to look like they could be an immigrant and checked for their papers, which for many of us has a real history. They have seen law enforcement go into people's homes without a judicial warrant, for a country that was invented because we were being oppressed by a foreign force that demanded entry into our homes.

So you say you don't want ICE in the news, you say you want to rebuild trust. Your predecessor was fired because she could not manage that, and people had to go in and bring the temperature down. Can you, without other words, just state clearly what you

would be willing to do to fundamentally reform ICE and put into law to do so since that trust is gone?

Senator MULLIN. Ma'am, as you know, I cannot make the law. You guys make that for me.

Senator SLOTKIN. But you are going to be the Secretary.

Senator MULLIN. Yes, I agree, but I cannot make the law. I can work within the parameters—

Senator SLOTKIN. No, but tell us what you would be willing to put into law.

Senator MULLIN. Right now, the law that I will work into is your guys' decision. We will work through that. But I do believe there is a better approach. I think working with municipalities, I would love to see ICE become a transport more than the frontline. If we can get back into just simply working with law enforcement, we are going to them and we are picking up these criminals from their jail. One, we are going to reimburse them for having the person there. A partnership is vitally important. I don't think there needs to be a law to change that. I think I can work within what is there, but there is an approach that can happen, but we got to have partners.

Senator SLOTKIN. Yes, I understand. We are not going to agree to this here, but I would just say the trust is gone and not just with Democrats. That is why we are here. That is why your predecessor was fired. There needs to be fundamental reform of this law enforcement agency. I think that the public writ large is crying out for that. Let me turn to elections.

Senator MULLIN. Senator,

Senator SLOTKIN. No.

Senator MULLIN. OK.

Senator SLOTKIN. Let me turn to elections. The Department of Homeland Security has the mandate since the Obama era for securing our election infrastructure. That is an important job, and you will be Secretary. The President has continued to say that he won the 2020 election, even though there have been 60 court cases saying the opposite. He has said he wants to Federalize the elections. He has said name check cities, including Detroit. He has said voting machines are inaccurate. He has said in the State of the Union, I was on the Senate floor, paraphrase that if his side does not win in November, then the elections were rigged, which is exactly what he said eight months before the 2020 election.

You have your own history. You did not certify the 2020 election. There are people at the Department of Homeland Security, three people specifically who are well-known election deniers now running election security functions. Who won the 2020 election?

Senator MULLIN. Ma'am, we know that President Joe Biden was sworn into office.

Senator SLOTKIN. Who do you believe won the election?

Senator MULLIN. I believe my job as Department of Homeland Security Secretary will be to make sure that we assure that the elections are fair and people can trust them.

Senator SLOTKIN. Does the Federal Government run the elections process or do states?

Senator MULLIN. It is very clear in the Constitution that the states control State elections, and then there is some Federal over-

sight that is on it, but the Federal Government can set some standards. If you are talking about the Save American Act, requiring you, which is within the Constitution, by the way, to requiring individuals to be citizens of the United States, I do not think it is too much to ask somebody to prove they are a citizen of the United States if we are going to talk elections.

Senator SLOTKIN. That is not what we are talking about. I am talking about administering the elections. If you are Secretary of Homeland Security, do you feel you have the authority to put uniformed officers at polling locations in 2026?

Senator MULLIN. Ma'am, we said this in your office. The only reason why my officers would be in there if there was a specific threat for them to be there, not for intimidation, and I said we would be able to share that.

Senator SLOTKIN. Even though we did not need it during World War II. We did not need it during Vietnam or the war on terror. We never had to put uniformed military there. Now, you feel that there is going to be a reason that there is going to be an armed threat to the United States that you need to potentially be there?

Senator MULLIN. No, ma'am. I cannot sit there and guarantee hypothetically of what threat would be and not. That is not within my purview.

Senator SLOTKIN. Sorry, uniformed officers.

Senator MULLIN. Yes. But if there is a threat, a specific threat, say it is in a Jewish community and there is a threat that is specific to that polling area, then we will work with local law enforcement. There will be a reason for us to be there, and it will be known why we are there.

Senator SLOTKIN. I think the reason you are here and not Kristi Noem is because Americans trust their local law enforcement now way more than they trust ICE. I would just say if we ever get to the point where you are being asked to put armed ICE officers at polling locations, we have lost the plot as a country. We have fundamentally lost it. Until I hear someone tell me that this man, President Trump, will actually allow us to have a free and fair election, there is zero trust here and I cannot trust that he will not try and steal it, again. I yield back.

Chairman PAUL. Senator Moody.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR MOODY

Senator MOODY. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and congratulations on your nomination. Congratulations to your family. I cannot think of a better person at this moment in time to lead such an important agency.

Talking about Americans trusting their local law enforcement, I think that is true. I think that is one of the reasons as the Attorney General (AG) in Florida, I worked so closely with our law enforcement, our local law enforcement, to make sure we were triaging our resources and going after really bad people that wanted to harm our community in a way to make our State safer. Part of doing that is we supported them. We made sure that they had resources, they had the support behind them, they knew that we had their backs.

I am proud that Florida was the first State to have every single county sign up to work with the Federal Government, because we were dealing with an unprecedented situation following the last administration where you had people working with radicals in that administration to destroy the border, roll out a welcome map to everyone, and has left our Nation reeling from an unprecedented surge of people we do not know who are here, many of which before they even got here had committed crimes and have committed crimes since.

The way to recover and shore up our communities is to work with, in partnership, local law enforcement who have an expertise in their communities. It is disheartening to me, not just as a former Attorney General or as a former prosecutor, but as the wife of a law enforcement officer and someone that worked very closely with them, it wrecks me to hear them refer to law enforcement, in general, especially some of the men and women that serve currently in the Department of Homeland Security, as breaking into people's homes and shooting Americans.

I think we can all acknowledge that we want law enforcement to meet professional standards, to act with the public safety in mind, to comply with the law. But we do not have to disparage an entire profession of men and women who put their lives on the line for you and for everyone in this room and said that they were going to dedicate their professional careers to stand on that line and put their safety behind yours.

When President Trump got in office, so many of these states on the Democratic side said, "I will never work with that man to come in and correct and rid the communities of people that are going to do it harm. We won't." In Minnesota, the first thing they said, "I will never help that person. I won't lift a finger," the Attorney General said. In Florida where you have 67 out of 67 counties signing up, tell me what I can do to help you. In Minnesota, they had like 7 of 87. Does that surprise anyone? No, because their State leader said, "We will not help you. We will not go after the most dangerous in our communities. Have at it. See how it goes. We won't lift a finger."

When the Administration says we are dealing with an unprecedented situation, 11 to 20 million people that's never happened in the history of our country, how do we do this? We need to make sure we are focusing on triaging and getting people out that we know may do harm to our communities. They are like, "What are you talking about? You can't have quotas." They won't talk about the quotas where they said to Border Patrol, push more and more and more and more in, however you need to do it. Don't tell us how we can stop this influx or this surge. Tell us how we can push more in. They will not talk about that. They want to tell you about focusing on children that are here, that are now here. Yes, you need to do that. As somebody that has pushed to protecting children and fought against trafficking with law enforcement's help, yes, you need to do that.

But I loved how you said, let's talk about the tens of thousands of children that the Federal Government helped traffic under the Biden administration, that we lost. When they were made aware of it, they ignored it.

You will now have to take over an agency that is charged with cleaning up a disaster, a danger. The Biden administration did that. I cannot think of a better person, someone who acts passionately and fiercely fights for the people he loves, and someone who loves this country and thinks of other people before himself.

I am telling you, in Congress, there are all kinds of personality types, but this man came up to me, time and time again, as the newest United States Senator, and said, "What can I do to help you? How can we make this place work? How can we get this done?"

I look over the course of your life, you left school when your father got sick, to go help your family business. That is the kind of person you are. The kind of person that stands up for every person in this office. That is the kind of person—passionate, fierce, a fighter, loyal—that is who I want now protecting this country at the head of the Department of Homeland Security.

You said in your testimony, "I'll fight for your family just as I fight for mine." Tell me about that personality trait and how you think that will help the Department of Homeland Security in this unprecedented time, where the last administration, the last President of the United States abandoned his role to secure this country. Tell me how you bring your personality and your character traits to this role.

Senator MULLIN. That is the way I was raised. It is the way my dad raised us, the way my mom raised us, the way they were raised. We love this country. I mean, think about it, I am getting to live the American Dream. You are telling me a kid from West Oklahoma with a speech impediment would ever be able to be here? That only happens in America. Only in America. We all probably have the same type of dreams, because none of us have royal blood. Maybe some of your parents might have served in public office or not. Mine most certainly did not. The fact that I am here, my goodness, that is why people want to come to our country, because they want the American Dream.

I want everybody to have the same opportunity that I have, but we have to secure the homeland. We have to make sure that they feel safe stepping out and being in the public eye. We got to make sure that people can have a peace of mind and trust our government, and right now there is a mistrust in our government. I think we have an opportunity to maybe work on that.

I meant it when I say that I hope in six months we are not. I cannot guarantee it, because the news chooses what they are going to run, but I hope that I am not on the news every six months, or six months from now, every day. I hope DHS is just able to be laser-focused on doing their job and it is not controversial about taking care of the homeland. I hope people have confidence in our agency again. I am going to work every day to restore that.

Senator MOODY. You will bring that same passion and zeal and protective instinct to protect every family and every community, working with local law enforcement because they know how to approach in a safe manner their communities.

Senator MULLIN. Nobody will take care of their backyard better than the individual.

Chairman PAUL. Senator Gallego.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR GALLEGO

Senator GALLEGO. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hello, neighbor. How you doing? Easy day.

Senator MULLIN. Hey, brother. Good to see you.

Senator GALLEGO. Some very specific questions. What is the primary mission of Homeland Security Investigations (HSI)?

Senator MULLIN. From the IG or from us?

Senator GALLEGO. I am sorry, from Homeland Security Department. There's HSI within Homeland Security. What is their primary mission? It is not a trick question either.

Senator MULLIN. No, I understand that. Every agency, sir, we have specific missions that we are targeted to look at our aspect of protecting the homeland. Different directions have different paths, and in different agencies, reason why there are 22 of them there, we all need to be in the same boat, rowing the same direction, working for one common goal. As I said, that is protect the homeland, bring peace of mind, and secure the confidence of the American people.

Senator GALLEGO. OK. HSI, and being from Arizona, we are very familiar with CP, ICE, and HSI. HSI specifically is very important because they specialize in dealing with human trafficking, human smuggling, counterfeit, bank fraud, things of that nature. Actually, I have a lot of friends that have worked for them forever.

The reason I bring this up is because there is confirmed reports that the Secretary of Homeland Security has ordered HSI agents, pulled them off what I just told you were very important missions, to go to Arizona and investigate the 2020 election results. Right? That is a very big concern of mine because these agents should be doing the work they are doing. A lot of them already are field ICE agents instead of actually doing these long-term investigations. But now, they are not even doing the ICE enforcement. They are literally going back and looking into conspiracy theories.

From my experience and seeing you both on the House and the Senate, do you believe that Joe Biden won Arizona in the 2020 Presidential election? The reason I ask is because, again, you are potentially deploying HSI agents to Arizona to check a result using our taxpayer dollars to followup on a conspiracy theory.

Senator MULLIN. Sir, I am not familiar with what the former Secretary did here, and nor am I here to debate what happened in 2020. I do know that there is an opportunity to look at 2020, and make sure that anything that went wrong we can fix moving forward, because what we want to make sure is that in the next election, be it the midterms or in 2028, the American people trust our election system. Trust is vitally, vitally important.

I want to always look at past mistakes and past successes, because I have addressed this multiple times, and I know everybody's busy here and I know you did not get to hear me earlier. But Senator, I think we can always do better and I want to do that. Just like you and I, we have worked on immigration issues before, because we both know we can do it better.

Senator GALLEGO. But you are talking about perspective. I am talking about going back. The fact that we are using Homeland Security funds, investigators that should be using their time and value more to check into something that, by the way, had multiple

independent audits, even one run by the Senate Republican and Senate State House representatives, that passed accuracy tests, hand counts, 14 court cases that were confirmed that Biden won in my State.

When I have personal friends that are HSI agents, friends that I know are telling me they are now being diverted from their duties and what they are doing is they are, instead of investigating child sex trafficking, child abusers, drug traffickers, which I don't disagree, we have not been doing the best at and certainly I think a lot of that was under the Biden administration did not do that sufficiently. But now, instead of it not being done, now we have the opposite, where some of these best-trained people are being ordered by somebody, somebody within the chain of command in the White House, which I will get to in a question later, to go investigate this false conspiracy theory. Right?

As much as, for me, a concern of mine, because I do know you very personally and we have gotten to work together. I think you are an upstanding guy and I reject this idea that you are not qualified for this job, 100 percent. But when it comes to something as existential as this, that is when I have to start questioning, are you going to be in charge of a department that is going to say, "You know what? HSI should not be used for this. As a matter of fact, no one in the Department of Homeland Security should be used to do and investigate an election conspiracy."

That is what I want to communicate on this is, I really urge you just to end the investigation. There is no reason why we need to be really getting back to 2020. There certainly is not any reason why we should be using these highly trained professionals that should be going after some horrible people to be investigating conspiracy theories that have been litigated multiple times, and put them back where they were.

Moving on from there, my other concern is something that I saw with the previous Secretary, and something that I have seen in myself in my time in the Marines, is that a chain of command is very important. I do not believe there was a real chain of command that was in the Secretary of Homeland Security. When I say that, it is because I think Stephen Miller personally was actually calling the shots there, and you could see the results of what occurred. You had men and women in ICE and CBP that felt that they were unaccountable, talking to actual ICE and CBP agents from Arizona that got deployed to Minnesota. They do not know who really was in their chain of command. They did not have operational orders. A lot of them did not understand how to actually engage with the public at all.

When there was a point of who is responsible for making decisions, they could not figure out if it was Miller or if it was Secretary Noem and her deputies. They could not figure out if there were quotas versus there are quotas. Now we know that there are quotas. This is the problem, is I want to make sure that if you are there, you are in charge, and not Stephen Miller.

Senator MULLIN. Sir, the President has nominated me to be Secretary of Homeland, and I will take full responsibility for that. Chain of command is important. I believe in empowering people to make decisions, but I will still be talking to the President on a reg-

ular basis. Any policy that is within my realm of authority that you guys give us, if the President wants us to look at it, we will look at it, because I serve at his discretion.

Senator GALLEG0. Yes. One thing, I don't know if it has been mentioned here, would probably be, what, the only second Native American in the history of the country to be a Cabinet member, which I appreciate. And you know that I also do a lot of work with our Native American communities, the 22 federally recognized Tribes in Arizona.

The one concern I also have is that when it comes to building some of these installations on the border, there has been very little to no Tribal consultation, especially with some of our border tribes, the Tohono O'odham Nation, where we are building walls in areas that just does not have much, much like you, english as a second language (ESL), so I have problems with English once in a while too.

There is a border wall that is going through Tribal land that is in very sacred land, that is not crossed and used significantly by human smugglers. It is important that DHS actually speak to these communities. They actually have programs that they do where they actually are working with DHS and local law enforcement to stop illegal smuggling, called Shadow Wolf Program, that DHS supports.

But this last administration and DHS did not talk to them whatsoever, did not talk about, did not even give the vague idea of Tribal consultation, and now they are just building into some areas that has unfortunately some burials of some of the people from their Tribe. I think it is important that we reestablish Tribal sovereignty, and I hope because of your background, you will understand and appreciate that.

Senator MULLIN. I respect Tribal sovereignty and there is a lot of technology. Now, we do have a job to secure the border, but we will work with Tribal nations because there are other ways to have a physical barrier where you can have technology there too, and I do not think anybody would complain about that.

But yes, you know my background. We have worked on Tribal issues a lot and I appreciate your passion. I have a lot of good friends in Arizona with Tribes that we have been able to have good relationships with.

Senator GALLEG0. These Tribal nations would absolutely work with you as long as they felt that there was the respect and also respect for the land, because we have a history of that.

Senator MULLIN. Absolutely.

Senator GALLEG0 Mr. Chair, am I up?

Chairman PAUL. We are going to come back around if you have another question.

Senator GALLEG0. Thank you.

Chairman PAUL. Senator Hawley.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR HAWLEY

Senator HAWLEY. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Senator Mullin, welcome to the Committee. I see you have some supporters with you today. Chairman Smith, good to see you. My friend Sean O'Brien

is here. I want the record to reflect that my money was always on O'Brien.[Laughter.]

I just want that noted for the record.

Senator MULLIN, let me ask you this. In your own words, could you tell us, just in capsule form, what is DHS, what is the mission of DHS, as you understand it, as you would put it, as you would explain it?

Senator MULLIN. Quite simply, it is simple, to protect the homeland.

Senator HAWLEY. Very good, to protect the homeland. OK, let me ask you this. Ten days ago, there was a shooting at Old Dominion University (ODU) that left one person dead, two people critically injured, the gunman had potential terrorist ties. Is this a good time for the Department of Homeland Security to be shut down and unfunded?

Senator MULLIN. It is the worst time. Keep in mind, we just came off a 43-day shutdown, as this is the third time in a year. It is devastating to the morale of the men and women we have tasked to take care of all of us, all the homeland. Regardless if it is a blue State or it is a red State, we have to look at it all the same and they have that mission mindset, but they do not have the pay to follow it up.

Senator HAWLEY. A few days before that, two individuals attempted to detonate bombs in New York City (NYC) in a way that would cause mass civilian casualties. Both of those individuals have potential terrorist connections. In light of that, is it a good time for DHS to be shut down?

Senator MULLIN. Sir, I think with the current conditions, this is the worst time we could possibly do it.

Senator HAWLEY. A few days before that in Austin, Texas, three people were fatally shot outside of a bar there when a gunman opened fire in the early hours of a Sunday morning. That gunman also had potential terrorist ties, and yet DHS is shut down.

Just a week ago, a gunman loaded his truck with incendiary devices and rammed it into the Temple Israel synagogue outside Detroit, Michigan. As I am sure you know, 40 law enforcement officers, 40, had to get emergency medical attention. It is a miracle by the grace of God nobody was killed, except for the gunman. But 40 individuals had to get medical attention, and yet DHS is still shut down.

Let me just ask you this. Law enforcement dangers, I think I have a poster that will go up behind me here. In the last year alone, we have seen an 8,000 percent increase in death threats to law enforcement, a 1,300 percent increase in assaults, a 124 percent increase in vehicular attacks, attacks using a vehicle, against CBP law enforcement. Now in light of this, is it a good time for DHS to be shut down?

Senator MULLIN. Sir, it is a horrible time.

Senator HAWLEY. Let's talk about children. Let's talk about the dangers to children. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) estimates that there are 20.5 million reports of suspected online and child exploitation. That includes almost 20 million reports of child pornography, 546,300 reports of online en-

ticement of children for sexual acts, and 27,000 reports of child sex trafficking. Is it a good time for DHS to be shut down?

Senator MULLIN. No, sir.

Senator HAWLEY. Let me ask you if you have seen this poster¹ that I am about to put behind me. Have you ever seen this before, Senator?

Senator MULLIN. I don't believe so.

Senator HAWLEY. There is no reason you should have. I was introduced to this material by Tim Tebow, the Heisman Trophy winner, who now spends a lot of his time trying to work with child victims of sex abuse. This poster reflects every individual Internet Protocol (IP) address in the United States in about a one-month period that was sharing, distributing, posting, or trading child sex abuse material or child pornography of some form. You want to guess how many points there are on that map?

Senator MULLIN. It makes me sick. I have no idea.

Senator HAWLEY. There are 338,000. That is just a one-month period. Now, can you see any blue dots on that map, Senator Mullin?

Senator MULLIN. Yes, sir.

Senator HAWLEY. Yes, there are. You got better eyes than I do. I mean, there are like very few of them. I would be surprised if anybody in the audience could see them. The blue dots are the number of investigations that are open. Look at the red dots—338,000. Look at the blue dots—you can hardly see them. Why would that be? Because in the best of times, the Department of Homeland Security has only 10 HSI agents who are fully dedicated to doing this. This is all Congress has given you, 10. Right now, none of those are funded. Is this a good time for the Department of Homeland Security to be shut down?

Senator MULLIN. I think any parent can look at that and it makes you sick, especially with teenage daughters like myself. That is scary. We have to focus on this.

Senator HAWLEY. It is very scary. That is exactly right. I am glad to hear you say that.

The Biden administration and your predecessor in this role, Alejandro Mayorkas, lost track of 450,000 children who were trafficked across our border over a four-year period—450,000 children. It is the biggest child trafficking ring that was set up under the last administration in the history of this country. The President has been doing a tremendous job. They found in the last year over 145,000 of them, but that leaves almost 300,000 who are still missing, and yet the Department of Homeland Security is unfunded and shut down. Let me just ask you again, does it seem like a good time for that?

Senator MULLIN. No, sir.

Senator HAWLEY. Let's talk a little bit about the challenges that are being faced by people across the country who are facing natural disasters as we have in my home State of Missouri. We had major tornadoes rip through Missouri last spring, all across the State, particularly concentrated in the eastern part of the State, the St. Louis area, Southeast Missouri. We have thousands of thousands

¹ The poster submitted by Senator Hawley appears in the Appendix on page 176.

of people who were without power, who lost their homes, many who were injured. We have had much disaster aid approved by FEMA, but we are still waiting for some of that aid to get to us.

Now, FEMA is shut down. I have thousands of people in Missouri who are awaiting the aid that the President has approved, by the way, and that FEMA has approved, but that is in the process of coming to the State. I have probably hundreds of people who are not able to go back to their homes and who are applying for individual assistance that has not yet been processed by FEMA. Now they are being told, "Sorry, there's nothing we can do because FEMA's shut down." Does this seem like a good time for DHS and FEMA to be shut down?

Senator MULLIN. No, sir.

Senator HAWLEY. In any airport in the country right now, if you go and look, you will find hours, backups of four and five hours. You will find TSA agents—you alluded to this earlier, Senator, over 10 percent of TSA agents now are not able to come to the job. Why? Because they make on average \$45,000 a year. They cannot afford their rent, they cannot afford to buy groceries for their kids. They have missed now two paychecks. This is endangering the security of our flyers. It is endangering the security of our airports. This is a terrible time for DHS to be shut down.

Here is my point. Whether we are talking about children who are missing, whether we are talking about the situation against our law enforcement officers, whether we are talking about the dangers to the homeland, we are involved in a major conflict overseas. This nation's homeland needs to be secured, and yet my friends across the aisle have shut down the Department of Homeland Security. They have defunded every agency we just talked about. I just want to ask them, how long is it going to take? How long are these children going to have to wait in exploitation? How many more are going to have to go missing? How many TSA agents are going to be able to afford to put food on the table for their children? How long are the people of St. Louis and Southeast Missouri going to have to wait to get back into their homes before we can finally have a vote to reopen the Department of Homeland Security?

It is long past time. I welcome your nomination. You are going to be a terrific leader of Homeland Security. I cannot wait to see you there. But it is time for this Congress to do its job and fund DHS and protect the homeland of the United States of America. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman PAUL. All right. Thanks, everybody. We are going to do another round of questions. I want to let anybody ask a question that wants to ask a question, but I really do not want to give everybody seven more minutes. I want to keep it to pressing questions. We will start on the Republican side. Does somebody have a pressing question they did not get to ask or would like to ask?

Senator HAWLEY. I will yield back.

Chairman PAUL. Anybody else? Senator Ernst.

Senator ERNST. Yes, thank you. Again, Senator Mullin, I truly appreciate you being here. I do want to ask some questions. I do want to followup. So many people have pointed out the various departments that exist and are not being funded under DHS.

We have a really significant anniversary coming up this year. Most people will think it is our Nation's 250th, which is extraordinary, but the other significant anniversary that has impacted so many of us, especially those of us that have served in uniform, significant anniversary, the 25th year of September 11, 2001.

Right now, we are currently in our 32nd day of the Department of Homeland Security being shut down. We have men and women serving in TSA, in FEMA, in the Coast Guard, Secret Service, in the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, all of them under DHS, not being funded.

Now, I just heard in the first round of questions, one of my colleagues on the left say, "This has nothing to do with ICE. They are funded." If it has nothing to do with ICE, why are we not funding these agencies that protect Americans? Especially as we are coming up on the 25th anniversary of September 11th, this fall. It is a significant anniversary. I hope never to repeat it. But the fact of the matter is that there is a greater possibility of September 11th happening all over again because we are not properly funding the men and women that protect our homeland.

I do not want to hear folks say it has nothing to do with ICE, because I do believe when we get into the politics of this, it is about ICE. It is about ICE. I would love for my friends on the left to acknowledge it is about ICE, but acknowledge that protecting our homeland is much more important than the politics of this.

Senator Mullin, do you think it is time to set aside the partisan politics and partisan games and fund DHS as a whole so that the Department can be fully functioning to protect Americans, especially as we are approaching this fall, the 25th anniversary on one of the greatest attacks that we have ever seen on our homeland?

Senator MULLIN. Yes, Senator. I look at this as a political theater that we are playing games with and we are risking people's lives and we are disturbing people's lives. As I stated earlier, we have 260-, 280,000 employees in DHS that are still on the job, still working, still keeping us safe, without pay. I do not know how in good conscience you could sit there and think that is OK.

Senator ERNST. It is not OK, and I look forward to your leadership at Department of Homeland Security. Thank you, Senator Mullin. I yield back.

Chairman PAUL. Senator Peters.

Senator PETERS. Yes. I have a couple questions for you.

Senator MULLIN. Yes, sir.

Senator PETERS Senator Mullin, but before that, I just want to clarify what we are hearing about funding for Homeland Security. I think the political theater has been on the Republican side, because there is really no debate with any of my Democratic colleagues that we need to fully fund FEMA, that we need to fully fund the Coast Guard, we need a fully fund CISA, to fund all of those other areas, the TSA folks all should be fully funded. But unfortunately, my Republican colleagues who control the floor, you are in the majority, you determine which bills go on the floor and which ones are up for a vote. The way we can do that so we do not have a floor vote is we can go and move by unanimous consent and move a bill and say, "Is there anybody that objects to this bill?" If they do not object, it immediately is passed. That is the proce-

ture. So folks at home watching this, we have bills that will immediately pass and could pass today. We have put on the floor bills to fully fund TSA, and my Republican colleagues have objected.

I heard all this support for TSA today, so I hope you tell your colleagues, do not object to the TSA funding bill. Please don't do not that. We could pass it today. God, that would be great. But we heard a lot of theater, all this stuff. FEMA, pass it today. Coast Guard, pass it today. CISA, cybersecurity, pass it today.

So, as the nominee for Homeland Security, I would hope you would tell your colleagues, "Boy, this is really important. Don't object to the bill that allows us to pay for this."

Now, granted, the CBP and ICE are not in there because we are around negotiating about making sure that there are guardrails in place so that Federal agents have to abide by the same rules as local police. When I go home and I say that, everybody says, "Really? They don't have to do that now?" I am like, no, but Republicans are going to hold TSA hostage. They are going to hold Coast Guard hostage. They are going to hold FEMA, CISA, they are going to hold it all hostage because they do not want to give any ground on making sure we just have commonsense guidelines.

We have a solution for that. Pass the bills for all of these other agencies, pass them, it can happen today. We have tried for the last two weeks and my Republican colleagues object. Do not object anymore. Then let's focus on trying to come together, and I appreciate your comments about how we come together, let's come together and figure out how we put commonsense guidelines in place for Federal agents that are operating in our communities. You have expressed an interest in doing that today, and I take you at your word for that. So let's do that. But let's not make TSA a hostage in this whole thing. Let's pass the bills. We can do it.

I have heard it. I heard HSI funding from one of my colleagues here. I want to be clear, HSI is funded because both CBP and ICE are fully funded because of the Big Bill that passed last year. That funding is not even in jeopardy. What is in jeopardy we can fix today. All the things that are not being funded, we can fund today, and every single Democrat is for it. There is only one Republican—it only takes one Republican to object, and apparently that keeps happening. I would talk to that one Republican and say, "Stop objecting to this." If you truly all believe in that, stop objecting to it.

HSI is getting money now because of the Big Bill, but what is the problem with HSI? I agree with my colleague with child exploitation. I am going to be at the top of the list when it comes to making sure we are doing as much as we can to stop that. But unfortunately, this Administration has actually transferred all those HSI people to immigration enforcement. They are not even doing what they were supposed to be doing.

I would hope if you are confirmed, you will bring those folks back to their role that my colleague says is so important, which I agree with. But why did the Administration send them off to immigration work then? Apparently the Administration does not think this is as important as my colleague.

I just want to wrap up here, questions that we had related to your bio. The biography is important, and it is important that we

fully understand how you are presenting yourself, and if there are any ambiguities, we want to work that out.

On March 11th, I sent you a letter asking for information about any activity related to any special assignment, which you talked about here today, that you have been involved in. There was no exception for official travel or any of that. We just asked any of these special assignments that you have talked about.

You responded to the Committee in that letter by saying, "My voluntary work included special assignments outside of DOD, was that I offered support and mentorship from a Christian perspective to both Afghans that supported our efforts and other personnel that served in war zones." You stated your special assignments occurred intermittently between 2006 and 2011. My letter did not exclude official travel, and it also gave you explicit instructions in that letter for providing classified information, how we could do that, and do it in a way that protects that classified information. You did not provide any of that. Today is the first time that I am hearing about your classified activities from 2015 to 2016.

Quite frankly, as we have had these conversations, you have not been forthcoming with me or this Committee. The story always seems to kind of change. As you know, candor, honesty, transparency are absolutely critical, particularly at this time to try to build trust as the Secretary of Homeland Security.

We have to clear this up. We feel pretty strongly we have to understand exactly what this is, especially with all your public comments that have raised a lot of questions. We have checked. The Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility (SCIF) is available. We would love to have you come to the SCIF and tell us exactly what you are talking about. I think that will put my colleagues' mind at peace. Would you be willing to go to the SCIF this afternoon and tell us the classified activities you are talking about?

Senator MULLIN. Sir, I think this Committee made it very clear with the paperwork they gave me that I do not have to disclose my official travel. That was part of the documents. I went over two or three times, I complied with exactly what the Committee said. There is no statement or no area for mission work and mentorship that was a volunteer basis that I did on my own time. It was very specific over and over again that you do not have to claim official travel.

Senator PETERS. We want to know what this supposed classified work was. We have real questions about it. I asked the FBI yesterday. I said, "if someone had appeared in any classified document, any document, would that be in this report?" They said, "Yes." I said, "I don't see anything for Senator Mullin. Why is that?" They said, "Nothing showed up. We queried the Department of State, the Department of Defense, other intel folks." So you are in no classified document that the Federal Government has according to the FBI, and yet you are telling me you did all this classified work. I do not understand how that—

Senator MULLIN. Sir, I did not say all. I was very clear with what I said. I get what you are trying to get to here and that is fine, but I complied with everything the document said, and it was official travel and it was a classified trip.

Chairman PAUL. Let me just chime in on this. I have agreed this is the fastest hearing anyone's ever had. This will be the fastest vote anyone's ever had, and that is despite my qualms and problems with your nomination. I am willing to do that. But when the FBI came to my office, I asked them if you had done any kind of work for the CIA, the DOD or any other—

Senator MULLIN. I have not.

Chairman PAUL [continuing]. Let me finish—any of these kind of agencies or any kind of classified work. They said the way it works is you would have a separate folder if you had been involved in classified missions somewhere, and we would get to see the folder and then we wouldn't talk about it. We would look at it privately and we would know what you are referring to.

It is confusing to us because there may have been some papers that said, "Your official trips were excluded." I do not know which ones were and were not, but you have now mentioned today that you have activities you have done. I think it would be easy and I am still willing to have the vote tomorrow, but I can cancel the vote tomorrow. I am still willing to have the vote, get this done and get it over with. But I think that just to make it clear, and it does not sound like it is a secret you are too concerned about divulging, if you would just spend an hour and go to this SCIF, or 30 minutes, and just tell both the Ranking Member and the other, it would be private and it will not be revealed. I think we would get this over with and we would not have a complaint about going ahead with the vote tomorrow.

Senator MULLIN. I have no issue with that, if you guys get cleared on it. Because my understanding was there was only four people read in it and it was a special program inside the House. Just like I was not on Intel at the time, I am not saying I was, but I have no issue with that at all. I would welcome being brought up. It is very unique and it was fun.

Chairman PAUL. That would be on you. We are not going to try to figure out who the four people are and whether we can have approval to it.

Senator MULLIN. I do not choose—

Chairman PAUL. If you are doing something that important, really it probably ought to be revealed and discussed in a classified manner.

Senator MULLIN. Mr. Chair, it is not on me to—I do not have the authority to do that. This is why I said I was very clear, sorry, that I never talked specific dates or locations on this. And so I have zero issue with talking about it.

Senator PETERS. Do it this afternoon.

Senator MULLIN. I don't have clearance to talk about this this afternoon. I do not. It is not me to release it.

Chairman PAUL. This is a legislative program. This is a program that Congress assigned you to?

Senator MULLIN. Yes. This was within my official duties.

Senator PETERS. Who assigned it to you?

Senator MULLIN. Sir, that is not for me to talk to you about on this. I am sorry. This is not a classified—I am sorry. I am not trying to be ugly. You know how classified situations work in classified information.

Chairman PAUL. Which agency classified it?

Senator MULLIN. It was not an agency. It was done here, well, in the House on the time.

Senator PETERS. But the House classified it.

Senator MULLIN. I am assuming. I wasn't on Intel.

Chairman PAUL. We are just not really aware of how the House classifies them.

Senator MULLIN. I have no idea. I know every time we spoke about this, we had to go to the SCIF and visit about it. I know there was a paper that I had to sign before it even started. I may be wrong and there may be more than four, but I know it was only me and three other people that ever discussed it.

Chairman PAUL. If it is so secret that we cannot know about it, I would think that there would be some paperwork in the SCIF that they should show us saying, "This is so top secret and this was made classified."

Senator MULLIN. I have no problem. You are welcome to go to the House. This started in 2015. It ended in a little late in 2016. I have nothing to hide on this. This is too easy. I would really enjoy sitting there and have a conversation with you because I do not want you to question or question my character on this. So that is very simple for me. But I cannot make that authorization. You guys know that.

Chairman PAUL. It is a little difficult for us to go ask about a program that has no name and we have nobody that we know to talk to about it. I do not know how we would begin doing this without your cooperation.

Senator MULLIN. I am willing to cooperate.

Chairman PAUL. We are willing to hold the vote tomorrow, but you brought this up that you were on a super-secret mission that you cannot tell us about it.

Senator MULLIN. No, I did not say super-secret, sir. I said it was classified.

Chairman PETERS. That only four people know?

Senator MULLIN. I only know that there was four people. There was maybe more people that understood it, but I know there was only three people plus me that was ever in the meeting. And so as far as I am concerned, only four people was read in on this.

Chairman PAUL. You were on the Intel Committee?

Senator MULLIN. No, not at the time. No, sir. I was on the Intel Committee after that.

Senator PETERS. What committee were you on at the time?

Senator MULLIN. You got to think about 10 years ago. Energy and Commerce.

Senator PETERS. So it was an Energy and Commerce top secret effort? I am just asking.

Senator MULLIN. Senator. What I am getting upset about a little bit here is that your tone that you are saying that in a condescending way. I did what I was asking you.

Senator PETERS. I am trying to find out who we would talk to.

Senator MULLIN. Sir, I told you exactly what happened here. I was not required to disclose this on any official travel. Your documents were very clear on that. I do not know what else you want me to say. You said you can go find out. Go find out. Then when

you guys say it is good for me to talk to you, I will be happy to talk to you about it. I cannot talk specifics. If you want to talk about in general ideas, let's go down and talk in the SCIF. I am OK with that. But I cannot get into the necessary specifics or who made the decision to do it, but I can talk in general, and I will be very glad to do that with you. Even Senator Lankford, who I know is on Intel, he can come down with us and visit with us about it.

No issues with that at all. Perfectly clear and OK with it, but it is not for me to release this. So if you guys want to do that, we can leave here, go down there and talk about it.

Chairman PAUL. Did this mission involve exchange of fire?

Senator MULLIN. It was not a mission. It was an official travel with specific deals or for specific fact finding, just like any official travel is, that they wanted clarification on. Like I said, I would be happy to talk to you about it if you guys want to.

Senator PETERS. It was in a conflict zone?

Senator MULLIN. Sir, once again, I am not talking about specific details or dates because we have revealed that this was a classified situation. Now I am not going to talk about any, because anything I have talked about in the past was not referencing any of this, but I am definitely not going to get into it now, talking about specific dates or details.

Chairman PAUL. We would have no way of exploring this unless you were willing to cooperate on who did this.

Senator MULLIN. I don't know. Mr. Chair, I do not know what else you said, or what else you want me to do. I said I will go down there and talk about this with you in a SCIF, but I cannot give all this specifics.

Chairman PAUL. There is no reason to think that somehow we are not qualified to look at classified information.

Senator MULLIN. There is a lot of programs out there, Mr. Chair, that you know, is based on a need to know.

Chairman PAUL. Right.

Senator MULLIN. Maybe you can talk to Senator Lankford about this too. Senator Lankford, would you like to talk about—

Senator LANKFORD. I am glad to jump on. This feels, as my mom used to say, a mountain out of a molehill, where he has offered over and over and over again to say, "Let's get into a classified setting." I just left the Worldwide Threats hearing where I had to run over to be able to run back there. And meeting with all the folks there, there were several questions that I asked there that they gave me a partial answer and said, "I will give you the rest of this answer in a SCIF." Everybody goes, "Oh, OK. I get that," because there are some things that are sources, methods, or actions that we are all keenly aware of on this. I do not know what else he could say at this point other than let's get into SCIF and let's actually talk about this.

Chairman PAUL. Why don't we start with that initial meeting and see how that goes?

Senator PETERS. Yes. We will have initial meetings. That is what we ask for, Senator. He said he couldn't do that because he wasn't authorized—

Senator MULLIN. No, I did say that. I said, I cannot give you all the details to it because it is not for me to release it, but I can talk to you in general about it, but not in this setting.

Senator LANKFORD. Yes. Let's get the information out and be able to talk it through and be able to find out what this is. All of us have been in classified settings before.

Chairman PAUL. Let's try to get it done this afternoon so we can proceed with that.

Senator MULLIN. I am available right after this. Mr. Chair, if you want to, we can go leave from here and go straight there.

Chairman PAUL. Yes, and let's try to get the hearing finished. So let's try no more speeches back and forth on all the ICE stuff if we can. You kind of just concluded that one. Can I come back to you in a minute?

Senator PETERS. Sure.

Chairman PAUL. All right. Senator Hassan. Let's try to get off of funding ICE and stuff and let's just try to stick to the nomination for now.

Senator HASSAN. I appreciate that, Mr. Chair. I do have to take a moment because during my first round of questions, I discussed the current impasse we find ourselves in over ICE reforms and DHS funding, and I did not speak clearly, so I just do need to clarify my comments now.

ICE already has significant funding right now for the President's budget bill, from the President's budget bill last summer, which provided the agency with several times more money than its annual budget and gave ICE broad discretion about how to use that money. That means that the partial shutdown that we have right now has nothing to do with whether ICE has the usual levels of funding it needs to operate since the agency already has many times its annual budget. It is about, instead, the need for policy reforms to help ensure that ICE operates using the same kind of standards that State and local law enforcement in New Hampshire and around the country uphold every single day.

Now, Senator Fetterman was right earlier when he pointed out that this shutdown is impacting other parts of DHS that handle cybersecurity and transportation security and other critical functions. We need to resolve it right now. As Senator Peters just described, we have been pushing to do that in the ways that the minority can. We need to reach agreement on ICE policy reforms or by funding the rest of the Department while we continue to negotiate on those reform, something I strongly support, but unfortunately Republicans have blocked.

The reforms to ICE are critical. DHS is supposed to be prioritizing the removal of dangerous and violent criminals. Instead, we have seen DHS agents assault and even kill American citizens while wearing masks seeming without accountability.

So now this is the question. Senator, if a masked ICE or other DHS agent kills an American citizen, should local law enforcement be allowed to investigate and hold that agent accountable?

Senator MULLIN. Unfortunately, local law enforcement is not supposed to be investigating Federal. That is what DOJ and FBI is for. Now, we will communicate with local law enforcement, but that is not their job. FBI, just same thing if in most municipalities,

if there is a fatality shooting, there is another agency that oversees them. In this case, it would be the FBI who is set up inside the DOJ to investigate those.

Senator HASSAN. So you have answered no, and your answer would make ICE unaccountable, and that endangers not just the rule of law, but also the security of all Americans.

I wanted to get to one other question. During the past year, DHS leadership cut CISA's expert workforce by nearly a third. Meanwhile, adversaries and criminal syndicates are accelerating their cyberattacks against the United States. How do you plan to restore DHS's cybersecurity force and better secure our critical infrastructure from cyberattacks?

Senator MULLIN. Ma'am, we have to recruit the right people, but the best and brightest individuals in those areas. I know the University of Tulsa has a great program. But recruiting individuals that want to be there, that want to deliver the mission is vitally important. And so we will work to make sure that happens.

Senator HASSAN. So you agree we need to add people back into CISA and pursue this critical function and they need to be non-partisan experts with experience and commitment to the safety and security of our country wherever that leads them.

Senator MULLIN. Ma'am, no one in Homeland should be looking at this from a bipartisan perspective. Now, if you want me to talk about staffing numbers, I do not know what the mission requires, but we will be staffed adequately if we can find the right people to staff and to make sure that we are mission capable.

Senator HASSAN. OK. Thank you. Mr. Chair, out of respect for your desire to move things along, I will submit for the record a question on non-intrusive imaging at the border.¹ It is supposed to be ready to do for every vehicle entering the United States, especially to detect fentanyl. I would like your answer on that and a couple of other questions as well, but I will submit those for the record. Thank you.

Chairman PAUL. Without objection.

Senator Lankford.

Senator LANKFORD. Thank you. We talked before about just trying to get information on time and such. In the transition that happened between the Biden administration and the Trump administration, data fell behind, and it fell really behind. It was one of my complaints that I had with Mayorkas that was sometimes two or three weeks late on releasing normal data information, just how many encounters were happening at the border, how many arrests, some of those things on it. Last year, it wasn't weeks late. It was months and months and months late on getting data out.

DHS has a really good story to tell. There are a lot of good things that are happening there. But my concern is that social media and some of the examples are coming out just to tell the story and DHS is not able to actually tell the story. Quite frankly, we have asked DHS several times, "Hey, give us more information, more data on this."

One of the things I would love to know is just, you have been one of us for a long time in this. You know the importance of over-

¹ The questions submitted by Senator Hassan appears in the Appendix on page 122.

sight and what that means on this, to be able to get data to Members of Congress and to the American people, and so, quite frankly, we can see the story as well. I am not asking for a pledge because I already know your heart on that, but want to just be able to open that up on how we can actually get more data and information.

Senator MULLIN. Our Leg Affairs Department, I am going to have to stand up and make sure that we are communicating and getting the information you need. It is not going to be fixed overnight, but it does frustrate me as a former member of the House and definitely a current member in the Senate that when we make a request, it is not seen. Now, there is a difference between making actual requests because you are wanting to get to a solution versus harassment.

Senator LANKFORD. Badgering people.

Senator MULLIN. Yes. There is a tremendous amount that happens. Both sides play the game and I am just not going to play that game. I will work with any Senator. I will work with any committee to make sure that we are getting the information you need to do your job. But just for harassment purposes, please, I ask you if you want me to do my job and do it right and be transparent with you, do not play games with me either. If you have real concerns, like I said, everybody on this Committee, and really for our colleagues for that matter, have my personal cell phone, and that number, I have no intentions of changing it unless somebody leaks it.

Senator LANKFORD. Yes, hopefully that would not occur on it. One of the quick question on this. Ali Mayorkas, when he sat at that desk before, he and I had a lot of conversations about what was labeled the special interest aliens. These are folks that come from known areas of terrorism, but we did not have any information on them specifically, and so the Biden administration just let them in. They may say, "Well, we know somebody in your family as acts of terrorism, but it is not you." So they just labeled them special interest aliens and released them into the country, that we know of about 70,000 of those individuals.

The Trump administration in the last year and a couple of months has picked up 50,000 of those. That is part of this enforcement that is out there to be able to identify folks that I have been ringing the bell on over and over and over again saying, "Why are we letting people in?" That we literally say, "Yes, they could be a terrorist. They could not be a terrorist. We don't know. Somebody in their family is, but we don't know them if they are on it." So they were just released into the country on that and given that label.

In fact, I was told, "We will keep watching them." But when I went to the FBI and asked them directly, they were like, "There's no way we can track 70,000 people." So there has been a lot of good work to be able to try to identify where those people went, who they are associating with here in the United States on it, and then removing them from the United States.

There are still about 20,000 left. I would love to be able to get your promise to say we are not going to quit. We are going to continue to be able to find folks that were just allowed to come in the country that may be a terrorist and may not be a terrorist we don't

know, but to be able to go identify those folks and make sure that American people are protected.

Senator MULLIN. Absolutely.

Senator LANKFORD. Yes. Thank you.

Chairman PAUL. We are almost done. We have two people left who have not responded this round. We have had a lot of debate over ICE funding. I hope we can ask just some specific questions to the nominee. I cannot control what you ask, but that is my hope. Senator Blumenthal.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thanks, Mr. Chair. Senator Mullin, just months before the war with Iran began, the Trump administration negotiated a back channel agreement, a deal with the Islamic Republic to deport Iranian nationals, including asylum seekers, dissidents. There have been public reports about it, CNN, on January 26, 2026. *New York Times* reported it in a couple of articles in September and December that flights around that time deported tens of those kinds of Iranian nationals back to Iran as part of this secret agreement.

I want to tell you about one husband and wife, Christian converts from Islam who were sentenced in absentia to 9-and 11-year sentences by the Islamic Republic. They fled to the United States seeking asylum, but they were detained by ICE on arrival. The wife was deported. She managed to take refuge in Turkey. The husband, I will call him Mr. H, is still here, but he is facing deportation despite showing scars from the beating he received by a government gang. I have both of their declarations. I would like them to be entered in the record.¹ There are Iranian American organizations like the Iranian American Legal Defense Fund that have further information.

I have no doubt that you share my outrage about the treatment of this couple and other Iranian nationals who were deported possibly to torture and death in Iran. Will you agree with me and commit that we should stop deporting such people?

Senator MULLIN. Sir, I do not know the specifics behind this. I think before I can talk about it in hypotheticals, I would need to know what the reasons behind it. But I do not want to deport anybody that is here illegally, or here legally, I mean, and most definitely not individuals that have done everything possible to be a contributor to society. But in these specific cases, I do not know. I am not familiar with them. I do not know if there is something else in the background that would cause the Administration to—

Senator BLUMENTHAL. I am talking in general about tens of people, as many as 55 on one flight, 15 or so on another, not just this couple. But in principle, we should not be sending Iranian dissidents and asylum seekers back to Iran. Wouldn't you agree?

Senator MULLIN. Sir, we do know that our enemies want to infiltrate us and use our rules and our generosity against us. I do not know the specifics of these. I do not know their background. I do not know what the reasons was, but I will be happy to look into it.

¹The statement submitted from Iranian-American Defense Fund appears in the Appendix on page 178.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Let me ask you about another topic. I am glad that you committed that there will not be the kind of review that Secretary Noem imposed on contracts above a certain amount uniformly by your office, but I would like your commitment that you will help us investigate another abuse of authority.

Corey Lewandowski apparently was in charge of approving all contracts. One of them was a \$220 million contract that was related directly to Kristi Noem being fired. They bypassed procurement rules to award that contract to a shell company that was created days before to benefit a Republican consulting firm with close ties to Secretary Noem and Mr. Lewandowski.

Will you commit to cooperating with our investigation, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigation, making documents and personnel available to congressional and other investigations into those contracts awarded by Secretary Noem and Mr. Lewandowski?

Senator MULLIN. Senator, I have heard these same reports. I know the IG, Joseph. I do not know him personally. That is why I say Joseph. Some people call him Joe. His open investigations, we will cooperate with him and——

Senator BLUMENTHAL. And provide all the documents and records that are requested to this Committee to do its work. That is what I am asking.

Senator MULLIN. I will leave that to the Inspector General.

I will do everything that is required of me by law, but the IG will be doing the investigation, and we will let the IG decide what documents he is going to share and maybe you can bring that up with him.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. In fact, Secretary Noem obstructed the investigations underway by the IG. In fact, in at least 10 investigations, they were the subject of a letter from the IG. Are you committing to immediately begin restoring the Department's working relationship with the IG?

Senator MULLIN. If confirmed, absolutely. I will do everything required of me by law and in the policies that you guys give me. There will not be any gray area with me. We want to have a good relationship with the IG. He has got a job to do, and every other agency that is underneath DHS and——

Senator BLUMENTHAL. And you will cooperate with the Committee in providing those.

Senator MULLIN. Sir, everything that is required of me to report and anything that you want the IG to do, that is between you and the IG.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Senator Mullin, I do not think I need to tell you that the American people have been appalled and angered by what they have seen in the excessive use of force. We have had hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigation that have shown Aliya Rahman, a woman suffering from traumatic brain injury, yanked from her car in Minneapolis, dragged by her arms, leaving both of her shoulders to be torn.¹ Javier Ramirez, a father of four from California, detained for four days and refused medical treatment for his diabetes. We documented these abuses in a report that we issued and in hearings that we conducted.

¹ The picture submitted by Senator Blumenthal appears in the Appendix on page 196.

One of them was Marimar Martinez, who was on her way to donate clothing at a local church when she came across agents in an unmarked car. Agents sideswiped her car. Three masked agents in camouflage stormed out and one of them pulled out his gun and fired at her moving vehicle, hitting her five times. The agent then bragged about it. He bragged about it in the text.² He said, "I have an MOF—" I won't detail it. "I fired five rounds and she had seven holes. Put that in your book, boys."

Shouldn't we be disgusted by an agent that fires at a U.S. citizen, no criminal record? She was charged.

Chairman PAUL. Senator Blumenthal—

Senator BLUMENTHAL. The charges were dismissed. Would you not agree with me that that an agent should not be carrying a firearm?

Senator MULLIN. I am not familiar with the investigation, sir. I do not know if the investigation is completed. As Secretary, I am sure I will be briefed on this.

Chairman PAUL. All right. Time has expired. I know these are important issues, but we just have to move on. We are going to finish up with Senator Kim, then we are going to make a statement that hopefully can be agreeable for a meeting later. Senator Kim.

Senator KIM. I will be concise here, Mr. Chair. Senator, There are just a couple last things here. A couple weeks ago we had a hearing here and I was engaged with the head of USCIS and I raised an issue that happened in San Diego of spouses of military members and veterans. They were going in to get interviewed for a green card and were arrested upon their arrival. I just wanted to get your reaction to that. Is that the kind of behavior you think is acceptable?

Senator MULLIN. Excuse me. Repeat that again.

Senator KIM. It was spouses of military servicemembers as well as veterans. Their spouses were going for the purposes of a green card interview, but were at that point detained and arrested on arrival.

Senator MULLIN. I have not heard about this. I have heard of different reports, Senator. If people are going through the process and trying to obtain it legally, because we do have naturalizations ceremonies Monday through Friday in this country everywhere, we are going to continue working with those individuals. I do not know the circumstances.

Senator KIM. I will pass you the details, but it is something that we can talk through. But just in general here, I guess what I am just trying to get a sense from you is what do you think is appropriate in terms of ICE agents being able to operate? For instance, do you think it is OK for them to operate and arrest people at hospitals?

Senator MULLIN. Sir, I will always support my law enforcement doing their job. I do not know the circumstances. If it is a felony warrant that the person is at a hospital, then they will go pick up the felony warrant. Just like local law enforcement does the same thing. And so in general, I think you need to be more specific on

²The picture submitted by Senator Blumenthal appears in the Appendix on page 195.

what you are talking about, but if you are talking about just doing everyday law enforcement, I think there is a better approach.

Senator KIM. Senator, I just want to raise, I just hear a lot of this from my own community about concerns of these types of efforts in and around hospitals, schools, churches. These are things that I hope we can engage on. I know you talked about it with one of my colleagues about polling sites, but these are important discussions and we do not have clarity on what we are expected to see, and it is causing just enormous amount of concern and challenge within our communities.

Senator MULLIN. Senator, I do not understand what the concern about enforcing immigration at polling places is anyways, because honestly, if you are not a citizen, you should not be voting anyway. So technically there should not be any illegals at the polling spot. As I have said before, if we are at a polling area, it is because of a specific threat, not for immigration enforcement.

Senator KIM. Yes. Look, what I will just convey here, it is not just about people who are undocumented. I am hearing from American citizens that are now feeling like they need to carry their passports around for fear of being stopped on the street. There is a chilling effect that is happening that is wider. I had to give my father-in-law specific instructions in case he was stopped upon re-entry back into the United States. There is real concern out there, and I just wanted to express that to you.

Just a couple last quick things here. At the detention facility in New Jersey, a different one called Delaney Hall, I was there right after a gentleman died there, and there was really no documentation, really minimal explanation of his cause of death. There were 32 deaths at detention facilities under ICE control last year, yet the oversight offices at DHS who do this, offices like the Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, the Office of Immigration Detention Oversight, they have been gutted. I just wanted to ask, do you commit to being able to ensure that there is the proper oversight there internally within DHS, working alongside us in Congress to ensure that people are being kept at the dignified levels that they should according to a law?

Senator MULLIN. Each facility falls underneath different standards of operation that are in statutes. We will operate within those statutes. Everybody deserves to be treated with a dignified hand, and we will follow those procedures that are set for those facilities particularly.

Senator KIM. I hope to work with you on that if you are confirmed, because we need to make sure we have that oversight as we have not been able to see it. In fact, some of our efforts have been impeded because we have not been able to have visitation at some of these sites, and I hope that that is something you will support us to be able to have.

One last thing I just wanted to raise, with FEMA there was a number of employees that sent an open letter titled the Katrina Declaration. This is something that warned about some of the reversals that are being made when it comes to disaster response and recovery. Your predecessor, Secretary Noem, she suspended a number of these FEMA employees. I just wanted to ask, can you commit that if confirmed you will adhere to whistleblower laws and en-

sure that these whistleblowers do not face retaliation for their protected disclosure?

Senator MULLIN. So there are already laws in place to protect whistleblowers. I have said multiple times, I will work within the law and the requirements of me as Secretary.

Senator KIM. I hope that means that you will ensure that these whistleblowers do not face unlawful retaliation for what they have done.

Senator MULLIN. It is against the law, as you said, unlawful, sir. I said I am going to work within the law and that is unlawful.

Senator KIM. OK. With that, I will yield back.

Chairman PAUL. Thank you. As I said previously, we have scheduled a vote for tomorrow. I am committed to that. There are several Members on both sides of the aisle that would like a briefing in the SCIF. They have it from 1 to 2. If you are willing to do that, several Members would like just to walk over and do it. I think that makes it much more likely that we have the vote tomorrow.

Senator MULLIN. Sir, I would prefer to have the Ranking Member, yourself, James, and if you want to bring another Democrat member that is on—

Chairman PAUL. No, it is all or none. All the Members need to be able to hear it directly. The problem up here is too many things are siloed and it just looks like resistance that you do not want everything to come out.

Senator MULLIN. No, sir.

Chairman PAUL. If you would be much more forthcoming, if you let any Member of the Committee and classified staff into it, I think we can get this done in this afternoon.

Senator MULLIN. I think that is fine as long as it is in a classified setting.

Chairman PAUL. As long as what?

Senator LANKFORD. Classified.

Chairman PAUL. Yes, that is fine. People classified, security, honor staff, and staff.

Senator LANKFORD. Top Secret/Sensitive Compartmented Information (TS/SCI) compliance.

Chairman PAUL. TS/SCI.

Senator MULLIN. TS/SCI, yes.

Chairman PAUL. All right. Thanks everybody for coming today. The nominee has filed responses to biographical and financial questionnaires answered prehearing questions submitted by the Committee and had their financial statements reviewed by the Office of Government Ethics (OGE). Without objection, this information will be made part of the hearing record with the exception of the nominee's financial data, which are on file with the Committee.¹

Due to the quick turnaround between this hearing and the markup tomorrow, the hearing will remain open until 4 p.m. today, March 18th.

This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:42 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

¹ The information for Mr. Mullin appears in the Appendix on page 68.

A P P E N D I X

**Ranking Member Peters Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
Full Committee Hearing: Senator Markwayne Mullin Nomination for DHS Secretary
March 18, 2026**

Thank you, Chairman Paul, and thank you Senator Mullin for being here today.

Congratulations on your nomination.

I appreciate your willingness to meet with both me and my staff as we consider your nomination to serve as Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security.

I'd also like to welcome your family who are joining us today, and to thank all of you for your commitment to public service.

The Department of Homeland Security is a complicated organization with challenging operational dynamics.

As everyone is well aware, many components within DHS are currently operating without funding.

Let's be clear – Democrats are committed to funding TSA, FEMA, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency and the Coast Guard while we negotiate much-needed ICE reforms.

We tried to pass those bills by unanimous consent multiple times over the past two weeks. Republicans blocked every single one of those bills.

Yesterday, the White House sent a letter laying out their latest offer – but the devil is in the details.

Administrative action is not enough – we need to pass real reforms into law.

If Republicans really do agree with us that TSA and other personnel need to be paid, then they should join us and pass the bills to pay them today while we continue to negotiate ICE reforms.

And let me be clear – these are very straightforward reforms we're asking for – we just want ICE to follow the same rules that our local police already do.

But DHS has faced management challenges since the start of the Trump Administration, and over the past year, many of those challenges have only increased.

As soon as President Trump was sworn in, he made deep cuts to counterterrorism offices and programs, forced out or reassigned key personnel, and redirected the focus of limited remaining counterterrorism resources away from the serious threats we face, and toward targeting the President's perceived political enemies.

The Administration also gutted our nation's main cybersecurity agency, once again forcing out or reassigning talented personnel, slashing budgets, and limiting the agency's work to help

private companies address significant cyberattacks, protect Americans from criminal hackers, and support secure elections.

The Administration has also taken an axe to FEMA, cutting staff, and freezing or delaying critical grant funding for everything from emergency food and shelter after a disaster, to flood mitigation programs, and security grants for nonprofits, including houses of worship.

All these cuts and reassignments have been made at the expense of vital missions, including the core terrorism prevention and response mission the Department was created to address.

In doing so, the Trump Administration has broken trust between law enforcement and the communities they are intended to protect – a break that will have a generational impact on public safety and security.

Now, after President Trump's reckless war of choice against Iran, the threats our nation faces have never been higher.

In my home state of Michigan, just last week, we saw both a major medical device manufacturer get hacked by an Iranian-backed group, and a horrific violent attack on Temple Israel, a metro Detroit area synagogue.

President Trump's unilateral and unchecked executive actions have put Americans at risk and we need a steady, qualified leader at the Department of Homeland Security to address these serious threats.

How the Homeland Security Secretary responds to a crisis sends signals to everyone from the Department's own personnel, to the American people, and to the entire world.

It's not the role of the Secretary to be a cable news commentator in the wake of a crisis, the Secretary's role is to lead the response and work to ensure the Department they are leading isn't the cause of that crisis.

A Secretary who jumps to conclusions without the facts – as we saw in the case of Renee Good and Alex Pretti's killings – only worsens the situation and makes us less safe.

This is a role where temperament matters, where judgment matters, and where experience matters.

We have seen under Secretary Noem's leadership, how shortcomings in these traits can compound the challenges that already come with leading a large and complex Department.

Now more than ever, we need a DHS Secretary who is a steady hand, who will provide thoughtful leadership, follow the facts, tell the truth, and hold agency officials accountable.

We need a DHS Secretary who is committed to the rule of law and who will protect and cooperate with independent oversight, whether that's from the Inspector General or from Members of Congress.

And we need a DHS Secretary who is free from distractions and conflicts of interest that not only undercut the Department's work, but break trust with the American people.

Senator Mullin, I appreciate you being here today to answer our questions about these concerns and your experience and qualifications for this role.

And while I'm interested in hearing more about your vision for leading the Department, I do have reservations about your readiness to take on such a significant role at such a critical time.

I hope you will provide us with substantive answers today, and candid recognition of where this Administration has fallen short on safeguarding our homeland security as you seek to lead the Department as our nation faces ongoing security threats and war with Iran.

Statement of Markwayne Mullin
Nominee, Secretary of Homeland Security
U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs
March 18, 2026

Chairman Paul, Ranking Member Peters, members of the committee—

I am truly humbled to accept this nomination.

First, I want to thank my wife, Christie, and our six wonderful children. Christie is the light of my life. We've been married for 28 years. None of this would have been possible without God in our lives, and her by my side. We are truly blessed to have our six children taking this adventure with us.

We say in our family: we are all one tribe. We take the ups and the downs together but we're always in it together. Our kids have all heard me say—"you're never going to change anything you're willing to tolerate." It's how we live our lives, AND it's how we approach public life.

The Department of Homeland Security is bigger than any political party. Regardless of whether or not you support me, if I'm confirmed, I'll fight for your family just as I'll fight for mine.

Of course, I want to thank President Donald Trump. In a matter of months, President Trump delivered the most secure border in American history. We're deporting violent criminals, enforcing the law, and putting the American people first. I am deeply grateful for President Trump's trust in me to lead the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. It's humbling.

If you were to tell me, years ago, as a kid from Westville—with a speech impediment—that he would one day be called to serve Oklahoma in the U.S. House, then the Senate, then be asked to serve in the president's cabinet—I never would have believed you. My story has only been possible because we live in America—the greatest nation on Earth—which we are proud to call our home.

Make no mistake, I'm clear-eyed about the challenges ahead of us.

If confirmed, I will support President Trump's mission to safeguard the American people and defend the homeland. The importance of the mission at the Department of Homeland Security in this current moment cannot be overstated. The threat environment is high, and America's adversaries seek to undermine us both at home and abroad. Our law enforcement, preparedness, and intelligence agencies must be operating at the highest level. Thankfully, we have the right Commander in Chief at the helm.

I'll have three areas of focus at DHS: First, I'll protect the homeland for everybody. Second, I will bring a commonsense approach. Third, I'll enforce the law.

Remember: if confirmed, I cannot pick and choose which laws to enforce.

I want to say: the employees across DHS, including the Coast Guard, TSA, Secret Service, ICE, and Border Patrol (just to name a few) – you all do a fantastic job keeping our nation safe. Unfortunately, DHS is STILL, as we all know, shut down. We owe it to these employees to get DHS funded again.

Right now, 260,000 employees and their families are working without pay. We've heard stories of parents struggling to afford basic needs. I want to speak to the public servants at DHS for a moment: First, thank you for defending our national security and protecting the homeland 24 hours a day, 365 days per year. Second, the fact that you continue to show up and do your job without pay says a lot about your character, AND the caliber of people who work alongside you at DHS. My friends in front of me, please end this partisan fight.

To the people we have working for DHS: I'm proud of your hard work during this shutdown. We owe it to the DHS employees and their families to do our jobs and fund the Department of Homeland immediately.

If confirmed, the dedicated men and women who work at all 22 agencies within the Department of Homeland Security will know I'll fight alongside you every day to protect our homeland.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak with you.

I look forward to answering your questions.

REDACTED

**HSGAC BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTIONS FOR
EXECUTIVE NOMINEES**

1. Basic Biographical Information

Please provide the following information.

<i>Position to Which You Have Been Nominated</i>	
<u>Name of Position</u>	<u>Date of Nomination</u>
Secretary of Homeland Security	Monday, March 9, 2026

<i>Current Legal Name</i>			
<u>First Name</u>	<u>Middle Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Suffix</u>
Markwayne		Mullin	

<i>Addresses</i>					
<u>Residential Address</u> (do not include street address)			<u>Office Address</u> (include street address)		
			Street: 330 Hart Senate Office Building		
City: Broken Arrow	State: OK	Zip: 74011	City: Washington	State: DC	Zip: 20002

<i>Other Names Used</i>						
<u>First Name</u>	<u>Middle Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Suffix</u>	<u>Check if</u>	<u>Name Used From</u> (Month/Year) (Check box if estimate)	<u>Name Used To</u> (Month/Year) (Check box if estimate)
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		Est <input type="checkbox"/>	Est <input type="checkbox"/>

<i>Birth Year and Place</i>	
Year of Birth (Do not include month and day.)	Place of Birth
1977	Tulsa, OK

<i>Marital Status</i>					
Check All That Describe Your Current Situation:					
Never Married	Married	Separated	Annulled	Divorced	Widowed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<i>Spouse's Name</i> (current spouse only)			
<u>Spouse's First Name</u>	<u>Spouse's Middle Name</u>	<u>Spouse's Last Name</u>	<u>Spouse's Suffix</u>
Christie	Renee	Mullin	

<i>Spouse's Other Names Used</i> (current spouse only)						
<u>First Name</u>	<u>Middle Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Suffix</u>	<u>Check if</u> <u>Estimated</u>	<u>Name Used</u> <u>From</u> (Month/Year) (Check box if estimate)	<u>Name Used</u> <u>To</u> (Month/Year) (Check box if estimate)
Christie	Renee	Rowan		x	Est 8/5/1978 <input type="checkbox"/>	Est 6/14/1997 <input type="checkbox"/>

<i>Children's Names (if over 18)</i>			
<u>First Name</u>	<u>Middle Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Suffix</u>
Jayce	Dalton	Caviness-Mullin	
Jim	Martin	Mullin	
Andrew	Daniel	Mullin	

2. Education

List all post-secondary schools attended.

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Type of School</u> (vocational/technical/trade school, college/university/military college, correspondence/distance/extension/online school)	<u>Date Began School</u> (month/year) (check box if estimate)	<u>Date Ended School</u> (month/year) (check box if estimate) (check "present" box if still in school)	<u>Degree</u>	<u>Date Awarded</u>
Missouri Valley College	College	August 1996 Est: X	December 1996 Est: X	N/A	N/A
Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology	University	August 2009 Est: X	August 2010 Est: X	Associate in Applied Science	August 2010

3. Employment

(A) List all of your employment activities, including unemployment and self-employment. If the employment activity was military duty, list separate employment activity periods to show each change of military duty station. Do not list employment before your 18th birthday unless to provide a minimum of two years of employment history.

<u>Type of Employment</u> (Active Military Duty Station, National Guard/Reserve, USPHS Commissioned Corps, Other Federal employment, State Government (Non-Federal Employment), Self-employment, Unemployment, Federal Contractor, Non-Government Employment (excluding self-employment), Other	<u>Name of Your Employer/Assigned Duty Station</u>	<u>Most Recent Position Title/Rank</u>	<u>Location</u> (City and State only)	<u>Date Employment Began</u> (month/year) (check box if estimate)	<u>Date Employment Ended</u> (month/year) (check box if estimate) (check "present" box if still employed)
Self-employed	Mullin Plumbing	Owner	Broken Arrow, OK	May 1996 Est: X	December 31, 2012 Est: X

(B) List any advisory, consultative, honorary or other part-time service or positions with federal, state, or local governments, not listed elsewhere.

<u>Name of Government Entity</u>	<u>Name of Position</u>	<u>Date Service Began</u> (month/year) (check box if estimate)	<u>Date Service Ended</u> (month/year) (check box if estimate) (check "present" box if still serving)
N/A	N/A	Est <input type="checkbox"/>	Est Present <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

4. Potential Conflict of Interest

(A) Describe any business relationship, dealing or financial transaction which you have had during the last 10 years, whether for yourself, on behalf of a client, or acting as an agent,

that could in any way constitute or result in a possible conflict of interest in the position to which you have been nominated.

No.

(B) Describe any activity during the past 10 years in which you have engaged for the purpose of directly or indirectly influencing the passage, defeat or modification of any legislation or affecting the administration or execution of law or public policy, other than while in a federal government capacity.

No.

5. Honors and Awards

List all scholarships, fellowships, honorary degrees, civilian service citations, military medals, academic or professional honors, honorary society memberships and any other special recognition for outstanding service or achievement.

Honorary Degree:

Honorary doctorate degree, Bacone College, 2018
2299 Old Bacone Rd, Muskogee, OK 74403

Special Recognition for Outstanding Service or Achievement:

Name of Award	Organization	Date Awarded
Appreciation for bringing Hope and Opportunity to Children in Developing Nations	Bridge Builders International	2012
NGV Public Policy Champion	NGV America	2018
Congressional Award for Leadership and Efforts to Improve Kidney Health	National Kidney Foundation	2018
Health IT Pioneer Award	Health IT Now	2018
Champion	Geothermal Heat Pump Industry	2018
Legislator of the Year	National Council for Behavioral Health	2019
Champion of Health Care Innovation	American Life Science Innovation Council	2020
Leadership and Support of Law Enforcement Nationwide	National Tactical Officers Assn	2023
Hope on the Hill Congressional Award	Hope on the Hill	2024

For your Strength, Spirit and Fight for Americans	M5 Incorporated	2024
Pioneers for Prosperity	Americans for Prosperity	2024
Hero of Main Street Award	National Retail Federation	2024
Ataxia Research Champion	National Ataxia Foundation & Friedreich's Ataxia Research Alliance	2025
Rare Leadership Award	Rare Disease Company Coalition	2026
Support and Mentorship	Big Brothers and Big Sisters	2026
Guardian of Small Business Award	NFIB	9/17/2014
Special Recognition Award re: WRRDA	Port of Muskogee	10/28/2014
Health Care Leadership Award	American Optometric Association	4/14/2015
Manufacturing Legislative Excellence	National Assn of Manufacturers	5/5/2015
Congressional Leadership Honors Award	National Johnson-O'Malley Association	2/2/2016
Outstanding American	Oklahoma Chapter - Wrestling Hall of Fame	10/9/2016
Men's Health Caucus Award	American Pharmacists Assn	12/2/2016
Award for Conservative Excellence	American Conservative Union	5/1/2017
Walgreens Pharmacy Champion Award	Walgreens	3/7/2018
Congressional Ratings Award	American Conservative Union	4/10/2018
2018 Health IT Pioneer Award	Health IT Now	12/12/2018
Cooldest in Congress Award	Air Conditioning Contractors of America	3/3/2022
Guardian of Seniors' Rights Award	American Assn of Senior Citizens	3/31/2022
Hero of Main Street Award	National Retail Federation	7/28/2022
True Blue Award	Family Research Council	3/1/2023
Defender of Limited Govt Award	Conservative Partnership Institute	6/7/2023
Friend of the Family Award	Faith & Freedom Coalition	9/25/2024
AbilityOne Champion	Source America and the Dale Rogers Training Center	2/26/2025
Patient Advocate of the Year Award	Patients Rising	6/12/2025
Rare Leadership Award	Rare Disease Company Coalition	3/3/2026
Legislator Award	International Assn of Drilling Contractors	115th Congress

Benjamin Franklin Public Policy Award	National Assn of Mutual Insurance Companies	118th Congress
Guardian of Small Business	NFIB	118th Congress
Affordability Champion (x2)	Council for Affordable Health Coverage	2015, 2019
Healthcare Champion	Oklahoma Assn of Nurse Anesthetists	2022-2023
Distinguished Community Health Center Advocate Award (x2)	National Assn of Community Health Centers	2024, 2026
Thank You for Dedicated Service	McAlester Army Ammunition Plant, OK	N/A
Congressional Health Coach Champion	Institute for Integrative Nutrition	N/A
Transportation Security Administration Partnership Award	Department of Homeland Security	N/A
Blood and Fire	The Salvation Army	N/A
Constituent Service Award	National Write your Congressman	N/A
Champion of the Vinyl Industry	The Vinyl Institute Honors	N/A
Support for Arkansas Verdigris Valley Health Centers	Porter Health Center & Muskogee Health Center	N/A

6. Memberships

List all memberships that you have held in professional, social, business, fraternal, scholarly, civic, or charitable organizations in the last 10 years.

Unless relevant to your nomination, you do NOT need to include memberships in charitable organizations available to the public as a result of a tax deductible donation of \$1,000 or less, Parent-Teacher Associations or other organizations connected to schools attended by your children, athletic clubs or teams, automobile support organizations (such as AAA), discounts clubs (such as Groupon or Sam's Club), or affinity memberships/consumer clubs (such as frequent flyer memberships).

<u>Name of Organization</u>	<u>Dates of Your Membership (You may approximate.)</u>	<u>Position(s) Held</u>
Coweta Assembly of God 29707 E Hwy 51, Coweta, OK 74429	1999 - 2012	Youth Director
Leadership Broken Arrow	2002-2007	Founding Member

7. Political Activity

(A) Have you ever been a candidate for or been elected or appointed to a political office?

<u>Name of Office</u>	<u>Elected/Appointed/ Candidate Only</u>	<u>Year(s) Election Held or Appointment Made</u>	<u>Term of Service (if applicable)</u>
United States House of Representatives	Elected	2013 – 2023	2 years, served 5 terms
United States Senate	Elected	2023 – 2026	3 years, served partial term

(B) List any offices held in or services rendered to a political party or election committee during the last ten years that you have not listed elsewhere.

<u>Name of Party/Election Committee</u>	<u>Office/Services Rendered</u>	<u>Responsibilities</u>	<u>Dates of Service</u>
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

(C) Itemize all individual political contributions of \$200 or more that you have made in the past five years to any individual, campaign organization, political party, political action committee, or similar entity. Please list each individual contribution and not the total amount contributed to the person or entity during the year.

<u>Name of Recipient</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Year of Contribution</u>
N/A	N/A	N/A

8. Publications and Speeches

(A) List the titles, publishers and dates of books, articles, reports or other published materials that you have written, including articles published on the Internet. Please provide the Committee with copies of all listed publications. In lieu of hard copies, electronic copies can be provided via e-mail or other digital format.

Please see Appendix A for a comprehensive list of my publications, all of which are linked to digital copies.

(B) List any formal speeches you have delivered during the last five years and provide the Committee with copies of those speeches relevant to the position for which you have been nominated. Include any testimony to Congress or any other legislative or administrative body. These items can be provided electronically via e-mail or other digital format.

Please see Appendix B for a comprehensive list of formal speeches I have delivered over the last 5 years during my final term in the House and over the 3 years I have served in the Senate. Each speech is linked to a digital copy.

(C) List all speeches and testimony you have delivered in the past ten years, except for those the text of which you are providing to the Committee.

For section 8B, I listed every formal speech and testimony I have delivered over the last 10 years, spanning a majority of my career in the House and my entire career in the Senate. In Appendix C I have compiled every additional speech I have given publicly over that same 10-year period.

9. Criminal History

Since (and including) your 18th birthday, has any of the following happened?

- Have you been issued a summons, citation, or ticket to appear in court in a criminal proceeding against you? (Exclude citations involving traffic infractions where the fine was less than \$300 and did not include alcohol or drugs.) No.
- Have you been arrested by any police officer, sheriff, marshal or any other type of law enforcement official? No.
- Have you been charged, convicted, or sentenced of a crime in any court? No.
- Have you been or are you currently on probation or parole? No.
- Are you currently on trial or awaiting a trial on criminal charges? No.
- To your knowledge, have you ever been the subject or target of a federal, state or local criminal investigation? No.

If the answer to any of the questions above is yes, please answer the questions below for each criminal event (citation, arrest, investigation, etc.). If the event was an investigation,

where the question below asks for information about the offense, please offer information about the offense under investigation (if known).

- A) Date of offense: N/A.
- a. Is this an estimate (Yes/No): N/A.
- B) Description of the specific nature of the offense: N/A.
- C) Did the offense involve any of the following? N/A.
- 1) Domestic violence or a crime of violence (such as battery or assault) against your child, dependent, cohabitant, spouse, former spouse, or someone with whom you share a child in common: N/A.
 - 2) Firearms or explosives: N/A.
 - 3) Alcohol or drugs: N/A.
- D) Location where the offense occurred (city, county, state, zip code, country): N/A.
- E) Were you arrested, summoned, cited or did you receive a ticket to appear as a result of this offense by any police officer, sheriff, marshal or any other type of law enforcement official: N/A.
- 1) Name of the law enforcement agency that arrested/cited/summoned you: N/A.
 - 2) Location of the law enforcement agency (city, county, state, zip code, country): N/A.
- F) As a result of this offense were you charged, convicted, currently awaiting trial, and/or ordered to appear in court in a criminal proceeding against you: N/A.
- 1) If yes, provide the name of the court and the location of the court (city, county, state, zip code, country): N/A.
 - 2) If yes, provide all the charges brought against you for this offense, and the outcome of each charged offense (such as found guilty, found not-guilty, charge dropped or “nolle pros,” etc). If you were found guilty of or pleaded guilty to a lesser offense, list separately both the original charge and the lesser offense: N/A.
 - 3) If no, provide explanation: N/A.
- G) Were you sentenced as a result of this offense: N/A.
- H) Provide a description of the sentence: N/A.
- I) Were you sentenced to imprisonment for a term exceeding one year: N/A.

- J) Were you incarcerated as a result of that sentence for not less than one year: N/A.
- K) If the conviction resulted in imprisonment, provide the dates that you actually were incarcerated: N/A.
- L) If conviction resulted in probation or parole, provide the dates of probation or parole: N/A.
- M) Are you currently on trial, awaiting a trial, or awaiting sentencing on criminal charges for this offense: N/A.
- N) Provide explanation: N/A.

10. Civil Litigation and Administrative or Legislative Proceedings

(A) Since (and including) your 18th birthday, have you been a party to any public record civil court action or administrative or legislative proceeding of any kind that resulted in (1) a finding of wrongdoing against you, or (2) a settlement agreement for you, or some other person or entity, to make a payment to settle allegations against you, or for you to take, or refrain from taking, some action. Do NOT include small claims proceedings.

<u>Date Claim/Suit Was Filed or Legislative Proceedings Began</u>	<u>Court Name</u>	<u>Name(s) of Principal Parties Involved in Action/Proceedi ng</u>	<u>Nature of Action/Proceeding</u>	<u>Results of Action/Proceedi ng</u>
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

(B) In addition to those listed above, have you or any business of which you were an officer, director or owner ever been involved as a party of interest in any administrative agency proceeding or civil litigation? Please identify and provide details for any proceedings or civil litigation that involve actions taken or omitted by you, or alleged to have been taken or omitted by you, while serving in your official capacity.

<u>Date Claim/Suit Was Filed</u>	<u>Court Name</u>	<u>Name(s) of Principal Parties Involved in Action/Proceedi ng</u>	<u>Nature of Action/Proceeding</u>	<u>Results of Action/Proceedi ng</u>

11/02/2001	Tulsa County District Court	PATRICIA D CUMMINGS, Plaintiff, v. Markwayne Mullin, Defendant, and MULLIN PLUMBING COMPANY, Defendant.	Issue: INDEBTEDNESS >\$1500.	Dismissed – released and satisfied, 3/13/2002. Dismissed - Settled
8/24/2010	Tulsa County District Court	EVERHOME MORTGAGE COMPANY, Plaintiff, v. MELISSA GAMBLE, Defendant, and BRANT J GAMBLE, Defendant, and JOHN DOE, OCCUPANT Defendant, a nd CREDIT SYSTEMS INC, Defendant, and ROBISON AIR INC, Defendant, and FIRST NATIONAL BANK &	Civil relief more than \$10,000; FORECLOSURE	Defendant: MULLIN PLUMBING INC Disposed: DISCLAIMER, 09/21/2010. Other Defendant: MULLIN, MARKWAYNE Disposed: DISCLAIMER, 09/21/2010. Other

		TRUST COMPANY OF BROKEN ARROW, Defendant, and MULLIN PLUMBING INC, Defendant, and MARKWAYNE MULLIN, Defendant, and KENNY BURKETT, Defendant, and F&M BANK AND TRUST COMPANY, Defendant, and AVB BANK, Defendant.		
11/04/2013	Tulsa County District Court	HUDDLESTON E, THOMAS v. MULLIN PLUMBING INC	Civil relief more than \$10,000; NEGLIGENCE (GENERAL)	Defendant: MULLIN PLUMBING INC Disposed: DISMISSED - LACK OF SERVICE, 06/24/2014. Dismissed by Court

				Defendant: MULLIN, MARKWAYNE Disposed: DISMISSED - LACK OF SERVICE, 06/24/2014. Dismissed by Court
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(C) For responses to the previous question, please identify and provide details for any proceedings or civil litigation that involve actions taken or omitted by you, or alleged to have been taken or omitted by you, while serving in your official capacity.

N/A.

11. Breach of Professional Ethics

(A) Have you ever been disciplined or cited for a breach of ethics or unprofessional conduct by, or been the subject of a complaint to, any court, administrative agency, professional association, disciplinary committee, or other professional group? Exclude cases and proceedings already listed.

Please see Appendix D for comprehensive list of complaints filed with both Senate and House Ethics Committees over my years of service in each respective chamber. I have provided examples of every individual complaint in Appendix D, the date of the complaint description of the citation, and committee action is listed in the documentation provided for each example.

(B) Have you ever been fired from a job, quit a job after being told you would be fired, left a job by mutual agreement following charges or allegations of misconduct, left a job by mutual agreement following notice of unsatisfactory performance, or received a written warning, been officially reprimanded, suspended, or disciplined for misconduct in the workplace, such as violation of a security policy?

No.

12. Tax Compliance

(This information will not be published in the record of the hearing on your nomination, but it will be retained in the Committee's files and will be available for public inspection.)

REDACTED**13. Lobbying**

In the past ten years, have you registered as a lobbyist? If so, please indicate the state, federal, or local bodies with which you have registered (e.g., House, Senate, California Secretary of State).

No.

14. Outside Positions

<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See OGE Form 278. (If, for your nomination, you have completed an OGE Form 278 Executive Branch Personnel Public Financial Disclosure Report, you may check the box here to complete this section and then proceed to the next section.)</p>

For the preceding ten calendar years and the current calendar year, report any positions held, whether compensated or not. Positions include but are not limited to those of an officer, director, trustee, general partner, proprietor, representative, employee, or consultant of any corporation, firm, partnership, or other business enterprise or any non-profit organization or educational institution. Exclude positions with religious, social, fraternal, or political entities and those solely of an honorary nature.

15. Agreements or Arrangements

☒ See OGE Form 278. (If, for your nomination, you have completed an OGE Form 278 Executive Branch Personnel Public Financial Disclosure Report, you may check the box here to complete this section and then proceed to the next section.)

As of the date of filing your OGE Form 278, report your agreements or arrangements for: (1) continuing participation in an employee benefit plan (e.g. pension, 401k, deferred compensation); (2) continuation of payment by a former employer (including severance payments); (3) leaves of absence; and (4) future employment.

Provide information regarding any agreements or arrangements you have concerning (1) future employment; (2) a leave of absence during your period of Government service; (3) continuation of payments by a former employer other than the United States Government; and (4) continuing participation in an employee welfare or benefit plan maintained by a former employer other than United States Government retirement benefits.

16. Additional Financial Data

All information requested under this heading must be provided for yourself, your spouse, and your dependents. (This information will not be published in the record of the hearing on your nomination, but it will be retained in the Committee's files and will be available for public inspection.)

REDACTED

REDACTED

SIGNATURE AND DATE

I hereby state that I have read the foregoing Statement on Biographical and Financial Information and that the information provided therein is, to the best of my knowledge, current, accurate, and complete.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Wayne Miller", is written above a horizontal line.

This 10th day of March, 2026

REDACTED

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF
GOVERNMENT ETHICS

March 17, 2026

The Honorable Rand Paul
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security
and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In accordance with the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, I enclose a copy of the financial disclosure report filed by Markwayne Mullin, who has been nominated by President Trump for the position of Secretary, Department of Homeland Security.

We have reviewed the report and have obtained advice from the agency concerning any possible conflict in light of its functions and the nominee's proposed duties. Also enclosed is an ethics agreement outlining the actions that the nominee will undertake to avoid conflicts of interest. Unless a date for compliance is indicated in the ethics agreement, the nominee must fully comply within three months of confirmation with any action specified in the ethics agreement.

Based thereon, we believe that this nominee is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest.

Sincerely,

Deborah Bortot
Chief, Ethics Disclosure Branch

Enclosures **REDACTED**

March 17, 2026

Ms. Kateland Jackson
Designated Agency Ethics Official
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Ms. Jackson:

The purpose of this letter is to describe the steps that I will take to avoid any actual or apparent conflict of interest in the event that I am confirmed for the position of Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. It is my responsibility to understand and comply with commitments outlined in this agreement.

SECTION 1 – GENERAL COMMITMENTS

As required by the criminal conflicts of interest law at 18 U.S.C. § 208(a), I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter in which I know that I have a financial interest directly and predictably affected by the matter, or in which I know that a person whose interests are imputed to me has a financial interest directly and predictably affected by the particular matter, unless I first obtain a written waiver, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(1), or qualify for a regulatory exemption, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(2). I understand that the interests of the following persons are imputed to me:

- Any spouse or minor child of mine;
- Any general partner of a partnership in which I am a limited or general partner;
- Any organization in which I serve as an officer, director, trustee, general partner, or employee, even if uncompensated; and
- Any person or organization with which I am negotiating or have an arrangement concerning prospective employment.

In the event that an actual or potential conflict of interest arises during my appointment, I will consult with an agency ethics official and take the measures necessary to resolve the conflict, such as recusal from the particular matter or divestiture of an asset.

If I have a managed account or otherwise use the services of an investment professional during my appointment, I will ensure that the account manager or investment professional obtains my prior approval on a case-by-case basis for the purchase of any assets other than cash, cash equivalents, investment funds that qualify for the regulatory exemption for diversified mutual funds and unit investment trusts at 5 C.F.R. § 2640.201(a), or obligations of the United States.

I will receive a live ethics briefing from a member of the ethics office after my confirmation but not later than 15 days after my appointment pursuant to the ethics program regulation at 5 C.F.R. § 2638.305. Within 90 days of my confirmation, I will submit my

Certification of Ethics Agreement Compliance which documents my compliance with this ethics agreement.

I will not modify this ethics agreement without your approval and the approval of the U.S. Office of Government Ethics (OGE) pursuant to the ethics agreement requirements contained in the financial disclosure regulation at 5 C.F.R. § 2634.803(a)(4).

SECTION 2 – RESIGNATIONS

Upon confirmation, I will resign from my positions with the following entities:

- Mullin Family Holdco LLC
- M8 Holdings LLC
- M8 Holdings II LLC
- M8 Holdings IV LLC
- Legacy RV Resort LLC

I will continue to have a financial interest in these entities, but I will not provide services material to the production of income. Instead, I will receive only passive investment income from them. I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that to my knowledge has a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of any of these entities, unless I first obtain a written waiver pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(1).

Upon confirmation, I will resign from my positions with the entities listed below. I will continue to have a financial interest in these entities, but I will not provide services material to the production of income. Instead, I will receive only passive investment income from them. I have been advised that the duties of the position of Secretary may involve particular matters affecting the financial interests of the following entities:

- Mullin Properties LLC
- Mullin Realty LLC
- Mullin Ranch LLC
- Mullin Properties West Division LLC

The agency has determined that it is not necessary at this time for me to divest my interests in these entities because my recusal from particular matters in which these interests pose a conflict of interest will not substantially limit my ability to perform the essential duties of the position of Secretary. Accordingly, I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that to my knowledge has a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of any of these entities, unless I first obtain a written waiver, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(1), or qualify for a regulatory exemption, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(2). I understand that substantial participation includes both recommendations and the rendering of advice.

Upon confirmation, I will resign from my positions with the following entities:

- Mullin Plumbing New Construction

Pursuant to the impartiality regulation at 5 C.F.R. § 2635.502, for a period of one year after my resignation from each of these entities, I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter involving specific parties in which I know that entity is a party or represents a party, unless I am first authorized to participate, pursuant to 5 C.F.R. § 2635.502(d).

SECTION 3 – RETAINED POSITIONS

I will retain my position as a trustee of The Markwayne Mullin and Christie Renee Mullin Living Trust, dated June 22, 2010 (Mullin Living Trust). I will not receive any fees for the services that I provide as a trustee during my appointment to the position of Secretary. I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that to my knowledge has a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of the Mullin Living Trust, unless I first obtain a written waiver, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(1), or qualify for a regulatory exemption, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(2).

I will retain my position with Circle 6 Rodeo Co. LLC. During my appointment to the position as Secretary, I will not provide services material to the production of income. Instead, I will receive only passive investment income from it. I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that to my knowledge has a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of Circle 6 Rodeo Co. LLC, unless I first obtain a written waiver, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(1).

I will retain my position with Allotment Services LLC. I have been advised that the duties of the position of Secretary may involve particular matters affecting the financial interests of Apres Spectrum LLC, which is owned by Allotment Services, LLC. The agency has determined that it is not necessary at this time for me to divest my interest in Apres Spectrum LLC because the likelihood that my duties will involve any such matter is remote. Accordingly, with regard to Allotment Services LLC, I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that to my knowledge has a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of this entity for as long as I own it, unless I first obtain a written waiver, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(1).

SECTION 4 – DIVESTITURES

As soon as practicable but not later than 90 days after my confirmation, I will divest my interests in the entities listed in Attachment A. With regard to each of these entities, I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that to my knowledge has a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of the entity until I have divested it, unless I first obtain a written waiver, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(1), or qualify for a regulatory exemption, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(2). I have verified that I will be able to carry out the divestitures within the timeframe described above.

As soon as practicable but not later than 90 days after my confirmation, I will divest my interests in the bonds listed in Attachment B. With regard to each of these bonds, I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that to my knowledge has a direct and predictable effect on the marketability or market resale value of the bond or on the ability or

willingness of the issuer to pay their debt obligations to me until I have divested it, unless I first obtain a written waiver, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(1), or qualify for a regulatory exemption, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(2). I have verified that I will be able to carry out the divestitures within the timeframe described above.

I understand that I may be eligible to request a Certificate of Divestiture for qualifying assets and that a Certificate of Divestiture is effective only if obtained prior to divestiture. Regardless of whether I receive a Certificate of Divestiture, I will ensure that all divestitures discussed in this agreement occur within the agreed upon timeframes and that all proceeds are invested in non-conflicting assets. I understand that I must submit my request for a Certificate of Divestiture to allow for adequate time for OGE to process the Certificate of Divestiture, and in order to divest assets within the agreed upon timeframe.

I (including my spouse and minor children if applicable) will not repurchase any asset I was required to divest without my consultation with my agency ethics official and the U.S. Office of Government Ethics.

SECTION 5 – PUBLIC POSTING

I have been advised that this ethics agreement and the Certification of Ethics Agreement Compliance will be posted publicly, consistent with the public information law at 5 U.S.C. § 552, on the website of the U.S. Office of Government Ethics with ethics agreements of other presidential nominees who file public financial disclosure reports.

Sincerely,



The Honorable Markwayne Mullin

Encl:
Attachment A
Attachment B

Attachment A

- Adobe Inc. (ADBE)
- Alphabet (GOOG/GOOGL)
- Amazon (AMZN)
- American Express (AXP)
- Amkor Technology Inc (AMKR)
- APi Group Corporation (APG)
- Apple Inc. (AAPL)
- Applied Materials Inc (AMAT)
- BlackRock Inc (BLK)
- Boston Scientific (BSX)
- Capital One Finl Corp (COF)
- Carpenter Technology Corp (CRS)
- Caterpillar Inc (CAT)
- Chevron Corp (CVX)
- Citigroup (C)
- Citizens Bancshares (CZBS)
- Coca Cola (KO)
- ConocoPhillips (COP)
- Costco (COST)
- Deere & Co (DE)
- Elevance Health Inc (ELV)
- Eli Lilly and Company (LLY)
- Emerson Electric (EMR)
- FirstCash Holdings Inc (FCFS)
- Goldman Sachs (GS)
- Hilton Worldwide Holdings Inc (HLT)
- Humphreys Fund I REIT
- Intercontinental Exchange Inc (ICE)
- Intuitive Surgical Inc (ISRG)
- IQVIA Holdings Inc (IQV)
- JPMorgan Chase & Co (JPM)
- KLA Corp (KLAC)
- L3Harris Technologies Inc (LHX)
- Lam Research Corp (LRCX)
- LPL Financial Holdings Inc (LPLA)
- Mastercard Inc (MA)
- McKesson Corp (MCK)
- Meta Platforms Inc (META)
- Microsoft Corp (MSFT)
- Monolithic Power Systems (MPWR)
- Nvidia Corp. (NVDA)
- Oneok Inc (OKE)

- Palo Alto Networks Inc (PANW)
- Parker-Hannifin Corp (PH)
- Pentair PLC SHS (PNR)
- Philip Morris Intl. Inc. (PM)
- Procter and Gamble Co (PG)
- RTX Corp (RTX)
- S&P Global Inc (SPGI)
- Salesforce Inc. (CRM)
- ServiceNow Inc. (NOW)
- Sherwin-Williams Co (SHW)
- Stride Inc (LRN)
- The Home Depot (HD)
- Thermo Fisher Scientific Inc (TMO)
- TJX Cos Inc New Com (TJX)
- Union Pacific Corp Com (UNP)
- UnitedHealth Group Inc (UNH)
- Valero Energy Corp New Com (VLO)
- Vanguard Utilities Fund (VPU)
- Visa Inc (V)
- VSE Corp (VSEC)

Attachment B

- Alamogordo N Mex Mun Sch Dist No 001
- Austin Tex CTFS Oblig
- Clear Creek Tex Indpt Sch Dist Unltd Tax Ref Bds
- Clear Creek Tex Indpt Sch Dist Unltd Tax Ref Bds
- Cook Cnty Ill Cmnty Cons Sch Dist No 015 Palatine Go Bds
- Corsicana Tex Combination Tax and Rev CTFS Oblig
- Florida St Dept Gen Svcs Div Facs Mgmt Rev Pool Rev Ref Bds
- Fort Lauderdale Fla Wtr & Swr Rev Bds Prospect Lake Wtr Treatment
- Fort Smith Ark Wtr & Swr Rev Ref Constr Bds
- IPS Multi-Sch Bldg Corp Ind Unltd Ad Valorem Ppty Tax First Mtg Bds
- Kentucky St Ppty & Bldgs Commn Revs Bds
- Macomb Inter Sch Dist Mich Unltd Tax Go Bldg Site Bds
- Massachusetts St Dev Fin Agcy Rev Bds Tufts Medicine Inc
- Metropolitan Transn Auth N Y Dedicated Tax Fd Green Fd Bds B-1 Green Bond
- Nevada St Ltd Tax Go Cap Impt Bds NVIDIA Corp (NVDA)
- Salem NH Go Bds
- Seattle Wash Drain & Wastewater Rev Ref Rev Bds
- University Houston Tex Univ Revs Consolidated Rev And Ref
- West Palm Beach Fla Cmnty Redev Agcy

U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Pre-hearing Questionnaire
For the Nomination of Senator Markwayne Mullin
to be Secretary, Department of Homeland Security

I. Nomination Process and Conflicts of Interest

1. Did the President give you specific reasons why he nominated you to be the next Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS or “the Department”), and if so, what are they?
 - a. President Trump cited my experience in Congress, interpersonal skills, and tireless work ethic as reasons he wants me to serve as Secretary of Homeland Security.
2. Were any conditions, expressed or implied, attached to your proposed nomination? If so, please explain.
 - a. None.
3. Have you made any commitments with respect to the policies and principles you will attempt to implement as Secretary? If so, what are they, and to whom were the commitments made?
 - a. The only commitment I have made is to the President, and that commitment is to focus on getting Homeland Security working for everyone.
4. If confirmed, do you commit to upholding the Constitution and the rule of law?
 - a. Yes.
5. If the President or anyone acting at the direction of the President or on his behalf asks you to violate the law, will you decline to do so?
 - a. Yes.
6. Are you aware of any business relationship, dealing, or financial transaction that can result in a possible conflict of interest for you or the appearance of a conflict of interest? If so, please explain what procedures you will use to recuse yourself or otherwise address the conflict. And if you will recuse yourself, explain how you will ensure your responsibilities are not affected by your recusal.
 - a. If confirmed, I will abide by my ethics agreement that was arranged by career, nonpartisan, ethics officials at the Office of Government Ethics and DHS. If confirmed, I will expect DHS to similarly follow all applicable ethics laws and

agreements.

7. Have you or any organization of which you were an officer, director or owner, or have or had a significant financial interest in, been the recipient of any Federal grants, loans, or other financial assistance (such as, but not limited to, Paycheck Protection Program Loans, Economic Injury Disaster Loans, Restaurant Revitalization Grants, etc.) within the past 10 years? If so, please list the program, amount, and date of receipt.
 - a. Yes. Detailed below.
 - i. Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan; \$706,800; 12/07/2020; to Mullin Plumbing, Inc.
 - ii. Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan; \$169,200; 12/07/2020; to Mullin Environmental, Inc.
 - iii. Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan; \$290,500; 04/09/2020; to Mullin Services, Inc.
 - iv. Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan; \$281,900; 12/29/2020; to Mullin Plumbing West Division, Inc.
8. Please provide the name of any individual, law firm, consulting firm, lobbying firm, public relations firm, or other entity you have formally retained or contracted with regarding this nomination, including any amounts paid in fees or otherwise.
 - a. N/A
9. Has anyone ever requested or received any financial benefit from you or anyone on your behalf in exchange for perceived, intended, or actual support for or solicitation or offer of promotion to any political office, including without limitation this nomination?
 - a. No.

II. Background of the Nominee

10. Why do you want to serve as the Secretary of Homeland Security?
 - a. I want to serve as Secretary of Homeland Security because I love this country and have deep respect for the men and women who work every day to keep it safe.
11. What specific background, experience, and attributes affirmatively qualify you to be Secretary?
 - a. In my public service career, I have worked to effectively advance policy changes by building and sustaining relationships, including with those from different backgrounds or with whom I have disagreements. This is a skill I will bring with me into service as Secretary of Homeland Security. I am comfortable in challenging situations and am skilled in building up organizations to work

effectively.

12. Please describe:

- a. Your leadership and management style:
 - i. As a leader, I set high standards, a fast pace, and focus on results. As a manager, I believe in hiring the right people and empowering them in their roles.
- b. Your experience managing personnel:
 - i. As a former business owner, including of a 24/7 service business, I have managed employees at all stages of their careers. Many of my private-sector employees stayed with me long-term. I have also managed an adaptable and successful congressional staff over my 13 years in office.
- c. What is the largest number of people that have worked under you?
 - i. Approximately 150 employees.

13. What would you consider your greatest successes as a leader?

- a. My greatest success is managing to stay married for 28 years and raising 6 wonderful children. In business and public service, my greatest success is building and managing successful teams, in both business and public service.

14. What do you consider your greatest failure as a leader, and what lessons did you take away from that experience?

- a. I don't believe in failure. However, I do admit when I make a mistake and work quickly to correct it.

15. Please give examples of times in your career when you disagreed with your superiors and advocated your position. Describe circumstances in which you were successful and in which you were unsuccessful.

- a. I have been a negotiator for 13 years in politics and have had many successes and failures.

16. Do you seek out dissenting views and encourage constructive dialogue? Please provide examples of times in your career when you have done so.

- a. Yes. In Congress, I regularly work across the aisle and maintain good relationships with those with different political or policy opinions. My company board also was not one to simply agree. I always encouraged different points of

view.

17. Please list and describe examples of when you made politically difficult choices that you thought were in the best interest of the country or an organization.

- a. One example is my work on the *I am Vanessa Guillen Act*, which was ultimately modified and adopted in the FY22 NDAA. This bill reformed the military's handling of sexual assault and harassment, and proposed reforms to the longstanding Feres doctrine. This was a politically controversial position to take, but I did so because I believed Vanessa deserved justice.

18. Please describe how you build credibility and trust among staff as a leader.

- a. I maintain an open-door policy with my staff and empower good managers.

19. During your career, has your conduct as a government employee ever been subject to an investigation or audit by the Office of Special Counsel, Department of Justice, agency Equal Opportunity office or investigator, agency Inspector General, congressional ethics committee, or any other similar federal, state, or local investigative entity? If so, please describe the nature of the allegations/conduct and the outcome(s) of the investigation(s) or audit(s).

- a. Listed and described below (also see Appendix D of HSGAC Biographical Questionnaire):
 - i. When I was first elected to the U.S. House of Representatives on November 6, 2012, I immediately began working with the House Committee on Ethics ("Committee") to ensure that myself, and my family business, would be operating in compliance with House rules. While I was working to bring my family business into compliance, the then-Office of Congressional Ethics (now the Office of Congressional Conduct) conducted a separate review. OCE referred allegations to the Committee, which were already part of the Committee's advisory process, but the referral by OCE compelled the Committee to open an investigation. The Committee ultimately determined that I made a good faith effort to seek their guidance on numerous issues with respect to the family business and that I substantially complied with the majority of advice given. The Committee had advised that I transfer ownership of the company to my spouse. The sole compliance issue uncovered by the Committee was an accounting error that was the result of the company failing to terminate an automatic disbursement process. This error led to my receipt of \$40,000 from the company, despite lack of ownership at the time. I was brought back into full compliance with the Committee by paying that amount back to Mullin Plumbing West Division, and the Committee then closed the matter.
 - ii. I received a letter from the Senate Committee on Ethics on June 13, 2024,

alerting me that my conduct during a HELP Committee hearing on November 14, 2023, violated Senate Rules and related standards of conduct. It was a private admonition and there was no additional disciplinary action.

III. Role of the Secretary of DHS

20. What do you consider to be the core mission of the Department, and what would you consider to be your role and responsibilities if confirmed as the Secretary?
 - a. The Department's core mission is, with honor and integrity, to safeguard the American People, our homeland, and our values. This includes protecting the American people and our critical infrastructure from attacks, managing and mitigating disaster response, and ensuring the safe movement of lawful travelers and goods. As Secretary of Homeland Security, my job would be to faithfully implement the laws on border security, cyber security, aviation security, and maritime security while supervising and supporting the Department's more than 250,000 officers and employees in carrying out this essential mission across more than 20 components.
21. Please describe your understanding of the authorities of the Secretary and how those authorities facilitate the core mission of the Department.
 - a. Congress has granted the Secretary a variety of legal authorities to protect the homeland. Among these are directing operations and policies to secure our nation's borders, implementing the legal immigration system, safeguarding cybersecurity infrastructure, and ensuring maritime safety and security through the U.S. Coast Guard. The Secretary advises the President on issues related to the protection of the homeland and collaborates with other Departments and agencies to keep American communities safe from terrorists, transnational criminal organizations, and fentanyl poisoning.
22. Do you believe the Department has expanded beyond its intended mission when it was created?
 - a. The Department was created over 20 years ago to protect the homeland and the American people. That core mission remains, but threats have changed, requiring the Department to adjust its focus and activities. As the Department assumes new responsibilities, leadership must ensure each component adds value and remains aligned with this mission. If confirmed, I would review Departmental activities to ensure they address current threats effectively.
23. Are there components in the Department that are conducting duplicative activities to other agencies that can be eliminated?
 - a. If confirmed, I will carefully review the Department to identify any overlapping

or duplicative activities.

24. Many of the Department's leadership positions are currently vacant. What level of input do you expect on the appointees selected for leadership roles if confirmed? What positions would be your highest priority to fill?
 - a. If confirmed, my highest priorities would be filling positions directly tied to the Department's core missions to ensure maximum security for the American people.
25. What is your understanding of the respective roles of the DHS Secretary, "border czar" Thomas Homan, and White House deputy chief of staff for policy, Stephen Miller?
 - a. If confirmed, I will work closely with the President and his team, and other federal departments and agencies to secure the homeland.
26. In your view, how has the Department's core mission evolved since its inception, if at all? What do you think the Department's core mission should be for the next decade?
 - a. The Department was founded in the wake of the horrific terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. The mission has remained the same to its core – to protect the homeland – but the threat environment has evolved over time to include cyber risk, transnational criminal networks, and more complex border and immigration pressures. Over the next decade, the Department should stay focused on secure borders, resilient critical infrastructure, lawful immigration enforcement, counterterrorism, and disaster readiness.
27. If confirmed, what would be the highest priority items you would focus on? What do you hope to accomplish during your tenure?
 - a. My highest priorities would be to maintain the most secure border in American history, stop the flow of fentanyl and other illegal drugs into American communities, prioritize immigration enforcement against criminal illegal aliens, and ensure FEMA is refocused on its core disaster response mission. I hope to leave the Department more efficient, more accountable, and better postured to protect the American people

IV. Policy Questions

28. What, if any, restructuring plans would you propose for the Department, if confirmed?
 - a. If confirmed, I would initiate a Department-wide look at whether its current structure maximally supports the agency's statutory mission. Any reorganization under my leadership must pass three tests: making the agency more effective,

strengthening accountability, and delivering real value for the taxpayer.

29. What do you consider to be the principal challenges in the area of human capital management facing the Department?
 - a. The biggest challenges are recruiting, retaining, and supporting a mission-critical workforce in high-stress operational environments while giving components the management tools they need to perform on behalf of the American people. The Department succeeds only if its people are trained well, led well, and given the resources and systems they need to do the job. This challenge is currently compounded by appropriations lapsing for the Department for extended periods twice in the last several months.
30. What measurements would you use to determine whether the Department is successful?
 - a. I would look at outcomes tied to mission: maintaining secure borders, preventing illegal alien “gotaways”, streamlining removals of removable aliens, stronger cyber defense and critical infrastructure resilience, faster and more accountable disaster support, and better stewardship of taxpayer dollars. I would also expect lawful operations, timely reporting to Congress, and measurable improvement in workforce readiness and morale. I look forward to working with each component head and the head of the management directive in order to properly prioritize these issues to create a successful work environment.
31. If confirmed, how will you ensure the Department is positioned to succeed beyond your tenure as Secretary? What steps will you take to prepare the office for future presidential transitions?
 - a. I would focus on building a Department that runs on systems, not personalities – clear lines of authority, strong managers, real professional development, and institutional processes that outlast any one person. When it’s time for me to hand over the reins, I will work constructively with my successor.
32. What steps do you believe the Department can take to ensure federal funds expended by the agency are free from duplication and waste?
 - a. I believe the Department must continue to strengthen internal audit and oversight functions, work closely with the Department’s Inspector General and the Government Accountability Office, and implement rigorous grant management and contracting controls to ensure every taxpayer dollar is spent efficiently and in furtherance of the Department’s core missions.
33. If confirmed, will you commit to reviewing any DHS programs that you believe could be eliminated because they are ineffective, duplicative, wasteful, unnecessary, or have outlived their purpose and report that information to Congress?

- a. Yes, if confirmed, I would support reviewing Departmental programs for effectiveness, duplication, and mission value, and I would be happy to work with Congress on that oversight. As a nominee, I do not want to prejudge specific programs before I have access to the full record.

- 34. What is your position on how the Department should engage with its varied stakeholders, including state, local, tribal, territorial (SLTT) governments, elected officials, the private sector, faith-based and non-governmental organizations (NGO), academia, and communities?
 - a. Homeland security is a team effort, not a solo mission. Many of our nation's most critical assets and response capabilities are outside the federal government, so the Department has to be a helpful partner. If confirmed, I will make clear that our success depends on strong, transparent partnerships with state, local, tribal, and territorial governments, the private sector, faith-based organizations, and other key stakeholders. The threats we face demand a comprehensive approach, and the Department can only fulfill its mission by working closely and continuously with these partners.

- 35. What role should the Department and Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) play regarding cybersecurity? What would your expectations be of a Senate-confirmed Director of CISA?
 - a. CISA's job is to stay laser-focused on being the nation's cyber defense and critical infrastructure security agency – understanding risk, sharing actionable information at speed, and helping government and critical infrastructure partners close vulnerabilities before they're exploited. I would expect a CISA Director to be relentlessly mission-focused.

- 36. Do you have experience managing the deployment of artificial intelligence at scale for a business, organization, or government entity?
 - a. As a United States Senator, I have worked on technology and policy issues, but I would not overstate my personal hands-on experience managing AI deployment at scale. I do understand both the promise and the risks of these technologies, and how important it is to get this balance right. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Department's technical experts and Congress to ensure AI is a powerful tool, not a reckless experiment – used responsibly, with clear guardrails, and always in direct support of the mission.

- 37. As the Department integrates AI tools into operations, how will you ensure that the privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties of Americans are protected?
 - a. As the development of AI continues to expand rapidly, the Department has to be nimble in its response to foreign or bad actors using AI, without infringing on Americans' fundamental rights. The United States continues to be the leader in the

emerging technologies and the Department needs to cooperate with these industry leaders in order to keep Americans safe. I will work with the private sector and other agencies while coordinating with the Privacy Office within the Department to ensure that civil rights and liberties are protected.

38. What do you believe is the appropriate role of the Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A) within the Department?
- a. I&A should be the Department's intelligence engine – pulling together threat information from across the Department and the intelligence community, turning it into clear, operational insight, and pushing timely, actionable intelligence to state, local, tribal, and territorial partners so they have the ability to stop threats.
39. I&A is permitted to do overt collections, including on U.S. persons. Do you believe it should continue to have this authority to collect intelligence on Americans?
- a. Any collection must strictly follow the law and established civil liberties protections. If confirmed, I will closely review I&A's collection authorities and with the Office of General Counsel to ensure they are constitutionally sound, tightly scoped, clearly justified, and under firm, continuous oversight.
40. Do you believe that the intelligence offices within DHS components should be writing intelligence reports about people participating in First Amendment protected activities?
- a. The Department's intelligence is there to protect the homeland, not to police speech. Intelligence offices should not be writing reports on people just because they're exercising First Amendment rights. Any collection or reporting must rest on a clear, legitimate homeland security or law enforcement purpose – nothing less.
41. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) implement multiple and layered security and other screenings, but do not currently assess their overall impact on individuals or their efficacy. If confirmed, will you work with the Committee to increase transparency and accountability for these different programs?
- a. If confirmed, I would welcome working with the Committee on transparency and accountability, consistent with security sensitivities and operational needs. As a nominee, I can't promise specific internal reviews before I know all the facts, but I firmly believe the Department should be able to clearly explain why its screening programs exist, how they work, and whether they are effective.
42. What do you consider the most pressing threat to the nation and how do you plan to address it?
- a. President Trump showed that strong leadership can secure the border – and under

his leadership we ended the invasion of illegal aliens that the previous administration facilitated. But the job isn't finished. An untold number of terrorists, gang members, and other bad actors were allowed into our country and need to be removed. Transnational criminal organizations are still driving criminals, narcotics, and other threats across our borders. If confirmed, my focus will be clear and relentless: secure the border, enforce the law, strengthen our partnerships, and harden the United States against both physical and cyber threats.

43. Do you commit to ensuring DHS submits statutorily mandated reports to Congress?

- a. Yes. Congress has a right to timely, complete reporting required by law, and if confirmed I would expect that obligation to be taken seriously across the Department.

44. In mid-February 2026, CBP used a military laser on loan from DOD to shoot down an object suspected to be a UAS near El Paso, Texas leading the FAA to issue a temporary flight restriction (TFR) that closed the airspace above El Paso. Just weeks later, DOD Joint Task Force-Southern Border shot down a CBP drone launched without notifying the military task force assigned to the U.S.-Mexico border near Fort Hancock, Texas. Both incidents reveal a lack of interagency communication and confusion. If confirmed, how will you ensure adequate coordination across DHS components, DOD, DOJ, and FAA in conducting UAS and C-UAS activities to prevent potential danger?

- a. If confirmed, I will prioritize investigating the examples mentioned and, if necessary, implement policy or operational changes. Before and during any sensitive mission, the Department, DOW, DOJ, and FAA must be on the same page – with clear deconfliction protocols, shared playbooks, and real-time communication. Safety, lawful authority, and unity of effort come first, especially when military and civilian systems are sharing the same airspace.

45. If confirmed, will you commit to prohibiting the nomination by DHS of individuals to other government watchlists (e.g., the Terrorist Screening Dataset) solely for activities protected by the United States Constitution?

- a. Yes, if confirmed, I commit to working to ensure that the Department does not nominate individuals to a government watchlist by the Department solely for exercising rights protected by the United States Constitution.

46. If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that Department activities undergo a privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties review before being implemented?

- a. The Department is tasked with protecting the American people, and it must do so in accordance with the Constitution and the rule of law. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department continues to operate within applicable legal and constitutional boundaries.

47. If confirmed, will you commit to not allowing any DHS component to conduct mass surveillance on United States citizens?
- a. The Department's responsibility is to safeguard the American public, and it must fulfill this duty while adhering to the Constitution and the rule of law. If confirmed, I will strive to ensure the Department remains fully compliant with all legal and constitutional requirements.
48. Do you believe the Department or any of its components has the authority to censor constitutionally protected speech of any American? Please explain why or why not.
- a. No, I do not believe the federal government has the authority to censor constitutionally protected speech.
49. Do you believe the Department or any of its components has the authority to require social media companies or other online platforms to solicit information about United States citizens absent a judicial or administrative warrant? Please explain why or why not.
- a. If confirmed, I will consult with Department of Homeland Security attorneys and the Department of Justice, as appropriate, particularly in regard to questions of constitutional authority, and will ensure compliance with all legal and constitutional requirements.
50. What types of policies and procedures do you think are appropriate to govern the Department's use of face recognition and face comparison technologies?
- a. Biometric technologies, such as facial recognition and face comparison, present both advantages and complexities that require thoughtful evaluation. The Department should determine how these tools can keep the homeland safe in a manner that is effective, efficient, and fully compliant with the Constitution and all relevant laws.
51. What will your priorities be with regards to the collection and use of biometrics by the Department and its components?
- a. My approach to biometrics is simple: mission-driven, tightly controlled, and well-guarded. Biometrics should be collected and used only for legitimate security purposes or immigration vetting and identity confirmation, the data must be securely protected and retained only as long as necessary, and clear policies with strong oversight must be in place to safeguard any applicable individual privacy and civil liberties.
52. What kind of reviews of Departmental programs do you plan on initiating in your first year? What kind of transparency and oversight do you expect to see of programs that may include activities related to protected speech?

- a. If confirmed, I will carefully conduct reviews of departmental programs to ensure all departmental efforts, including those related to protected speech, are focused on securing the homeland and are consistent with the Constitution and federal law.

53. Will you commit that within 30 days of confirmation you will provide this Committee with copies of all data sharing agreements with other federal departments and agencies?

- a. I am not currently in a position to commit to a specific timeline. If confirmed, I will work with the Department's Office of Legislative Affairs to provide responsive information that can be appropriately provided as expeditiously as possible.

Under what conditions is it appropriate for DHS components to arrest and detain American citizens?

- b. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department and its components arrest and detain identified suspects or individuals as authorized by law and consistent with constitutional protections.

54. In your opinion, what is the appropriate role of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)?

- a. FEMA's appropriate role is to serve as the federal government's lead agency for disaster preparedness, response, and recovery, focused on supporting state and local governments when disasters exceed their capacity.

55. If confirmed, do you commit to administering federal disaster assistance without regard to political affiliation?

- a. The delivery of necessary federal disaster assistance should not be guided by political considerations. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that disaster assistance is provided impartially, without regard to political affiliation, and in accordance with this principle.

56. Which U.S. federal agency is the lead border security agency?

- a. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is the lead federal border security agency, operating under the Department of Homeland Security.

57. What reforms, if any, do you support to DHS's use of force policies and practices?

- a. As I am currently not in the role, I cannot make definitive statements regarding any potential reforms. However, if confirmed I commit to look at each components' use of force policies and practices to see if reforms are needed.

58. What is your understanding of the distinct missions and responsibilities of the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) and DHS with respect to unaccompanied children?
 - a. In fulfilling its border security duties, the Department apprehends and detains aliens who enter the country unlawfully. I recognize that the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) within HHS is responsible for coordinating the care and placement of unaccompanied alien children in suitable custodial environments.
59. What is your understanding of the limitations of the U.S. military in domestic law enforcement and immigration enforcement?
 - a. If confirmed, I will consult with Department of Homeland Security attorneys and work with the Department of War to ensure any cooperative efforts are consistent with both the Constitution and federal law.
60. If confirmed, do you intend to continue to use Naval Station Guantanamo Bay (NSGB) to detain immigrants?
 - a. If confirmed I would support the President's illegal immigration enforcement efforts and utilize available facilities to detain high-priority criminal aliens as needed, while ensuring operations comply with applicable law.
61. What steps will you take to ensure that the legal immigration system will run efficiently and effectively?
 - a. If confirmed, I will make the effective management and enforcement of the legal immigration system a key priority for the Department.
62. Do you believe a warrant should be required to search the contents of an American citizen's electronic device at ports of entry?
 - a. If confirmed, I will consult with Department of Homeland Security attorneys and the Department of Justice, as appropriate, on questions of law.
63. In your view, is aviation security screening at airport security checkpoints an inherently governmental function?
 - a. By law, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is responsible for aviation security screening at airports. If confirmed, I will prioritize making sure TSA fulfills this role with both effectiveness and efficiency.
64. What are your thoughts on the Secret Service's two missions, investigations and protections, and the responsibilities associated with these missions? Do you believe any adjustments should be made?

- a. If confirmed, I will evaluate any reforms that strengthen the Secret Service's ability to carry out its dual missions, including its critical responsibility to protect the President, Vice President, and other designated individuals. The agency should be organized in a manner that optimally supports these essential functions.

65. Do you believe any or all of the Secret Service's operations should be removed from the Department? Please explain.

- a. If confirmed, I will evaluate any reforms that strengthen the Secret Service's ability to carry out its mission, including its critical responsibility to protect the President, Vice President, and other designated individuals. The agency should be organized in a manner that optimally supports these essential functions.

V. Accountability

66. Protecting whistleblower confidentiality is of the utmost importance to this Committee.

- a. Please describe any previous experience with handling whistleblower complaints. What steps did you take to ensure those individuals did not face retaliation and that their claims were thoroughly investigated?
 - i. Whistleblowers are essential to ensuring accountability and instilling trust in public institutions. When a whistleblower approached my office, my staff and I worked with the relevant Committee of jurisdiction and referred the case to the agency in question for investigation. My staff and I advised them to seek counsel in the event of retaliation.
- b. If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that whistleblower complaints are handled appropriately at the Department?
 - i. If confirmed, as Secretary I commit to ensuring that whistleblowers are protected and do not face retaliation. I also commit to working with the Office of General Counsel to make sure DHS follows all laws and regulations on whistleblowers and has robust processes in place to ensure that all whistleblower complaints are handled appropriately. I would note that the DHS Office of Inspector General also has significant resources available to whistleblowers, and if confirmed I will encourage the Inspector General to continue providing these resources while offering my support.
- c. If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that whistleblowers at the Department do not face retaliation, and that complaints of retaliation are handled appropriately?
 - i. If confirmed as Secretary, I commit to ensuring that whistleblowers are protected and do not face retaliation. I also commit to working with the

Office of General Counsel to ensure that DHS has robust processes in place to ensure that all whistleblower complaints are handled with the utmost care and respect, as well as ensuring that DHS studiously follows all laws and regulations on whistleblowers.

To be clear: if confirmed, I will not tolerate retaliation against whistleblowers and I will make sure that this view is known throughout DHS.

67. How do you view the Department's relationship with the DHS Inspector General?

- a. Inspectors General are an incredible resource across the government to identify waste, fraud, and abuse, and if confirmed I will take this view into my relationship with the DHS Office of Inspector General. The current DHS Inspector General has been in office since 2019 and has over 40 years of experience in the United States Air Force, on Active Duty, in the Reserves, and in the Arizona Air National Guard. His experience will be invaluable in our shared efforts to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse while protecting the homeland.

68. Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe the Department would not be required to provide the DHS OIG with timely access to agency records?

- a. If confirmed, I will always try to provide the DHS Office of Inspector General with timely access to agency records. I understand that there could be situations where the Inspector General is seeking sensitive information that could be classified, related to an ongoing national security or law enforcement activity, involve personally identifiable information, or be the subject of ongoing litigation. In those cases, I would work closely with the Office of General Counsel to ensure that we are providing timely access that is respectful of any relevant laws, regulations, or guidelines.

69. If confirmed, do you commit to fully cooperate in a timely manner with any audits, investigations, and other reviews and related requests for information from IGs?

- a. Yes, although I would note the potential need to protect sensitive information as described in Response 68.

70. Under what circumstances do you believe it is appropriate for the DHS IG to redact OIG reports that are provided to Congress?

- a. As I mentioned in Response 68, there could be situations where both DHS and Congress would recognize the need to protect information that is classified, related to an ongoing national security or law enforcement activity, involve personally identifiable information, or be the subject of ongoing litigation. In those circumstances, however, I anticipate that Congress and DHS will participate in good faith efforts to seek accommodation so that the information could be

shared without infringing on any law, ongoing investigation, court case, personal privacy, or classification issue.

71. Will you commit to not interfering with any decision by the DHS Inspector General to provide members of the Committee with unredacted versions of any DHS Inspector General report?
 - a. Yes, although I would note the potential need to protect sensitive information as described in Response 68.
72. If confirmed, do you commit without reservation to ensuring GAO receives timely, comprehensive responses to requests for information, including for records, meetings, and information?
 - a. Yes, although I would note the potential need to protect sensitive information as described in Response 68.
73. If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure all Department offices and employees cooperate fully and promptly with GAO requests?
 - a. As I have not been confirmed, I do not have a full view of how the Department is currently handling requests from GAO. If confirmed, I would want to determine if the Department has an appropriate system to handle GAO requests from start to finish, ensuring that requests are appropriately routed to the correct component or subject matter experts and that those components or subject matter experts have the resources they need to communicate with GAO and draft substantive and timely responses. I would also expect DHS staff to work with GAO to identify any high-risk areas within DHS that GAO has identified as containing serious vulnerabilities to waste, fraud, or abuse.

VI. Relations with Congress

74. Will you commit to providing this Committee unredacted copies of all requested documents related to the ongoing investigation into the origins of COVID-19, dual use research of concern, risky life sciences research, and gain-of function research?
 - a. Yes.
75. Will you commit to providing this Committee unredacted copies of all requested documents related to special access programs, prospective access programs, and controlled access programs including acknowledged, unacknowledged, and waived programs?
 - a. As I have not been confirmed, I do not have a full view of how the Department is currently handling the types of requests mentioned here (special access programs,

prospective access programs, and controlled access programs including acknowledged, unacknowledged, and waived programs). In those cases, I would work closely with the Office of General Counsel to ensure that we are providing timely access that is respectful of any relevant laws, regulations, or guidelines.

76. Will you commit to providing this Committee unredacted copies of all requested documents and accesses related to assassination attempts against President Trump, all security threats against President Trump since 2021?
- a. Yes. Information regarding security threats against President Trump could involve information that is part of ongoing law enforcement or national security activities, but I would work with the Committee to provide information without jeopardizing those activities.
77. Will you commit to providing this Committee unredacted copies of all requested documents related to the weaponization of the Department of Homeland Security under the Biden Administration, including Quiet Skies/TSA watchlists and censorship of protected speech of Americans?
- a. Yes.
78. Do you agree without reservation to comply with any request or summons to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of Congress if you are confirmed?
- a. Yes.
79. Do you commit to testifying publicly before this Committee at its annual hearings on the DHS budget and worldwide threats?
- a. Yes.
80. Do you agree without reservation to make any subordinate official or employee available to appear and testify before, or provide information to, any duly constituted committee of Congress if you are confirmed?
- a. Yes.
81. Do you agree without reservation to comply fully, completely, and promptly to any request for documents, communications, or any other agency material or information from any duly constituted committee of the Congress if you are confirmed?
- a. Yes. I would note, however, as I did in my responses to questions 68 and 70, that there could be situations where the information sought could be classified, related to an ongoing national security or law enforcement activity, involve personally identifiable information, be the subject of ongoing litigation, subject to attorney-

client or deliberative process privileges, or implicate constitutional concerns regarding the activities of the Executive Branch. In those circumstances, however, I anticipate that Congress and DHS will participate in good faith efforts to seek accommodation so that the information could be shared without infringing on any laws, ongoing investigations, court cases, personal privacy, classification issues, or the Constitution of the United States.

82. If confirmed, how will you make certain that you will respond in a timely manner to Member requests for information?
- a. If confirmed, one of my first actions will be to ensure that the DHS Office of General Counsel and Office of Legislative Affairs have the resources they need to respond to Member requests for information in a timely manner. As a Senator myself, I know how important it is for agencies to respond quickly to our requests.
83. If confirmed, will you direct your staff to adopt a presumption of openness where practical, including identifying documents that can and should be proactively released to the public without requiring a Freedom of Information Act request?
- a. Yes. Whether it is the JFK assassination records or drug pricing information, President Trump has been a leader in providing the American public with information long kept secret. I fully support President Trump's efforts and will do my part if confirmed and instruct my staff to do the same.
84. If confirmed, will you keep this Committee apprised of new information if it materially impacts the accuracy of information your agency's officials have provided us?
- a. Yes.

VII. Assistance

85. Are these answers your own? If not, who has provided you with assistance?
- a. These responses were prepared in consultation with my Senate staff, with input from the Department of Homeland Security and Executive Office of the President personnel. I reviewed each response personally.
86. Have you consulted with DHS or any other interested parties? If so, please indicate which entities.
- a. See answer to Question #85
87. Have you used any Artificial Intelligence tool to assist in drafting, editing, or reviewing your answers?
- a. No.



(Signature)

This 12th day of March, 2026

Post-Hearing Questions for the Record

Submitted to Hon. Markwayne Mullin

Senator Gary C. Peters

Nomination of Senator Markwayne Mullin to be Secretary, Department of Homeland Security

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

1. Will you commit to ensuring the following with respect to the Department's use of facial recognition and facial capture technologies:
 - a. That the Department will provide U.S. citizens the ability to opt out of non-law enforcement uses of these technologies? If confirmed, I will ensure the Department's use of these technologies is consistent with applicable law, published policy, and any applicable civil-liberties protections. I will review whether existing opt-out and alternative-processing procedures are appropriate where the law permits.
 - b. That the Department will provide alternative processing for those who opt out that does not impose unnecessary burdens on the individual? If confirmed, I will review existing procedures to ensure that, where alternatives are legally required or otherwise appropriate, they are operationally sound and do not impose unnecessary burdens.
 - c. That the Department will not use these technologies to profile, target, or discriminate against any individual solely for exercising their Constitutional rights? Yes – the Department must act consistent with the Constitution and applicable law. Protected First Amendment activity will not be the basis for profiling, targeting, or discrimination.
 - d. That the Department will not use these technologies to enable systemic, indiscriminate, or wide-scale monitoring, surveillance, or tracking? If confirmed, I will ensure the Department's use of any such technology is tied to lawful authorities, mission needs, and appropriate oversight, not indiscriminate monitoring.

2. Please provide a list of all the countries to which you have traveled at any time outside of the United States, whether for personal or official reasons, the circumstances for each trip, and who funded each trip. You may accompany your response with a classified annex. A comprehensive personal travel history has been completed as part of the background investigation, on which the Committee has been briefed. All official travel and related expenditures are a matter of public record and available for the Committee's review in the Congressional Record.

3. The Congressional record shows you traveled to Jordan from August 16-19, 2016, and it looks like you were traveling alone. What was the purpose of that trip? Who did you meet with? Did you travel to any other countries while you were in Jordan – like Syria? Please refer to my hearing testimony and additional discussion held in a separate meeting immediately following the hearing on March 18, 2026.

4. Will you commit that as Secretary, if confirmed, you will not divert or use any FEMA resources or personnel for immigration enforcement? If confirmed, I will use the funds and resources in accordance with the law.

5. Do you commit that, if confirmed, you will ensure that FEMA grants are moved expeditiously and fairly to support state and local law enforcement and houses of worship? If confirmed, I will work to move FEMA grants as quickly as possible while ensuring proper vetting and eligibility screening occurs. I will work with FEMA to ensure that approvable grants are distributed.

6. In your pre-hearing questionnaire, you said regarding Secretary Noem’s policy that she personally needs to approve any DHS payment over \$100,000 you would “review the contract approval process and modify it, if appropriate.” This response contradicts your response in the hearing where you said you are not a micromanager and said that adding so much red tape was unrealistic. Did you prepare the answer in the questionnaire alone, or were you told to provide that answer by staff at DHS and/or the White House? The response in the questionnaire is my own. It was prepared in consultation with personnel at the Department of Homeland Security and the Executive Office of the President.

7. Since President Trump began strikes in Iran in February, we have seen several attacks, both terror and cyber, apparently linked to this conflict in Iran. If confirmed, how specifically would you direct DHS to communicate on cyber and terror threats from Iran and other foreign adversaries? If confirmed, I will work with the experts at CISA, I&A, and DHS Policy to determine the best possible ways for the Department to communicate on these issues.

8. In the hearing questionnaire you said that DHS is responsible for protecting election systems

as critical infrastructure. What specific activities, if confirmed, would you direct the Department to carry out in the lead up to the midterm elections? If confirmed, I will work with the experts at CISA to determine the best actions to protect critical infrastructure leading up to the midterm elections.

9. Are you concerned that a bill requiring the use of DHS's SAVE program to be used for bulk voter verification could wrongly flag eligible Americans – and lead to disenfranchisement? If so, what will you do to address these concerns? SAVE is a verification tool with defined limits, and any use of it should be accurate, lawful, and paired with appropriate safeguards so eligible Americans are not wrongly disenfranchised.

10. Given the critical work DHS and CISA do to protect our elections across the nation, will you commit to continuing CISA's election security supportive work? If confirmed, I will look at CISA's election security work and assess its use.

11. Do you believe that federal agencies should be required to implement cybersecurity upgrades and maintain the highest cybersecurity standards to protect sensitive or classified data and U.S. citizen information as well? Yes. Federal agencies should maintain strong cybersecurity practices to protect sensitive, classified, and personal information consistent with applicable law and federal standards.

12. In the hearing questionnaire, you said you would make sure the Department is proactively stopping foreign entities from attacking U.S. cyber infrastructure. Will you commit to providing HSGAC staff a briefing within 180 days of your confirmation on the specifics of how you would achieve this? If confirmed, I will work with CISA to provide briefings as appropriate on these topics.

13. The DHS Biodefense Analysis and Countermeasures Center (NBACC) is a unique biodefense laboratory that identifies credible biological weapons threats. If confirmed as DHS Secretary, will you commit to ensuring DHS retains this critical biodefense asset? If confirmed, I will work with leaders in the Department to assess the future of the NBACC and will work with Congress on this topic, as appropriate.

14. Executive Order 14367 designates "illicit fentanyl and its core precursor chemicals" as

weapons of mass destruction. If confirmed, do you commit to providing the Committee with a comprehensive plan for how DHS will implement the EO in carrying out its counter fentanyl Operations? If confirmed, I will work with the relevant DHS components to provide briefings on counter fentanyl operations as appropriate.

15. Will you commit to ensuring personnel at the Office of Intelligence and Analysis and any component personnel working on intelligence matters receive regular and targeted trainings on protecting privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties? What about individuals working at fusion centers, whether they are federal employees or not? If confirmed, I will work to make sure that all employees receive the proper training and uphold Constitutional rights.

16. Will you commit to ensuring that the Office of Intelligence and Analysis remains the primary DHS intelligence community member? If confirmed, I will ensure DHS's intelligence activities remain organized and conducted consistent with law and the Department's statutory structure.

17. Will you take President Trump's direction on Temporary Protected Status decisions? If confirmed, I will work with appropriate DHS employees, including USCIS, and consult with appropriate government officials and agencies regarding TPS determinations.

18. Is it safe to return Haitians who have resided in the United States for years back to Haiti? What about Nicaragua? Venezuela? Syria? Yemen? If confirmed, I will work with appropriate DHS employees, including USCIS, and consult with appropriate government officials and agencies when regarding determinations.

19. Is it permissible to terminate TPS for all countries in order to implement President Trump's immigration agenda? If confirmed, I will make sure the Department is working within the law on TPS. I will work with experts in the Department to make these decisions.

20. Nearly 300 DACA recipients have been detained and almost 100 who were deported from the U.S. If confirmed, do you commit to this committee that you will review those cases to ensure due process was followed and re-establish a fair criteria and process for grounds for detention and deportation for DACA recipients? If confirmed, I will review these cases and ensure that the Department follows existing court orders and the law.

21. Do you commit to providing Congress and the public with timely and accurate statistics and information relevant to DACA? If confirmed, I will work with the proper components to provide timely and appropriate information to Congress about DACA.

22. Do you believe there are locations where the border barrier is not appropriate? How would you evaluate proposals to place a border barrier within a National Park, including potential impacts to the local economy? If confirmed, I will work with the experts at CBP to take the best course of action on wall placement and will work within the current law to ensure that the wall is constructed properly.

23. In your pre-hearing questionnaire, you said that law enforcement information gained through drug interdictions contributes to efforts to counter drug trafficking organizations and their networks. You also acknowledged DHS's law enforcement role.

a. If confirmed, how would you advocate for the importance of DHS's law enforcement role in maritime drug interdictions? The Department plays a critical role in maritime interdiction through layered border security, interdiction, intelligence, and partnerships, and I would continue to advocate for that mission.

b. Do you believe DOJ should pursue U.S. prosecution of individuals found to have been engaging in maritime drug trafficking? Charging decisions belong to DOJ, but where facts, circumstances, and the law support prosecution, the Department should work closely with DOJ to build strong cases.

24. Do you support the universal use of body worn cameras by DHS immigration enforcement officers? Do you support mandating their use? If confirmed, I will build on existing Departmental efforts and available funding for body-worn cameras to expand their use across immigration enforcement, and I will work with the Department and Congress to address remaining gaps in resources, policy, and implementation.

25. The FY 2025 National Defense Authorization Act (Public Law 118-159) was enacted on December 23, 2024. Section 5611 "Department of Homeland Security Northern Border Mission Center," a bipartisan, bicameral provision, requires the DHS Secretary to establish the DHS Northern Border Mission Center "not later than 1 year after the date of enactment."

Secretary Noem failed to do so. If confirmed, do you commit to formally establishing the center, pursuant to law, within **one month** of your swearing in? If confirmed, I will work with the Department to make sure we are following any laws that were passed by Congress.

26. If confirmed, are you committed to assigning sufficient personnel to support operations at the U.S. port of entry at the Gordie Howe International Bridge, which is expected to open for traffic in the coming months? If confirmed, I will work to ensure CBP staffing aligns with operational requirements at ports of entry, including new or expanded facilities.

27. ICE recently purchased a commercial warehouse in Romulus, Michigan to be used for detention. On February 16, Romulus Mayor McCraight expressed opposition of the use of this facility for detention citing several concerns – it was also unanimously opposed by the Romulus City Council on February 23. If confirmed, do you commit to reviewing this specific facility and address the concerns raised by the Mayor and City Council? And do you commit to establishing a clear line of communication between ICE and the state and local officials and communities? If confirmed, I will review the matter and expect the Department and ICE to maintain clear communication with state and local stakeholders.

28. What independent oversight would you put in place to ensure detainee and employment safety, medical care, overall conditions, and accountability? If confirmed, I would expect robust oversight through existing inspection, investigative, medical, and compliance mechanisms, and I would review whether additional safeguards are warranted.

29. According to a court testimony disclosed in a case being litigated in the U.S. District Court in Oregon, an ICE officer testified that officers were orally instructed to meet quotas or other enforcement targets of arresting individuals for immigration purposes. If confirmed, will you continue these quotas instead of prioritizing quality and targeted enforcement? If confirmed, I will work with ICE to ensure that appropriate enforcement happens.

30. Do you believe toddlers and other unaccompanied children should be forced to represent themselves in immigration court without counsel? If confirmed, I will work to make sure that the Department follows the Constitution and applicable laws passed by Congress regarding aliens' access to counsel.

31. In January 2025, DHS removed the memberships of all its advisory committees, including for congressionally mandated committees and ones focused on critical national security work. Since then, DHS has only restored two advisory committees: the Homeland Security Advisory Committee and the FEMA Review Council. Do you commit to prioritizing the reinstating of required or national security focused advisory committees at DHS? If confirmed, I will look at those advisory committees and reinstate any of them, as warranted and appropriate.

32. If confirmed, will you commit that DHS will not award any money or contracts to your personal friends, family, or past businesses? If confirmed, I will ensure that all contracts are awarded through the proper procedures and protocols, and free of conflicts of interest.

33. In your pre-hearing questionnaire, as well as during the staff-level interview, you stated that, if confirmed, your role as Secretary would be “not a partisan one—my job will be to help protect the homeland for all Americans.” Do you think TSA should be playing videos at airports that blame Democrats for the DHS shutdown? Would you consider this type of activity to be partisan? If confirmed, will you continue to play these types of videos at Airports? If confirmed, I will look at the media that is being played at TSA lines and make sure that it is within the scope of the law and appropriate.

34. Do you commit to reviewing the processes for clearing content that DHS posts on its social media accounts, including 1) to ensure that personally identifiable information is not shared and 2) to ensure that the language is appropriate for a government agency? If confirmed, I will look at how the Department utilizes its social media and make changes as appropriate.

35. The U.S. Coast Guard has historically under invested in its icebreaking mission on the Great Lakes where the majority of the United States steel production takes place. If confirmed, will you support efforts to fund and obtain a second heavy Coast Guard Great Lakes icebreaker? If confirmed, I will work with Congress and the Coast Guard to identify the best placements of future icebreakers.

36. According to public reporting, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) is the lead agency

probing the 2020 election in Arizona. Do you believe HSI is the appropriate agency tasked to investigate this matter or elections broadly? And do you believe it is an appropriate use of HSI resources? I would need to review the facts, legal predicate, and agency equities before commenting on a specific matter. In general, Departmental resources should be used consistent with statutory authorities and mission priorities.

37. During your nomination hearing, you stated that there has been a loss in institutional knowledge when experienced personnel leave DHS components. Are you concerned at all with the Administration's targeting and firing of counterterrorism and national security personnel across federal agencies who possess institutional knowledge that not only will take a long time to rebuild, but also create gaps in our threat preparedness? I believe institutional knowledge matters, and if confirmed I will work to ensure the Department has the people and expertise needed to meet its national-security missions. Fully funding the Department will help significantly in retaining the workforce.

38. Under what circumstances do you think it would be appropriate for DHS to use tracking apps, tools, or databases to conduct mass surveillance of Americans? The Department should not engage in surveillance of Americans absent lawful authority and appropriate safeguards; any use of investigative tools must be appropriately tailored, lawful, and subject to oversight.

39. Will you commit to not awarding any DHS contract (on a sole-source or non-competitive basis) to any entity or individual with whom you, your staff, political associates (e.g., former campaign staff), or your family have personal, political, or financial ties? Yes. Departmental contracting must be governed by law, ethical rules, and the integrity of the procurement process.

40. During the hearing, in regard to sanctuary cities and state and local police offices, you said "We're going to reimburse them for having the person there." Can you elaborate on this comment and how you would plan to operationalize this strategy? Under what authority would you reimburse state and local police forces for holding undocumented migrants? My point was that the Department should work with willing state and local partners within available legal authorities and appropriations. If confirmed, I would review the relevant authorities before committing to any reimbursement mechanism.

41. Will you commit to providing the committee with all contracts that Secretary Noem awarded

under a sole-source or non-competitive process, within 30 days of confirmation? If confirmed, I will work with the Department and the Committee in good faith on appropriate oversight requests, consistent with law, privilege, procurement sensitivities, and ongoing reviews.

42. If confirmed, will you commit to referring any individual or entity found to have obtained a DHS contract through improper or illegal means – including conflicts of interest or circumvention of traditional bidding process requirements – to the Department of Justice? Yes, where the facts and law support referral.

43. In 2025, the Government Accountability Office determined that DHS illegally impounded funding for the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP), Shelter and Services Program (SSP), and Next Generation Warning System Grants Program (NGWS). Do you commit to obligating all federal funds that Congress provides the Department of Homeland Security, including FEMA in a timely way, and in compliance with the Impoundment Control Act? If confirmed, I will expect the Department to carry out duly enacted appropriations consistent with applicable law.

44. Under Secretary Noem, FEMA still has not awarded FY25 Nonprofit Security Grant Program grants to individual recipients – and has added onerous and terms and conditions. If confirmed, do you commit to awarding these grants without these unrelated terms and conditions to protect America’s houses of worship? If confirmed, I will review the current terms and conditions and ensure the program is administered consistent with statute, program purpose, and applicable law.

45. In 2025, DHS attempted to terminate the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant program, a congressionally created and funded program. Do you commit to fully and promptly implementing the BRIC program and releasing funds to recipients? The Department must comply with applicable law, and if confirmed I will review the Department’s posture and ensure lawful administration of the program.

46. Do you believe that DHS has the authority to terminate congressionally authorized and funded programs? The Department must administer Congressionally authorized and funded programs in a manner that is consistent with statute, appropriations, and any controlling court orders.

47. Do you commit to award federal funds to recipients based upon their merits and qualifications of applicants and not the partisan affiliation or makeup of their state or community? Yes.

**Post-Hearing Questions for the Record
Submitted to the Honorable Markwayne Mullin
Nominee for Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
From Senator Maggie Hassan**

**Full Committee Hearing:
*Nomination of the Honorable Markwayne Mullin to be Secretary, U.S. Department of
Homeland Security*
March 18, 2026**

- 1) DHS needs to balance its various missions. If confirmed, will you commit to providing my office with the following information?
 - a. Since January 2025, how many investigations has HSI opened? Please disaggregate by field office, month, topic (e.g., counter-intelligence, child sexual exploitation, immigration, etc.), and current status.

If confirmed, I will work with the Department to provide this data to your office, as appropriate and consistent with law, privacy protections, and operational considerations.
 - b. Since January 2025, how many HSI agents have been assigned to temporary duty? How many HSI agents are currently TDY from their normal duty station? Please disaggregate by duty station and month.

If confirmed, I will work with the Department to provide information on these topics, as appropriate.
- 2) I am concerned that the ICE Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) may not be structured or staffed in such a way that it is able to perform adequate oversight of the ICE workforce, particularly given recent increases in the size of the ICE workforce.
 - a. If confirmed, will you work with my office to increase the independence and capacity of ICE OPR?

If confirmed, I will work with ICE to ensure that they have the capacity to meet mission needs.
- 3) During your testimony, you mentioned the importance of hiring qualified personnel.
 - a. Are you aware of any changes to background investigation procedures, including polygraph standards, for new CBP or ICE personnel?

I am not currently aware of specific changes, but if confirmed, I will review current hiring and vetting procedures.

- b. Do you believe that prospective federal law enforcement officers should undergo polygraph testing for risk factors such as criminal history, drug abuse, and sexual misconduct? If not, why not?

If confirmed, I will ensure that hiring practices maintain strong vetting standards consistent with law.

- 4) Prior to Fiscal Year 2024, DHS published an annual report on the use of force by Department personnel. The Department continues to collect this data but no longer publishes this report.

- a. If confirmed, can you commit to publishing the Use of Force Reports for fiscal years 2024 and 2025 within 30 days of your confirmation?

If confirmed, I will review the status of these reports and work to make information on these matters available, as appropriate and consistent with law.

- b. Can you commit to publishing this report for fiscal year 2026 and 2027 within 60 days of the end of each fiscal year? If not, can you commit to providing Congress with this data?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure timely reporting of information on these matters, as appropriate and consistent with law.

- 5) There are significant concerns about Secretary Noem's actions and the role of Mr. Corey Lewandowski at the Department, including reported concerns from President Trump. These concerns must be fully addressed, but in the past, DHS has had problems with records retention. If confirmed, will you:

- a. Confirm whether, prior to their departure, DHS archived all potential records for Secretary Noem and Mr. Lewandowski, including any records that may exist on their personal devices?

If confirmed, I will review Departmental records management practices and ensure they are consistent with applicable law and records retention requirements.

- b. Describe the processes for archiving these records, including any auditing or validation of such records?

If confirmed, I will provide an overview of Departmental records archiving processes, including any auditing or validation procedures, as appropriate and consistent with law.

- c. Identify any gaps or irregularities that DHS identified in records belonging to Secretary Noem or Mr. Lewandowski, either as part of off-boarding or responding to prior records requests?

If confirmed, I will review this matter and provide appropriate information to your office, as appropriate and consistent with law and applicable restrictions.

- 6) Please explain your views on how the Department of Homeland Security should interpret requirements in legislative report language.

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I understand the importance of report language. If confirmed, I commit to working collaboratively with Congress on matters included in report language to address its priorities, as appropriate and consistent with law.

- 7) The DOJ Office of Legal Counsel has advised the Executive Branch that “When individual members are requesting information in their official capacity on their own behalf, and not acting on behalf of a body of Congress, an Executive Branch policy of providing good-faith responses to their requests exhibits a proper respect for members of a coordinate branch of the government. Departments and agencies, therefore, appropriately give due weight and sympathetic consideration to requests for information from individual members of Congress.” *See Requests by Individual Members of Congress for Executive Branch Information*, 43 Op. O.L.C. 42, 42 (2019).

- a. What are the key features of a “good faith” response and why?

A good faith response is as timely, accurate, and complete as is appropriate and permitted by law and operational constraints, demonstrating respect for congressional oversight.

- b. How do you understand the concepts of “due weight” and “sympathetic consideration?”

These concepts mean giving careful and respectful consideration to requests from Members of Congress, consistent with legal and operational constraints.

- c. Does relevance to the requester’s home state afford additional weight to or sympathetic consideration of a request?

Relevance may inform urgency and context, but all requests should be handled fairly and consistent with applicable standards.

- 8) By law, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is supposed to achieve a 100 percent high-throughput Non-Intrusive Inspection (NII) scan rate for commercial and passenger vehicles and freight rail at ports of entry (LPOE) and rail-border crossings by January 6, 2027. According to a September 2025 report from the Government Accountability Office (GAO), CBP’s scanning plan does not include NII system deployments needed to scan passenger vehicles at nine POEs along the southwest border, including LPOE in high drug-trafficking areas. This is unacceptable.

- a. Will you commit to working with my office on this problem and to providing regular updates on progress towards meeting statutory NII requirements?

If confirmed, I will work with your office and provide updates on progress toward meeting statutory scanning requirements, as appropriate.

- 9) State and local officials in New Hampshire criticized ICE and DHS over the past few months for poor communication and a lack of transparency regarding a proposed detention facility in Merrimack. When I raised this with you during the hearing, you said that you wanted to work with us on this issue and be good partners to my state and community, which I appreciate.

- a. If confirmed, will you help determine what went wrong with the communication between ICE and state and local officials in New Hampshire, by directing the relevant personnel at DHS and ICE to review communications between DHS or ICE and any state and local officials in New Hampshire regarding a potential new ICE detention facility in New Hampshire?

If confirmed, I will work with the relevant components to review communications regarding ICE detention facility acquisitions in New Hampshire.

- b. Will you provide the New Hampshire congressional delegation with these communications between DHS, ICE, and any state and local officials in New Hampshire to help us understand what went wrong and work with our constituents to improve communication in the future?

If confirmed, I will work to provide responsive information, as appropriate and consistent with law and applicable protections.

- c. Going forward, will you work to improve communication between ICE, DHS and state and local officials about ICE detention centers going forward, as well as with members of congress from relevant states?

If confirmed, I will work to improve and ensure appropriate communication and coordination with state and local partners and Members of Congress.

- d. Will you meet with the New Hampshire congressional delegation to discuss what went wrong with the communication between ICE and state and local officials in New Hampshire, and how to improve these processes going forward?

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with the delegation to discuss communication issues and explore ways to improve coordination moving forward.

- 10) Recent New York Times reporting details the extent to which the Sinaloa Cartel is paying traffickers in the United States to smuggle guns into Mexico. The Mexican government estimates that, every year, 500,000 guns are smuggled from the U.S. into Mexico. This

reporting has indicated that cartels are even providing fentanyl to criminal syndicates in the United States in exchange for weapons. This is a clear threat to American safety.

My bipartisan legislation, the Enhancing Southbound Inspections to Combat Cartels Act, would help stop the flow of guns and cash to the cartels by requiring DHS to inspect at least 10 percent of southbound traffic into Mexico.

- a. If confirmed, what steps will you take to increase inspections of vehicles traveling to Mexico from the United States, and to investigate the overall illicit shipment of weapons to Mexico, in order to choke off the supply of American guns to violent drug cartels?

If confirmed, I will work with the experts at CBP to ensure that we are protecting Americans in this regard.

- b. Will you commit to working with us to pass and implement the bipartisan Enhancing Southbound Inspections to Combat Cartels Act?

If confirmed, I will work with the House and Senate on appropriate legislation.

- 11) We need to strengthen the security of both the northern and southern borders. However, DHS has not completed a Northern Border Threat Analysis since 2017. My colleagues and I have bipartisan legislation that would require DHS to regularly complete a new Northern Border Threat Analysis and update its Northern Border Strategy.

- a. If confirmed, by what date will DHS complete an updated Northern Border Threat Analysis and accordingly update its Northern Border Strategy?

If confirmed, I will work with the Department to prioritize completing an updated Northern Border Threat Analysis and updating the Northern Border Strategy in a timely manner, as appropriate.

- b. Will you work with us to pass our bipartisan legislation to strengthen northern border security?

If confirmed, I will engage with Congress on relevant legislation to support strengthened northern border security.

- 12) We are seeing a rise in religious and political violence across the country. Just last Thursday, an armed man attacked a synagogue in Michigan by ramming his vehicle into the building. Americans in New Hampshire and across the country deserve to be safe in their houses of worship. The bipartisan Pray Safe Act would create a central clearinghouse to provide religious organizations and nonprofits with information on safety and security best practices.

- a. If confirmed, will you commit to working with us to pass and implement this important legislation?

If confirmed, I will work with the House and Senate on appropriate legislation.

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Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee

Hon. Markwayne Mullin to be Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Questions for the Record

Senator Richard Blumenthal

U.S. Citizens

1. The Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations minority published a report in December 2025 detailing twenty-two accounts of U.S. Citizens who were detained by the Department of Homeland Security (“DHS”) and its component agencies.¹ Public reporting has identified at least 170 U.S. Citizens who have also been detained.²
 - a. As Secretary, will you commit to ensuring that any detention or arrest of a U.S. citizen by DHS officials is tracked, including the individual’s age, the location of the detention, the length of detention, and the reason for detention?
If confirmed, I will review current tracking mechanisms and expect the Department to maintain accurate records where U.S. citizens are detained or arrested by Departmental personnel, consistent with law and operational needs.
 - b. As Secretary, what policies will you implement to ensure that U.S. Citizens are not improperly detained by DHS agents?
If confirmed I will work with those in the Department to ensure the safety and rights of law enforcement officers and any Americans they encounter are maximally protected.
 - c. If confirmed, will you commit to providing the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations with the following information within 60 days?
 - i. The number of U.S. citizens that have been detained or arrested by DHS components since January 20, 2025, including when and where the detention or arrest happened, which component was involved, the length of the arrest or detention, whether any charges were brought against that individual, whether those charges were dropped and when, and whether force was used to detain the U.S. citizen.
 - ii. The number of U.S. citizens who have been charged with charges involving “obstructing and assaulting” ICE or CBP officers since January 20, 2025, including the name of the citizen(s) charged and the court in which those charges were brought.

¹ U.S. Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Minority Staff, *Unchecked Authority: Examining the Trump Administration’s Extrajudicial Immigration Detentions of U.S. Citizens* (Dec. 9, 2025), https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025.12.8_ICE-Report-revised-FINAL.pdf.

² Nicole Foy, *We Found That More Than 170 U.S. Citizens Have Been Held by Immigration Agents. They’ve Been Kicked, Dragged and Detained for Days.*, ProPublica (Oct. 16, 2025, 12:00 PM), <https://www.propublica.org/article/immigration-dhs-american-citizens-arrested-detained-against-will>.

- iii. The number of cases charging U.S. citizens with “obstructing and assaulting” ICE or CBP officers since January 20, 2025, that have been dismissed.
- iv. The number of cases charging U.S. citizens with “obstructing and assaulting” ICE or CBP officers since January 20, 2025, that have resulted in a conviction, including:
 - 1. Details regarding the specific crime(s) the individual was charged with and convicted of in each case.

If confirmed, I will work with the Committee to provide information on these matters as appropriate.

- 2. On March 3, 2026, former Secretary Noem testified that she did not know the case of Marimar Martinez, a US citizen shot five times by DHS agents as she was driving to donate clothes at her church in Chicago. She promised me she would “look into” the case.

If confirmed, will you commit to providing the following information to the Permanent Subcommittee within 60 days?

- i. Whether the agent who shot Ms. Martinez ever placed on any type of administrative suspension or leave as well as the dates when any suspension/leave began and ended.
- ii. Whether the agent who shot Ms. Martinez is still currently serving in CBP or any other DHS entity and whether he is still permitted to carry a firearm.
- iii. Whether there is an ongoing investigation into the circumstances surrounding the shooting of Ms. Martinez.

If confirmed, I will look into this case and the investigation and brief as appropriate. I am committed to appropriate transparency and timely cooperation with congressional oversight on this matter.

U.S. Citizen Surveillance

- 3. The recent controversy involving Anthropic and DoD has highlighted concerns about the limits on DoD’s lawful authority to engage in mass domestic surveillance.

What legal authority do you believe DHS and ICE have to apply AI systems to voluminous commercially available information, drone, body camera, and closed circuit surveillance videos, government intelligence, and investigative information to identify, locate, and monitor US citizens who have criticized ICE’s tactics on social media, attended street protests, videotaped DHS officers, or engaged other First Amendment protected activities?

Protected First Amendment activity cannot by itself be the basis for Departmental investigative action. Any use of AI or other tools must be grounded in lawful authority, tied to a legitimate mission, and subject to applicable privacy and civil-liberties protections.

4. Should DHS and ICE be compiling a list of Americans who disagree with DHS's enforcement policies and practices? Or who express concern about the war in Iran?

No. The Department should not collect or maintain information on Americans solely because they disagree with government policy or engage in lawful protected speech.

5. Do you believe that DHS should maintain any information on the activities of U.S. Citizens, including whether DHS should track their participation in protest activities, rallies or other gatherings?

Departmental information practices must continue to be governed by law, mission need, and applicable privacy and civil-liberties safeguards.

6. Do you believe that DHS should use intelligence tools to surveil or otherwise collect information related to U.S. citizens while they are engaged in lawful activity?

Departmental information practices must continue to be governed by law, mission need, and applicable privacy and civil-liberties safeguards.

7. Please detail the measures you will take as Secretary to assure this committee and the American people that DHS will not engage in mass domestic surveillance of protestors and political opponents.

If confirmed, I would expect clear legal standards, training, auditing, retention controls, and oversight by the Department's privacy, civil-rights, and inspector-general mechanisms.

8. If confirmed, will you commit to providing the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations with the following information?
- Whether DHS or any of its component agencies maintain documents or records related to whether individual U.S. Citizens have attended protest activities, rallies, or other gatherings, including which agency, how the documentation is maintained, and what information is collected.
 - Whether DHS or any of its component agencies used artificial intelligence tools to surveil or otherwise collect or assess information related to US Citizens, including a list of the tools used, the circumstances under which those tools have been used, and the number of instances that those tools have been used each month from January 20, 2025 through present.
 - Whether DHS or any of its component agencies have asked other federal agencies to use artificial intelligence tools to surveil or otherwise collect or assess information related to US Citizens, including a list of the tools used, the circumstances under which those tools have been used, and the number of instances that those tools have been used each month from January 20, 2025 through present.
- If confirmed, I will work to provide the Subcommittee with relevant information regarding these questions, as appropriate.
9. Millions of Americans are enrolled in trusted traveler programs administered by CBP like Global Entry, NEXUS, SENTRI, and FAST.³ Recent reports indicate that CBP headquarters disseminated a memorandum to field offices requesting “recommendations to revoke trusted traveler membership for U.S. citizens.”⁴ The memorandum reportedly alleged that “encounters” with CBP officers who were assisting in “operations led by other law enforcement agencies” were sufficient basis to revoke an individual’s trusted travelers status.⁵ Reports of this memorandum’s existence coincide with Americans recounting that, after lawfully protesting the actions of immigration agents in their communities and interacting with those agents, whether through facial recognition or otherwise, they received notice from CBP that their participation in a trusted traveler program had been revoked without explanation.⁶

³ Government Accountability Office, *Trusted Traveler Programs: DHS Has Enrollment Processes, but CBP Should Provide Additional Information on Reconsiderations*, GAO-24-106314 (Feb 24, 2024), <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-24-106314>.

⁴ David Jamieson, *Watching ICE Agents? You Could Lose Your Global Entry*, HuffPost (Mar. 4, 2026), https://www.huffpost.com/entry/ice-watchers-global-entry-memo_n_699e3cdee4b0c4f808270959.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ See, e.g., Ashley Grams, *Richfield observer says her Global Entry was revoked days after tense encounter with Border Patrol*, CBS News (Feb. 3, 2026), <https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/richfield-observer-encounter-border-patrol-court-filing-retaliation>; Jim Glab, *ICE mobile app scans protester's face, revokes her TSA PreCheck status*, SFGATE (Feb. 7, 2026), <https://www.sfgate.com/travel/article/united-airlines-sfo-21335764.php>; Jon Brodtkin, *ICE observer says her Global Entry was revoked after agent scanned her face*, ars technica (Jan. 30, 2026), <https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2026/01/ice-protester-says-her-global-entry-was-revoked-after-agent-scanned-her-face/#:~:text=ICE%20observer%20says%20her%20Global,2026%202:36%20PM%20%7C%20390>

- a. If confirmed, will you provide this committee with the number of U.S. Citizens have had their membership in Global Entry, NEXUS, SENTRI, FAST revoked due to “encounters” with CBP officers since January 20, 2025?

If confirmed, I will work with the Department to provide relevant information on this topic, as appropriate.

10. Recent reporting indicates that DHS has used its administrative subpoena power to target potential political critics such as the DHS subpoena of “Jon Doe,” a retiree who emailed a DHS lawyer's public government email address to give his opinion on the pending case of an asylum seeker he had read about. His email did not include threats and was speech covered by the First Amendment. Despite that, DHS subpoenaed Google for his private user data and sent federal officers to interrogate him at his home. If confirmed, will you commit to ending this practice?

Departmental tools must continue to be used lawfully and for legitimate government purposes, not to chill protected speech. If confirmed, I would review such matters immediately to ensure these standards are upheld.

Sensitive Locations

11. On January 20, 2025, the Trump Administration rescinded long-standing DHS policy protecting certain sensitive locations from immigration enforcement. Since the rescission of this policy, we have seen immigration officers conducting immigration enforcement operations at hospitals, surgical centers, day care centers, churches, and court houses.

If confirmed, will you commit to reimplementing DHS’s 2021 Guidelines for Enforcement Actions in or Near Protected Areas policy?

If confirmed, I would review current policy and operational impacts before making a final determination, while ensuring enforcement remains lawful and sensitive to public-safety and humanitarian concerns.

Children

12. Under the 1997 Flores Settlement Agreement, the federal government is required to adhere to certain standards governing the detention, release, and treatment of children in federal immigration custody. The Agreement’s terms include basic standards of care, age-appropriate education, and a prohibition against prolonged detention.

If confirmed, will you commit to bringing the South Texas Family Residential Center, commonly known as the Dilley ICE Detention Center, into compliance with the Flores Settlement Agreement, as required by law?

The Department must continue to comply with applicable court orders, settlement obligations, and governing law, including requirements relating to alien children in federal immigration custody.

13. In answers to Post-Hearing Questions for the Record Submitted to the Honorable Kristi Noem from my office on May 20, 2025 for the hearing entitled Department of Homeland Security's Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2026, the former Secretary stated in her responses that Customs and Border Protection ("CBP")'s August 18, 2021 policy memo entitled "Pregnancy and Childbirth Guidance" and November 21, 2021, policy memo entitled "Policy Statement and Required Actions Regarding Pregnant, Postpartum, Nursing Individuals, and Infants in Custody" remained in effect. No such information has been provided on the status of policies guiding treatment of pregnant, postpartum, nursing individuals, and infants in Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE") custody.

In fact, in August 2025, the Department of Justice ("DOJ") stated in a legal filing that ICE's July 1, 2021, policy on "Identification and Monitoring of Pregnant, Postpartum, or Nursing Individuals"⁷ was revoked pursuant to Executive Order 14159. However, in February 2026, a different DOJ legal filing indicated the policy was still in effect.⁸

If confirmed, will you commit to providing all applicable policies for the detention and care of pregnant and postpartum mothers? Will you also commit to providing me with the following information :

- i. The number of pregnant, postpartum, nursing individuals, and infants are currently detained by ICE.
- ii. The number of women that have given birth in ICE facilities since January 20, 2025, and the number of children born.
- iii. The names of all ICE facilities that currently detain pregnant, postpartum, and nursing women.
- iv. A description of pregnant women's access to prenatal and postnatal health care in all ICE facilities that detain pregnant women, including routine medical examinations, treatment for pregnancy complications, and access to medical specialists such as OB/GYNs.
- v. The name of all entities providing prenatal and postnatal health care in ICE facilities to pregnant women including but not limited to contracted providers, ICE employees, and/or employees of any other federal agency.

If confirmed, I will work to provide relevant information to Congress, as appropriate.

⁷ Memorandum in Opposition to Motion for Temporary Restraining Order at 29, *Aguilar Maldonado v. Olson*, No. 25-cv-3142 (D. Minn. Aug. 8, 2025), <https://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/27172523/nelsonorder.pdf>.

⁸ Kyle Cheney, *Judges Decry Treatment of Nursing and Pregnant Detainees in ICE Custody*, POLITICO (Feb. 18, 2026, 5:00 AM), <https://www.politico.com/news/2026/02/18/pregnant-nursing-ice-detainees-00784683>.

14. In several instances, U.S. citizen children have been detained and deported without due process. In one instance, a four-year-old U.S. citizen child with stage-four kidney cancer was deported to Honduras with his mother despite a legal guardian in the United States willing and able to care for the child.⁹

If confirmed, will you commit to providing this Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations 60 days:

- i. The number of U.S. citizen children that have been detained since January 20, 2025, and the length of each detention.
- ii. The number of U.S. citizen children that have been deported or otherwise removed from the country since January 20, 2025, as well as the country to which each child has been sent.
- iii. A description of the extent to which each child or their guardian was able to consult with legal representatives prior to deportation.
- iv. In each instance where a U.S. citizen child was deported, indicate whether the child's parent or legal guardian consent to the child's deportation, and whether the consent was given verbally, in writing, and whether that consent was in the presence of or after consultation with legal representation.
- v. A description of how U.S. citizen children in detention are tracked by DHS.

If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department is following the Constitution and will provide relevant information on these issues, as appropriate.

⁹ *Children Who Are U.S. Citizens Deported Along with Foreign-Born Mothers, Attorneys Say*, PBS (Apr. 28, 2025, 6:50 PM), <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/children-who-are-u-s-citizens-deported-along-with-foreign-born-mothers-attorneys-say>.

15. As of September 2025, 6,198 Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) personnel within DHS have been diverted from their primary tasks to support ICE Enforcement and Removal (ERO) operations.¹⁰

As you know, HSI personnel are instrumental in, among other critical missions and roles, investigating child exploitation, including identifying and rescuing victims of child sexual abuse material that proliferates online. In comparing HSI data from 2025 to 2024, HSI worked “approximately 33 percent fewer hours on child exploitation cases from February through April compared to their average in prior years.”¹¹ In fact, from February to April 2025, HSI “worked the fewest hours on child exploitation that they have during that period in more than a decade...”¹²

If confirmed, will you commit to restaffing HSI special agents, forensics analysts, and child exploitation investigators back to their original missions on child exploitation cases?

If confirmed, I will work with ICE to determine the best usage of employees, including with respect to the important work of HSI.

Elections

16. Pursuant to 18 U.S. Code § 592, federal immigration officers are barred from being present at any place where a general or special election is held. Under 18 U.S. Code § 593, federal immigration officers may not prevent or attempt to prevent by force, threat, intimidation, advice, or otherwise any qualified voter from voting.

Please confirm that you understand these legal prohibitions. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department follows the law.

FEMA

17. Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) is a vital tool in protecting religious communities. Security investments acquired through the NSGP program include physical security enhancements, emergency preparedness planning, training and exercises. Notices for Funding Opportunities for Fiscal Year 2025 were significantly delayed by FEMA.

If confirmed, will you commit to providing Congress with a briefing on the status of the NSGP?

If confirmed, I will work to provide Congress with appropriate information on the status of NSGP, including updates on funding, delays, and implementation.

¹⁰ David J. Bier, *ICE Has Diverted Over 25,000 Officers from Their Jobs*, Cato Institute: Cato at Liberty (Sept. 3, 2025, 11:04 AM), <https://www.cato.org/blog/ice-has-diverted-over-25000-officers-their-jobs>.

¹¹ Nicholas Nehamas et al., *Homeland Security Missions Falter Amid Focus on Deportations*, N.Y. Times (Nov. 16, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/11/16/us/politics/dhs-agents-reassigned.html>.

¹² *Id.*

18. During your confirmation hearing, you committed to “absolutely” ending Secretary Noem’s policy of personally approving any grant or contract over \$100,000, in response to a question by Senator Kim. While this is an important step, there is currently a backlog of billions of dollars of disaster projects waiting to be reimbursed by FEMA as a result of Secretary Noem’s policy.

If confirmed, how do you plan to address this backlog?

If confirmed, I will work to prioritize review processes and accelerating reimbursements to ensure communities receive timely disaster recovery funding.

19. In your pre-hearing questionnaire, you stated that “FEMA’s appropriate role is to serve as the federal government’s lead agency for disaster *preparedness*, response, and recovery” [emphasis added]. However, under Secretary Noem, the Department of Homeland Security canceled a variety of grant programs that help cities and states prepare for disasters, including the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program. As a result of the termination, Connecticut had over \$50 million in BRIC funding cancelled in 2025. In response, 20 states, including Connecticut, sued FEMA, and on December 11, 2025, a federal judge ruled that FEMA unlawfully terminated the BRIC program and ordered DHS to restore the program. Despite this ruling, DHS has continued to ignore the judge’s orders and has held up BRIC funding to states.

- a. If confirmed, do you commit to following the court order and fully reinstating the BRIC program?

If confirmed, I will ensure the Department follows all existing court orders and I will carefully examine the BRIC grant program.

- b. If confirmed, what is your plan to address the backlog of BRIC funding for states, which has accumulated as a result of the legal disputes and other delays?

If confirmed, I will carefully examine the BRIC grant program and implement changes if appropriate.

- c. If confirmed, how will you ensure FEMA is aiding states in resilience, mitigation, and disaster preparedness?

If confirmed, I will work with FEMA to identify the best ways to aid states in resilience, mitigation, and disaster preparedness.

20. Over a year into the Trump administration, FEMA has yet to have a full-time, Senate-confirmed administrator. A series of acting officials over the course of the year has left the agency without a clear sense of leadership and sends a troubling signal to FEMA's hard-working staff about the future of the agency. I appreciate your statement to Senator Kim today that you are already "looking at some" potential nominees.

If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring any nominee you recommend for FEMA administrator has emergency management experience, as required by the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act?

If confirmed, I will identify qualified candidates when recommending a FEMA Administrator.

21. There are several well-documented instances during President Trump's first term of him politicizing disaster aid. In one of the more egregious examples, in 2020, President Trump ignored a request from FEMA to aid in wildfire recovery in Washington State because of political disputes with Washington's then-Governor Jay Inslee. In his second term, President Trump has continued this pattern – issuing more denials for disaster declarations than previous presidents and routinely citing a state's voting record when approving aid. As someone from a disaster-prone state, I am sure you understand how imperative it is to ensure disaster aid is administered based on need and merit alone, without regard for political affiliation.

- a. If confirmed, if you become aware of situations where President Trump is delaying or denying FEMA aid otherwise discriminating in the provision of government services based on political affiliation – or any basis other than merit – do you commit to stand up to the President and press him to expeditiously act on disaster declarations?

- i. In such a scenario as described in the previous question, do you commit to immediately notifying the majority and minority members of this Committee?

If confirmed, I will ensure that FEMA money is properly administered and will provide appropriate transparency to the Committee on such matters.

- b. If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that all money appropriated to FEMA is properly administered, free from political interference?

If confirmed, I will ensure that FEMA funds are properly administered.

22. After reports of widespread staff cuts at FEMA last year, I wrote to Secretary Noem on July 14, 2025, asking a series of questions about staffing levels for FEMA's Region 1 that serves Connecticut. Specifically, I asked Secretary Noem to provide for Region 1: i) the total number of positions authorized by the Fiscal Year 2024 and 2025 budgets, ii) the number of currently vacant positions, iii) the title of each vacant position, and iv) the length of time each position has been vacant. Unfortunately, I did not receive a response to my letter until February 20, 2026, and that response did not include any information on Region 1 staffing levels.

If confirmed, do you commit to providing me with information on FEMA Region 1 staffing levels?

If confirmed, I will work with your office to provide appropriate information on this topic.

23. FEMA provides life-saving training and exercises to state and local officials across the country. However, there have been various reports indicating that FEMA has cut some training programs completely, reduced the number of training offerings and exercises, and shifted certain training programs online. For example, ahead of the 2025 hurricane season, FEMA's National Hurricane Program and the National Hurricane Center conducted virtual training, instead of their usual in-person exercises. State and local officials have voiced concerns about reduced training and the shift to virtual training, as these sessions help FEMA staffers build relationships with state and local officials and review planned responses to disaster events.

If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring that FEMA training is fully reinstated and offered in person for local and state officials?

If confirmed, I will work with FEMA officials to ensure that they receive the proper training.

Administrative Warrants

24. During your confirmation hearing, I asked you about a secret memorandum, issued by ICE Acting Director Todd Lyons, that instructs ICE agents to enter private property without a judicial warrant. When I asked if you would disavow this policy as Secretary, you stated: "a judicial warrant will be used to go into houses, into place of businesses unless we are pursuing someone that enters in that place."

- a. As Secretary, will you officially rescind the memorandum issued by ICE Director Lyons regarding the use of administrative warrants to enter private property, or any other guidance to ICE or CBP personnel that instructs them to enter private property without a judicial warrant?

If confirmed, I will review existing policies and ensure the Department's guidance and practices are consistent with the Constitution and applicable law regarding warrants.

- b. As Secretary, will you ensure that no DHS officials are permitted to enter private property without a judicial warrant?

If confirmed, I will work with the Department to review policies and practices and ensure compliance with applicable law regarding entry onto private property.

- 25. In her testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, former Secretary Noem stated, "In the 400,000 cases that ICE has used these administrative warrants, only 28 times have they been used to enter a home."

Will you commit to reporting to Congress on DHS's use of administrative warrants to enter homes since January 20, 2025, including

- i. The city and state where entry took place;
- ii. Whether litigation has been brought against DHS or its component agencies for such entry.

If confirmed, I will work with the Department to provide the appropriate information to the Committee regarding the use of administrative warrants, consistent with legal and privacy considerations.

Refugees and Asylum Seekers

- 26. Currently, more than 1,100 Afghan allies remain under U.S. authority at Camp As Sayliyah in Doha, Qatar.¹³ Approximately 800 of the individuals located at the camp are fully vetted, approved refugees who were legally cleared for travel to the United States. More than half are women. More than half are children. Many are immediate family members of U.S. military personnel and U.S. government partners.

- a. As Secretary what steps will you take to ensure that these vetted individuals who risked their lives and their family's well-being to ensure the safety of the United States are able to find refuge in the United States?

¹³ Letter to Members of Congress, the U.S. Department of State, USCIS, and other relevant authorities from Representative of Camp As Sayliyah Residents On behalf of approximately 1,100 Afghan residents, *Urgent Appeal for Protection and Resettlement of Afghan Residents at Camp As Sayliyah*, (Mar. 3, 2026).

If confirmed, I will work with the experts in the Department to determine the best path forward as it relates to these individuals, consistent with applicable executive orders.

- b. If confirmed, will you commit to providing this committee with a briefing on the status of pending cases for these individuals with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and well as how DHS plans to work with the U.S. State Department to relocate these vetted refugees to the United States?

If confirmed, I will work with USCIS and other relevant components to provide the Senate with appropriate briefings on the status of pending cases and plans regarding these individuals, consistent with applicable law.

- 27. In November 2025, USCIS issued a policy memorandum instructing USCIS personnel to review applications of refugees who entered the United States from January 20, 2021, to February 20, 2025, and to cease processing applications for permanent residence for refugees.¹⁴

- a. Do you believe that processing for refugee applications should continue to be stopped?

If confirmed, I will work with USCIS to determine the best path forward regarding the process of screening, vetting, and adjudicating applications for refugee status, consistent with applicable law.

- b. When do you believe that applications for refugees should be open again?

If confirmed, I will work with USCIS to determine the best path forward regarding the refugee process, consistent with applicable law.

¹⁴ Ted Hesson & Kristina Cooke, *Trump Administration Orders Review of Biden-Era Refugees, Memo Shows*, Reuters (Nov. 24, 2025), <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/trump-administration-orders-review-biden-era-refugees-memo-shows-2025-11-24>.

28. A deportation flight was sent to Iran on January 25 despite the nationwide uprising inside Iran during which the Islamic Republic killed over 30,000 protesters and imprisoned many more. The U.S. administration has publicly maintained a posture of “maximum pressure” against the Iranian regime and has repeatedly expressed rhetorical solidarity with the Iranian people’s struggle for freedom. Yet simultaneously, DHS has been negotiating with that same regime through back channels to facilitate the forced return of individuals who protested against the regime, who converted to Christianity, or who identify as LGBTQ+—all categories facing severe punishment or death under Iranian law. The U.S. government’s logistical cooperation with the Iranian regime dangerously compromises the lives of those fleeing persecution.

- a. Will you commit that as DHS Secretary you will not authorize the deportation of any individual to Iran or elsewhere whether directly or via a third-country transit point where credible evidence of torture, imprisonment, or execution risk exists?

If confirmed, I will ensure that any removals comply with U.S. law and protections against returning aliens to certain places.

Reassignments:

29. As of September 2025, 6,198 Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) personnel within DHS have been diverted from their primary tasks to support ICE Enforcement and Removal (ERO) operations.¹⁵

As you know, HSI personnel are instrumental in, among other critical missions and roles, investigating child exploitation, including identifying and rescuing victims of child sexual abuse material that proliferates online. In comparing HSI data from 2025 to 2024, HSI worked “approximately 33 percent fewer hours on child exploitation cases from February through April compared to their average in prior years.”¹⁶ In fact, from February to April 2025, HSI “worked the fewest hours on child exploitation that they have during that period in more than a decade...”¹⁷

- a. If confirmed, will you commit to providing me with the following information within 60 days?
 - i. The number of HSI special agents, forensics analysts, and child exploitation investigators have been reassigned, detailed, transferred or otherwise had their primary role or mission changed, on a permanent or temporary basis from child exploitation cases to immigration enforcement since January 20, 2025.

¹⁵ David J. Bier, *ICE Has Diverted Over 25,000 Officers from Their Jobs*, Cato Institute: Cato at Liberty (Sept. 3, 2025, 11:04 AM), <https://www.cato.org/blog/ice-has-diverted-over-25000-officers-their-jobs>.

¹⁶ Nicholas Nehamas et al., *Homeland Security Missions Falter Amid Focus on Deportations*, N.Y. Times (Nov. 16, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/11/16/us/politics/dhs-agents-reassigned.html>.

¹⁷ *Id.*

- ii. The number of employees that were previously assigned to the Cyber Crimes Center.
- iii. The number of these employees that were previously assigned to the Victim Identification Laboratory of the Child Exploitation Investigations Unit of HSI.
- iv. The number of these employees that were previously assigned to support identification and rescue of victims of child sexual exploitation and abuse at offices of the Special Agent in Charge of HSI.
- v. The current backlog of child exploitation cases within HSI.

If confirmed, I will work with HSI to provide the Senate with accurate information on these matters, as appropriate.

30. On September 15, 2025, a group of my colleagues and I sent Attorney General Bondi and Director Patel a letter expressing our concern about, among other things, the Administration's personnel reassignments across federal law enforcement agencies.¹⁸ Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents responsible primarily for counterterrorism work were transferred out of their specialized units and moved to immigration enforcement.¹⁹ They were joined by reassigned employees from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives; the Bureau of Prisons; the Drug Enforcement Administration; the U.S. Marshals Service; the Bureau of Diplomatic Security; and the Internal Revenue Service.²⁰ Amid this chaos, it is absurd to believe that federal law enforcement's ability to protect our country has not been impacted.

The decimation of our national security apparatus has not spared the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). DHS agents—including highly specialized investigators—have been diverted from counterterrorism, money laundering, sanctions evasion, and organized crime investigations.²¹ The Coast Guard has reassigned assets and personnel from its public safety mission to immigration enforcement.²² And the ground, naval, and air power specifically dedicated to protecting our nation's borders and shores has been depleted in service of the President's immigration vendetta.²³

If confirmed, will you commit to providing me with the following information within 60 days?

¹⁸ Sen. Richard Blumenthal et al. to Attorney General Pam Bondi and Director Kash Patel, Sept. 15, 2025, https://www.blumenthal.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/2025-9-15_letter_to_patel_national_security_capacity.pdf.

¹⁹ Andrew Goudswaard and Sarah N. Lynch, *Exclusive: FBI scales back staffing, tracking of domestic terrorism probes, sources say*, Reuters, (Mar. 21, 2025), <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/fbi-scales-back-staffing-tracking-domestic-terrorism-probes-sources-say-2025-03-21/>.

²⁰ David J. Bier, *supra* note 17.

²¹ Nicholas Nehamas et al., *supra* note 18.

²² *Id.*

²³ David J. Bier, *supra* note 17.

- i. The number of employees that have been reassigned, detailed, transferred or otherwise had their primary role or mission changed, on a permanent or temporary basis, from Air and Marine Operations to immigration enforcement since January 20, 2025, including the number of these employees that are federal agents.
- ii. The number of DHS employees that have been reassigned, detailed, transferred or otherwise had their primary role or mission changed, on a permanent or temporary basis, from Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) to immigration enforcement. Including how many of these employees were previously assigned to:
 - 1. Cultural property, art, and antiquities smuggling;
 - 2. Cybercrime;
 - 3. Financial crime;
 - 4. Identity and benefit fraud;
 - 5. Illicit technology procurement and sanctions violations;
 - 6. Narcotics smuggling;
 - 7. Terrorism and national security threats;
 - 8. Transnational gangs;
 - 9. Weapons trafficking;
 - 10. The Joint Terrorism Task Force;
 - 11. The Document and Benefit Task Force;
 - 12. The El Dorado Task Force;
 - 13. The Cross-Border Financial Center;
 - 14. The Export Enforcement Coordination Center;
 - 15. The Forensic Laboratory; and
 - 16. The National Bulk Cash Smuggling Center.
- iii. The number of employees from other federal agencies, including but not limited to FBI, ATF, and DOD that have been detailed, transferred, or otherwise had their primary role or mission changed, on a permanent or temporary basis, to DHS immigration enforcement since January 20, 2025. Please indicate the agency that each employee has been detailed from as well as their specific role and function at that agency before coming to DHS.

If confirmed, I will work with the Department to provide information on these matters, as appropriate.

Arrest Quotas

- 31. The Trump Administration, and specifically Stephen Miller, have called for arrest quotas. Stephen Miller specifically told Sean Hannity on his Fox News show that “Under President Trump’s leadership, we are looking to set a goal of a minimum of 3,000 arrests for ICE every day.”
 - a. If confirmed, will you direct ICE to arrest 3,000 individuals a day?

If confirmed, I will ensure enforcement decisions are guided by law, operational priorities, and available resources.

- b. If confirmed, will you implement any type of arrest quota for ICE?

If confirmed, I will work with ICE to ensure enforcement decisions are guided by law, operational priorities, and available resources.

ICE Facilities

32. In February 2026, *The Guardian* reported that under its Detention Reengineering Initiative (DRI,) ICE intends to spend \$38 billion turning warehouses into detention centers and has sought out 24 locations across the United States for new potential regional service processing centers and detention centers.²⁴

- a. Do you believe that ICE should be permitted to build and open new ICE detention and processing facilities without first consulting and receiving the sign off from state and local officials in the communities where the facilities will operate?

If confirmed, I will work with State and local officials regarding these facilities, as appropriate.

- b. If confirmed, will you commit to providing to the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations on an ongoing basis the site locations of all proposed or planned ICE detention or processing facilities including:
- i. The site location, the size of the facility, the proposed use, and any associated contracts with the construction or management of the facility, to include a list of all parties who have been awarded contracts, or under consideration for award of contracts to build these service processing center sites and detention centers.
 - ii. An indication of whether the site location has been purchased, whether outreach has been made to local and state officials, whether DHS has received objections from local and state officials regarding the placement of the site, and a detailed description of any assessments that DHS has conducted on the impact that the detention facility may have on the environment or surrounding community.
 - iii. the anticipated opening date of each of the proposed detention centers and service processing center sites.

If confirmed, I will work with the Committee to provide information on these matters, as appropriate.

²⁴ Lucy Campbell and Marina Dunbar, *ICE to spend \$38bn turning warehouses into detention centers, documents show*, *The Guardian*, (Feb. 13, 2026), <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/feb/13/ice-warehouses-detention-centers-dhs>.

Training

33. On February 23, 2026, Whistleblower Ryan Schwank appeared before a bicameral spotlight forum I led to explain how DHS's changed standards for new ICE officers are "deficient, defective and broken." On the same day that Mr. Schwank appeared before Congress, DHS issued a press release asserting, that "DHS has streamlined training to cut redundancy and incorporate technology advancements, without sacrificing basic subject matter content. Under these new improvements, candidates still learn the same elements and meet the same high standards ICE has always required. No subject matter has been cut."²⁵

If confirmed, will you commit to providing the following information to the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations within 60 days?

- i. Whether any practical or written examinations have been cut from the ICE ERO training program since January 20, 2025, including a list of any eliminated exams.
- ii. A complete list of the courses required to complete the ICE ERO training program as of January 20, 2025, and as of January 1, 2026.
- iii. A detailed description of any changes made to courses taken as a part of the ICE ERO training program, including the length of time spent on a subject matter and material covered during the coursework.

If confirmed, I will work with ICE to ensure that proper training is given and will work to provide Congress with information on these matters, as appropriate.

Coast Guard

34. On November 20, 2025, reporting revealed that the U.S. Coast Guard would no longer classify swastikas and nooses as hate symbols, instead treating them as "potentially divisive" under a new policy. While the Coast Guard claimed to rescind this abhorrent policy, the next day, on December 16, 2025, it quietly went into effect. After much public outcry, on December 18, 2025, the Coast Guard finally rescinded their policy, clarified its guidance, and reaffirmed that swastikas and nooses are still classified as hate symbols in its policies.

Last month, a drawing of a swastika appeared on the wall of a bathroom at the U.S. Coast Guard Training Center Cape May, underscoring the importance of having a strong, zero-tolerance policy for hateful symbols or rhetoric within the service.

²⁵ U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Release: DHS Sets the Record Straight About ICE Law Enforcement Training, Debunks Falsehoods, (Feb. 23, 2026), <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2026/02/23/dhs-sets-record-straight-about-ice-law-enforcement-training-debunks-falsehoods>.

If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring the Coast Guard maintains and enforces a policy that explicitly prohibits hate symbols, like nooses and swastikas?

If confirmed, I will ensure that Coast Guard maintains appropriate policies regarding such symbols.

35. On February 14, 2025, Secretary Noem issued a memorandum directing all DHS components to “eliminate all climate change activities and the use of climate change terminology in DHS policies and programs.” As a result, the Coast Guard Academy revised its curriculum, removing any reference to “climate change” or “related terminology.” This change has the potential to impact the quality of the education all future Coast Guard officers receive.

a. If confirmed, will you commit to rescinding Secretary Noem’s February 14 memorandum limiting references to climate change throughout DHS?

If confirmed, I will ensure that the Coast Guard has the proper education and tools to do their jobs.

b. If confirmed, how will you ensure the Coast Guard Academy is able to deliver the highest quality education, free from political interference?

If confirmed, I will work with the Coast Guard to identify the educational needs of its components.

36. On September 10, 2025, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations requested that the United States Coast Guard produce updated data regarding reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment for fiscal years 2024, 2025, and 2026 (to date) and materials provided to cadets.

If confirmed, will you provide the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations with a comprehensive response to this request? If confirmed, I will work with the Department to provide such information, as appropriate.

TPS

37. Do you anticipate ending TPS for El Salvador?

If I am confirmed, I will use the experts at the Department and appropriate government agencies to assess all TPS decisions, consistent with Section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

38. Do you anticipate ending TPS for Ukraine?

If I am confirmed, I will use the experts at the Department and appropriate government agencies to assess all TPS decisions, consistent with Section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

39. Do you anticipate continuing the recent trend of ending long-standing TPS designations?

If I am confirmed, I will use the experts at the Department and appropriate government agencies to assess all TPS decisions, consistent with Section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

DACA

40. There are approximately 500,000 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients in the U.S. right now. President Trump said that DACA recipients should feel safe in the U.S., do you agree with that assessment?

I agree with the President's assessment on this topic.

Post-Hearing Questions for the Record

Submitted to Senator Markwayne Mullin, Nominee to be a Secretary, Department of Homeland Security

From Senator John Fetterman

Full Committee Hearing:

“Nomination of The Honorable Markwayne Mullin to be Secretary, Department of Homeland Security”

1. The Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is a critical tool that helps communities prepare for disasters before they occur, investing in flood control, stormwater systems, and other resilience programs that ultimately save lives and taxpayer dollars. Communities across the country, including many in Pennsylvania, rely on this program to reduce disaster risk and strengthen local infrastructure.

In December of 2025, a federal court ruled that FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security must release and obligate BRIC funds appropriated for Fiscal Years 2020-2023 and continue administering the program consistent with statutory requirements after finding that DHS had unlawfully withheld or delayed these congressionally appropriated mitigation funds.

a. If confirmed, will you commit to immediately complying with the December court judgement by ensuring the prompt release and obligation of all BRIC grant funds appropriated for Fiscal Years 2020-2023?

If confirmed, I will fully comply with all applicable court orders in coordination with FEMA leadership and legal counsel.

b. If confirmed, will you continue to administer the BRIC program in accordance with the Stafford Act and congressional appropriations, including maintaining regular funding notices, fair and transparent application review, and timely obligation of funds to eligible states, tribes, and local governments?

If confirmed, I am committed to administering BRIC in full accordance with the Stafford Act and congressional appropriations, in coordination with FEMA leadership and legal counsel.

2. The Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP), administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), provides critical funding to help nonprofit organizations at risk of terrorist attack improve their security and preparedness. However, applicants and administrators have reported that the program’s application, review, and reimbursement processes can be slow and burdensome, particularly for smaller organizations.

a. If confirmed as Secretary, will you commit to reviewing the administration of the NSGP and taking steps to streamline the application, award, and reimbursement process?

If confirmed, I will direct a review of the NSGP to identify inefficiencies and reduce administrative burdens. My goal is to streamline the FEMA grant process while maintaining strong accountability and oversight of federal taxpayer dollars.

3. Recently, stakeholders have raised concerns with my office regarding uncertainty, delays, and lack of clarity surrounding Department of Homeland Security grant programs intended to support security planning and operations for major upcoming events, including the 2026 FIFA World Cup, America 250, and the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

These events will place significant demands on state and local law enforcement, emergency response, and homeland security partners, many of whom are relying on federal grant funding to make significant investments in necessary personnel, equipment, and capabilities upgrades.

a. If confirmed as Secretary, how will you ensure that DHS grant programs supporting these major events, including programs like UASI and the new FEMA C-UAS Grant Program, are administered in a timely and predictable manner, and how will you coordinate with state and local partners to provide clarity on funding availability and allowable usage to support security planning for these nationally significant events?

If confirmed, I will prioritize the timely and predictable administration of DHS grant programs supporting major national events. For programs such as UASI and the FEMA Counter-UAS grant program, I will ensure transparency, consistency, and responsiveness so that jurisdictions can plan effectively for these high-visibility events.

4. Over the past year, at the direction of DHS leadership, U.S. Border Patrol agents have routinely been taken away from the border to perform duties in the interior of the country, including functions that fall outside their traditional border security mission. These deployments have raised concerns and contributed to questions from the American public about the appropriate role of Border Patrol personnel and the Department's overall approach to immigration enforcement.

At the same time, these shifts risk detracting from Border Patrol's core responsibilities, including securing the border between ports of entry, interdicting illicit narcotics, and disrupting the cartels and other transnational criminal organizations.

a. If confirmed as Secretary, what steps will you take to ensure that U.S. Border Patrol Agents are refocused on their primary mission along the border?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure that Border Patrol personnel are focused on their core mission: securing the border between ports of entry, interdicting illicit narcotics,

and disrupting transnational criminal organizations. I will review current deployment practices and rebalance assignments, if necessary, to prioritize frontline border security.

- b.** If confirmed as Secretary, how will you address concerns about public trust and clearly define the appropriate use of Border Patrol personnel, particularly with respect to deployments in the interior of the United States?

To strengthen public trust, I will clearly define and communicate the appropriate use of Border Patrol personnel. This includes ensuring that any interior deployments are limited, mission-appropriate, and transparent. I will also enhance oversight and public communication so that the American people understand how and why personnel are being utilized.

5. Over the past year, DHS has expanded the use of personnel in roles and locations beyond their traditional missions. These changes have raised important questions about oversight and accountability, particularly with respect to the Department's civil rights and internal investigations procedures.

- a.** If confirmed as Secretary, how will you ensure that the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) and the Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) are effectively overseeing DHS operations and what steps will you take to ensure the timely review of complaints and accountability for misconduct?

If confirmed, I will ensure CRCL and OPR are fully empowered and resourced to conduct oversight and review Departmental operations, as appropriate and consistent with law. I will require timely review of complaints, and I will ensure accountability if misconduct is found.

6. On March 27, 2025, President Trump signed an Executive Order titled, "Exclusions from Federal Labor-Management Relations Programs." The EO eliminates collective bargaining rights from several agencies in the name of protecting national security.

- a.** Will you respect the right of federal workers at DHS to organize as guaranteed by federal law, if confirmed?

If confirmed, I will ensure the Department complies with applicable federal labor laws governing employee rights.

- c.** Are federal employee unions a threat to national security? Why or why not?

No, though labor activity must be conducted in a manner consistent with law and national security functions.

7. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) faces a significant case backlog exacerbated by the forced resignations and early retirements of more than 2,000 USCIS staff and the reassignment of more than 4,000 remaining staff to Immigration and Customs Enforcement operations.

- a. Do you commit to ensuring that USCIS has the staff it needs to fulfill its mission (i.e., processing applications for legal status in the United States), including recalling USCIS staff that have been detailed to ICE?

If confirmed, I will review staffing levels and ensure USCIS is resourced to carry out its core mission of screening, vetting, and adjudicating legal immigration benefits efficiently and fairly, consistent with Departmental priorities.

- b. USCIS staff detailed to ICE have been put into situations involving law enforcement action alongside ICE officers without the necessary training or protective equipment merited by these situations. If USCIS employees continue to be detailed to ICE under your leadership, what steps will you take to ensure that they are adequately trained and protected?

If USCIS personnel are detailed to ICE operations, I will ensure they receive proper training, equipment, and support. No employee should be placed in a role involving law enforcement activity without the preparation and protections necessary to ensure their safety and effectiveness.

Senator Andy Kim

Post-Hearing Questions for the Record

Submitted to:

**The Honorable Markwayne Mullin, Nominee for Secretary of the Department of
Homeland Security**

Nomination Hearing:

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

Questions (Senator Markwayne Mullin)

- There are approximately 500,000 DACA recipients in the U.S. right now; they have all passed background checks and continue to renew their work authorization. President Trump said that DACA recipients should feel safe in the U.S., do you agree with that assessment?
I agree with the President's assessment, and if confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department remains fully compliant with federal law and applicable court orders on this topic.
 - o If so, do you commit to releasing DACA recipients in detention and ending the detention and deportation of current DACA holders without proper due process?
If confirmed, I will work to make sure the Department follows the law on this topic.
- Is the Secretary of Homeland Security required to conduct a meaningful review of country conditions before terminating TPS for a country? What does “meaningful” mean to you when it comes to such reviews?
If confirmed, I will work with Department experts to ensure a thorough and informed review of country conditions is conducted regarding Temporary Protected Status, as appropriate and consistent with law.
- I’ve called for at least a doubling of the funding for the Nonprofit Security Grant Program. Will you support that? Furthermore, Will you commit to rolling back unnecessary terms and conditions placed on the grant funding to ensure nonprofits and houses of worship at risk of a terrorist attack aren’t excluded from accessing these critical funds?
Evolving threats to houses of worship, schools, and community organizations make FEMA preparedness grants, including the Nonprofit Security Grant Program, crucial for communities to enhance security. If confirmed, I look forward to partnering with Congress to ensure these programs are implemented effectively within resources.
- In the past, the NSGP notice of funding opportunities has been delayed in being released to the public. Will you commit to ensuring FEMA moves forward with the funding process in a timely manner?
I will ensure the process moves forward in an appropriate manner.

- How will you ensure that unnecessary bottlenecks that have disrupted FY25 disbursements of funds for NSGP are removed?
If confirmed I would work with Congress, the President, and FEMA leadership to identify opportunities to streamline disbursement, reduce administrative burden, and improve how funding reaches communities while maintaining strong oversight.
- If confirmed, will you commit to an apolitical, legally consistent application of all disaster and preparedness funding to every state, tribe, and territory regardless of their political leadership? And will you provide this Committee with a full accounting of the timelines for review and approval of all Individual Assistance, Public Assistance, and Hazard Mitigation grants across all open disasters, including a specific explanation of why certain states, tribes, territories, or categories of projects have been paused or severely delayed? And separately, will you provide a full accounting of the status and timeline for all pending preparedness grants, including an explanation of any that have been withheld or delayed?
If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Department and FEMA are compliant with all applicable laws regarding disaster and preparedness funding and look forward to partnering with Congress to ensure communities in need receive timely assistance.
- Reports indicate that, at the direction of the Department, FEMA violated its own policies, which call for renewal periods of two to four years for CORE employees, instead renewing them on 90-day terms. CORE employees, while term-limited, are entitled to the same benefits as permanent full-time employees, including FMLA, maternity leave, and insurance. There are reports that employees being renewed for 90 days or less are being denied access to maternity leave. Will you commit to renewing CORE employees for a minimum of two years, consistent with the CORE policy manual, and to ensuring that all CORE employees receive the full benefits to which they are entitled regardless of renewal term length? Will you further commit to providing Congress with a full accounting of any plans, proposals, or workforce analyses under consideration that would result in reductions to FEMA staffing levels across permanent staff, CORE employees, reservists, or local hires, including which DHS or FEMA offices developed those plans and whether a detailed workload analysis was performed to inform them? Will you halt further reductions until a responsible, transparent workforce analysis has been completed and shared with this Committee?
If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Department is compliant with all applicable statutory and operational requirements relating to staffing and hiring.
- In August 2025, more than 190 current & former FEMA employees signed a whistleblower disclosure to Congress. Employees who signed publicly were placed on administrative leave pending misconduct investigations. After 88 days, DHS and FEMA's own legal teams concluded no misconduct occurred and that those employees are

protected whistleblowers, only for a DHS spokesperson to subsequently claim their reinstatement was unauthorized, placing them back on leave, where they remain today. Will you commit to immediately reinstating these employees?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Department is compliant with all applicable whistleblower protections.

- The previous Secretary instituted a policy requiring DHS-level approval for all contracts and grants exceeding \$100,000. If confirmed as Secretary, will you direct FEMA to review every contract or grant denied or allowed to lapse under that policy? If confirmed, will you provide this Committee with a full accounting of which contracts and grants were not approved, what work they supported, and the rationale for each termination or lapse?

If confirmed, I will review such matters and ensure FEMA remains equipped to aid communities in need as efficiently as possible. I look forward to working with Congress and FEMA leadership to ensure unnecessary bottlenecks and bureaucracy are eliminated and provide appropriate transparency on such matters.

- Beginning in August 2025, approximately 50 of FEMA's 70 personnel security employees were involuntarily detailed to ICE for its hiring surge. These details were extended through December 31st, 2025. More broadly, FEMA has been detailing staff to immigration-related activities. Will you commit to limiting FEMA staff and disaster relief resources strictly to the statutorily required disaster relief activities Congress intended, and to ensuring that any details to other DHS agencies do not exceed 90 days as outlined in FEMA/DHS policy? If confirmed, will you provide this Committee with a full accounting of the hours FEMA staff have contributed to immigration-related activities in 2025 and 2026, the number of staff detailed to other DHS agencies beyond 90 days, and whether any disaster relief funds were used to support those activities?

If confirmed, I will review the detailee process and modify it if appropriate. Additionally, if confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department remains compliant with all statutory requirements and provides appropriate transparency on such topics.

- DHS appropriations laws consistently establish explicit timelines for the award of preparedness grants, including SHSGP, UASI, and NSGP. FY25 funding was required to be released by May of last year, yet these resources have still not reached state and local governments. If confirmed, will you commit to promptly clearing any outstanding holds, reviews, or other administrative impediments to ensure these grants are awarded without further delay?

If confirmed I will work to ensure preparedness grants are provided to communities in need as efficiently as possible while maintaining oversight and compliance with the law.

- Under Secretary Noem, FEMA's hazard mitigation programs have effectively stalled. No new Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Notice of Funding Opportunity has been issued, and previously awarded funds remain delayed despite a court order to continue the program. New funding opportunities for programs like the Flood Mitigation Assistance program and the Safeguarding Tomorrow through Ongoing Risk Mitigation Loan Fund have not been released. In addition, prior Hazard Mitigation Grant Program awards have also faced delays. Will you commit to the timely and efficient disbursement of hazard mitigation funding, including moving forward with new grant cycles and expediting disbursements for previously awarded funds?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure hazard mitigation program funding is provided to communities in need as efficiently as possible while maintaining oversight and compliance with the law.
- As Secretary of DHS, what steps would you take to ensure that FEMA is fully meeting its civil rights obligations, including for individuals with disabilities across all stages of disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation?

As Secretary, I would ensure that FEMA is meeting civil rights obligations as required by law, including for individuals with disabilities.
- If confirmed as Secretary of DHS, will you commit to providing the committees of jurisdiction with a briefing on the current state of CISA and its capacity to respond to and support communities in responding to the heightened threat environment as a result of the war in Iran?

I commit to providing appropriate information to the committees on these topics.
- At minimum, will you commit to requiring CISA to issue an alert in response to the war in Iran, similar to what was issued following the strikes in Iran during the summer of 2025?

If confirmed I will ensure CISA coordinates with partner agencies to evaluate the necessity of issuing any additional advisories or alerts regarding Iran.
- If confirmed, will you provide this committee with updated information on the current number of CISA employees and how many are working on missions outside of CISA?

I will provide appropriate information to the committee on this topic.
- If confirmed, what actions will you take as Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security to ensure that CISA quickly regains the skills and personnel needed to secure soft targets and harden our critical infrastructure against cyberattacks from the likes of China, Russia, North Korea, Iran or any other actor?

If confirmed, I will work with the experts at CISA to determine what personnel are needed.

- If confirmed, will you commit to providing the full contract between GEO Group and ICE for Delaney Hall Detention facility?
If confirmed, I will work to provide Congress with information on this matter, as appropriate and consistent with law
- If you are confirmed to this role, what level of influence will you allow Tom Homan or Stephen Miller to exert over the operations of DHS?
If confirmed, I will work with the President and appropriate senior administration officials to ensure that DHS operations remain professional, lawful, and mission-focused.
- If you are confirmed, what actions will you take as Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security to ensure that CISA quickly regains the skills and personnel needed to secure soft targets and harden our critical infrastructure against cyberattacks from the likes of China, Russia, North Korea, Iran or any other actor?
If confirmed, I will work with the experts at CISA to determine what personnel are needed.
- The Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (PKEMRA) requires FEMA to be maintained as a distinct entity within the Department of Homeland Security and prohibits the Secretary from substantially or significantly reducing the authorities, responsibilities, or functions of the agency or the capability of the agency to perform those missions, authorities, and responsibilities. Secretary Noem frequently violated this law, reducing our nation's ability to effectively respond to disasters.
If confirmed as Secretary of DHS, will you respect the agency's autonomy as is statutorily required by the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006? If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Department is compliant with all applicable statutes.
- In February, lawyers for the Trump Administration acknowledged that ICE has violated court orders issued by federal judges in New Jersey more than 50 times over a ten-week period while carrying out immigration enforcement activity. Similarly, in January, a federal judge in Minnesota found that ICE had violated nearly 100 court orders in that state stemming from the Trump Administration's heavy-handed immigration enforcement, and stated that in one month, ICE has violated more court orders than some federal agencies have violated in their entire existence. Are you concerned by ICE's continuous violation of court orders?

If confirmed, I will ensure DHS components, including ICE, follow all court orders and take corrective action where issues arise.

- An article published on March 16th indicates that staff at the World Trade Center Health Program (WTCHP) have been reassigned to work with ICE and the Indian Health Service (IHS). It appears at least two staffers, including the deputy director of the WTCHP, have been temporarily reassigned to ICE and IHS even though the WTCHP has already seen more than a 25 percent drop in its personnel. The WTCHP is budgeted for 120 staff, however, it currently has only 84, leaving 36 positions vacant. The staff shortage at the WTCHP has reportedly increased patient wait times, caused medical providers working with the WTCHP to experience delayed or denied reimbursements, and apparently resulted in survivors being denied enrollment in the program. If confirmed as Secretary, will you commit to return any World Trade Center Health Program personnel who have been temporarily assigned to ICE or any other DHS agency to their original position at the Health Program? And will you commit to refrain from accepting any staff assigned to DHS from the Health Program in the future?

If confirmed, I will review the staffing situation at the World Trade Center Health Program and work with relevant components to ensure mission-critical needs are met while addressing any personnel challenges.

- If confirmed, can you commit to reviewing the contracts, particularly those that were not competitively bid, that were approved under Secretary Noem for ethics violations including preferential treatment for Noem and Lewandowski's business and personal connections? Will you provide copies of those contracts to the Committee?

If confirmed, I will work with the Department to review contracts as appropriate, and provide information on this topic to Congress, as appropriate and consistent with law.

**Post-Hearing Questions for the Record
Submitted to the Honorable Markwayne Mullin, Nominee to be Secretary of DHS
From Senator Ruben Gallego**

*“Nomination of the Honorable Markwayne Mullin to be Secretary, U.S. Department of
Homeland Security”
March 18, 2026*

Question 1

Last September, Gila and Mohave Counties in Arizona were hit with devastating flooding that caused an estimated \$100 million in damage to homes, roads, and public infrastructure. Despite the scale of the damage, FEMA denied the state’s request for a major disaster declaration, leaving the county without access to critical federal recovery assistance. The state appealed the decision in January.

These are rural counties where a large share of the land is federally owned, which significantly limits the local tax base and the county’s ability to absorb recovery costs of this magnitude on its own.

If confirmed, will you commit to review FEMA’s decision and work with my office and state and local officials to ensure the Governor’s appeal receives full and fair consideration for disaster assistance?

Yes. If confirmed, I will review FEMA’s decision and ensure the Governor’s appeal receives full and fair consideration under the law.

Question 2

Congress established the Shadow Wolves program in 1972 to create a native hiring preference for specialized patrol units that operate on the Tohono O’odham Nation in Arizona. This partnership has proven to enhance the relationship between DHS and Tribal communities, which is especially important on international boundary-adjacent Tribal lands.

Due to recruitment issues and attrition, the number of Shadow Wolves has decreased from a peak of 22 in the early 2000s to five as of late 2025. Will you commit to looking at ways to improve hiring and retention for Shadow Wolves to ensure they can continue to support border security on tribal lands?

Yes. If confirmed, I will review hiring and retention challenges and work to address challenges relating to this program, consistent with law.

Question 3

I have heard from constituents across my state that ICE has been wrongly arresting and detaining Tribal members and U.S. citizens for hours and sometimes days before they are released. In a

recent court filing, ICE stated they don't consider REAL IDs sufficient to prove citizenship. This means that if a citizen or tribe member is arrested, they can only confirm citizenship using a document like a birth certificate or passport, which many individuals don't currently possess. The result is that individuals are arrested for far longer than necessary.

If confirmed, will you commit to making sure the process of verifying citizenship or tribal membership happens more quickly and with greater oversight, ensuring ICE agents in the field are informed of this guidance?

If confirmed, I will review procedures to ensure citizenship and tribal status are verified quickly and accurately, with clear guidance and oversight.

Question 4

Early last year, FEMA terminated all active Shelter and Services Program (SSP) awards, which were appropriated by Congress with bipartisan support. Since then, the agency has been reviewing outstanding reimbursements for costs incurred prior to termination. Arizona nonprofits have about \$12 million in outstanding reimbursements for services they provided in good faith with the expectation that the government would reimburse them.

If confirmed, can you commit to reviewing the costs incurred prior to the notice of termination and reimbursing allowable costs on the basis that these recipients acted with the reasonable expectation that the government honor its commitment?

If confirmed, I will review these claims and ensure that cost requests are handled in a manner consistent with law.

Question 5

Several Arizona land ports of entry are being modernized using funds from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. These expanded ports will require additional CBP personnel to support their new baseline operations. For example, the San Luis I Land Port of Entry expansion project includes increasing vehicle lanes from eight to 16, which will significantly improve throughput and security. These new lanes are expected to open soon. However, CBP has struggled with staffing shortages for years. If CBP is unable to staff these new lanes due to staff shortages, these security and efficiency gains will be in jeopardy.

Can you commit to ensuring San Luis I and other high-volume land ports of entry are fully staffed to support expanded operations?

Yes. If confirmed, I will work to pair CBP staffing with operational needs at high-volume ports of entry.

Question 6

The Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Program (BRIC) was established by the Disaster Recovery Reform Act of 2018 and signed into law by President Trump with bipartisan support. In the years since, it has become a cornerstone of federal hazard mitigation strategy—helping communities invest in resilient infrastructure before disaster strikes, reducing long-term costs to federal taxpayers. Congress has appropriated funds for this program in each subsequent fiscal year.

In April 2025, The Trump administration terminated the BRIC program. A federal court has twice ordered FEMA to restore the program, most recently on March 6, 2026, with a strict deadline to unfreeze hundreds of million in congressionally appropriated grants. DHS has repeated this pattern for several FEMA grant programs.

1. If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring FEMA complies fully and on time with that and other relevant court orders?

Yes. If confirmed, I will ensure DHS complies with applicable court orders.

2. If confirmed, will you commit to resuming all BRIC and other FEMA grant program funding cycles — FY2024, FY2025, and FY2026 including on the schedule ordered by the court?

If confirmed, I will review the status of BRIC and other grant programs and ensure they are administered consistent with law and court directives.

Question 7

DHS has acknowledged in federal court that it has formally deported about 7,000 third-country nationals to Mexico, while Mexican authorities report receiving 13,000 nationals, including 3,700 Cubans. Most of these Cubans had been long-time U.S. residents, living in New York and Florida. Upon arrest, they were reportedly rapidly transferred to Arizona detention facilities and driven over the border without any paperwork. Can you commit to reviewing this policy to ensure individuals are removed properly and transparently in accordance with relevant all laws, regulations, and policies?

If confirmed, I will review these removal practices to ensure they are conducted lawfully, transparently, and in accordance with all applicable regulations and policies.

Question 8

DHS is responsible for the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), which collects, maintains, analyzes, and provides information so only legitimate foreign students or exchange visitors gain entry to the United States after a thorough background screening.

A 2024 regulatory change required that flight training schools participate in the SEVP program before training any international students. However, due to a backlog at DHS, many flight training schools have been caught in years of bureaucracy, waiting for their applications to be reviewed by the Department.

My state is a leader in pilot training. But until the DHS reviews SEVP applications for these businesses, they cannot accept international students, even from friendly allied countries. What steps will you take to eliminate the backlog in the SEVP program and ensure that applicants are getting responses to their applications without years of delay?

If confirmed, I will review the backlog and work to improve processing while maintaining security standards.

Question 9

As U.S.-Taiwan economic and trade ties continue to deepen, travel and people-to-people exchanges between our two sides are expected to increase. Following the launch of direct flights between Taipei and Phoenix, direct service between Taipei and Washington, D.C. is also expected in the near future, which would further facilitate travel for government officials, business leaders, and visitors.

Given these developments, will you commit to exploring the possibility of including Taiwan in the CBP pre-clearance program, including assessing the feasibility of establishing a pre-clearance facility in Taiwan, in order to facilitate travel while maintaining strong security standards for U.S.-bound passengers?

If confirmed, I will review the feasibility of expanding the pre-clearance program, consistent with legal and operational requirements.

Question 10

Currently, federal regulations allow companies with valuations in the billions of dollars to receive no-bid SBIR Phase III contracts from a DHS component even when that company no longer meets the definition of a “small business concern” under the Small Business Act (15 USC 638). This makes it more difficult for small businesses to compete for government contracts and for the US Government to expand its innovation base.

What steps, if any, would you take, to ensure the SBIR Phase III program does not cause competitive harm to actual small businesses that meet the Small Business Act definition of a “small business concern?”

If confirmed, I will review how the Department is using SBIR Phase III authorities to ensure the Department is promoting innovation while preserving fairness, competition, and opportunities for firms that meet the statutory small-business definition.

Question 11

Unregulated markets and illicit nicotine and THC vapes imported from China continue to pose a threat to the health and safety of Americans, including our youth. These products are themselves heavily regulated or illegal under Chinese law. As Secretary of Homeland Security, how will you

address the expected surge of illegal and unregulated products entering the United States from China?

The Department should continue using customs, investigative, and interagency enforcement tools to target illicit importers, interdict unlawful shipments, and work with FDA and other partners to keep illegal vaping products out of the United States.

Question 12

U.S. and international law prohibit removing individuals to a country where they are likely to face persecution, danger, or serious human rights violations. Nonetheless, DHS has deported individuals to many such countries, including Iran. If confirmed, will you deport Iranians who are religious minorities or who protested against the Government of Iran? In light of changed country conditions, do you think that Iranians in the United States should be eligible to file a new asylum application based on these changed conditions?

The Department must continue to comply with governing asylum and removal law in every case, including protections for aliens who establish a legal basis for relief or protection based on changed country conditions or fear of persecution. If confirmed, I would expect such claims to be handled consistent with applicable statutes, regulations, and court orders.

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NATIONAL BORDER PATROL COUNCIL

PAUL A. PEREZ / President

PROTECTING THOSE WHO PROTECT OUR BORDERS

March 17, 2026

The Honorable Rand Paul
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Gary Peters
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Paul and Ranking Member Peters:

The men and women of the National Border Patrol Council (NBPC) are excited to provide our support for President Donald J. Trump's nominee to be Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Senator Markwayne Mullin.

We have no doubt that Senator Mullin is the right person to lead DHS and continue the Trump Administration's focus on keeping America safe. Thanks to President Trump's vision and leadership, we now have the most secure border in our lifetime and Border Patrol agents are again able to do the job of protecting our great nation. While much has been accomplished, there is still work to be done and Senator Mullin will ensure we never let our guard down. Threats emanating from overseas remain persistent and the cartels operating south of our border continue to try and smuggle narcotics, people and weapons across our borders. The brave men and women of the Border Patrol deter and stop these threats every day and we know Senator Mullin will have our backs as we execute our mission.

Senator Mullin has spent valuable time on the ground at the border and met with frontline agents to understand our mission and challenges. We have gotten to know Senator Mullin and his no-nonsense leadership style means Border Patrol will remain focused on public safety and enforcing our nation's laws. In addition to his more than a decade of leadership and public service in Congress, Senator Mullin brings much needed private sector experience that will allow him to cut through bureaucratic red tape and ensure agents in the field have the resources and equipment we need to secure our borders.

The NBPC is proud to endorse Senator Mullin to be the next DHS Secretary, and we urge the Committee to swiftly pass and move his nomination to the full Senate.

Sincerely,

Paul A. Perez
National President



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Deputy Principal Chief
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March 11, 2026

The Honorable Rand Paul
 Chairman
 U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
 340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
 Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Gary Peters
 Ranking Member
 U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
 340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
 Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Paul and Ranking Member Peters:

Cherokee Nation strongly supports the nomination of Senator Markwayne Mullin to serve as Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

As you know, Senator Mullin's nomination carries meaningful significance for Cherokee Nation and all Indian Country. A proud citizen of Cherokee Nation, Senator Mullin would be the first Native American to lead this department and just the second Native American to head a Cabinet-level agency.

That unique perspective is particularly important given the many ways DHS works with Tribal governments, including in emergency management, disaster response, public safety coordination, and infrastructure protection in Tribal communities. During his years in Congress Senator Mullin championed issues of Tribal sovereignty and consistently exhibited a willingness to engage constructively with Tribal leaders on a government-to-government level. I am quite confident he will work in a similar fashion while in the administration.

On a policy level, Senator Mullin brings substantial experience in federal public service that will serve him well in leading DHS. During his service in the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, he has worked on issues affecting national security, public safety, infrastructure, and national preparedness. In the Senate, he currently serves on the Armed Services Committee, the Appropriations Committee, the Committee on Indian Affairs, and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. These assignments have provided him

with experience addressing national security matters, overseeing federal programs, and working across levels of government on complex policy challenges.

In addition, Senator Mullin has held leadership roles within the Senate, including serving as Chair of the Legislative Branch Appropriations Subcommittee and Chair of the HELP Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety. These responsibilities have required oversight of major federal operations and management of complex federal programs—experience that will be valuable in leading one of the nation’s largest and most important federal departments.

For these reasons, I respectfully support Senator Mullin’s nomination and urge the Committee to favorably report his nomination to the full Senate.

Wado,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chuck Hoskin, Jr." in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Chuck Hoskin, Jr.
Principal Chief, Cherokee Nation

Senator Katie Boyd Britt: Introduction of Senator Markwayne Mullin
Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Hearing: Nomination of the Honorable Markwayne Mullin to be Secretary, U.S.
Department of Homeland Security
March 18, 2026

- Thank you, Chairman Paul, Ranking Member Peters, and members of this distinguished Committee.
- It is a true honor to join you today to introduce..... our colleague and my dear friend,
- United States Senator for the great state of Oklahoma,
- And President Donald J. Trump’s nominee to serve as Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, Senator Markwayne Mullin.
- Many in this room have had the opportunity to get to know Markwayne – and that is both a privilege..... and something that doesn’t take long.
- Because with Markwayne, what you see is what you get. He is authentic in every interaction andhe has never met a stranger.
- Markwayne and I became not only fast friends as freshman members of the Senate, but importantly, we became real friends.
- Over the past few years, my husband Wesley and I have cherished getting to share memories and that same level of friendship with his wonderful wife, and better half –Christie – and their six children.
- Both personally and professionally, Markwayne Mullin is the real deal.

- He is a man of faith and deep conviction. A devoted husband and father, and whether it is coaching his children in their wrestling matches, being home when his girls get picked up for Homecoming, making doctor's appointments across the country, or leaving our freshman dinners early to be home for FaceTime devotions with his boys, Markwayne makes sure that his family always comes first.
- He is honest, loyal, selfless, and principled – all of the qualities of a true leader and public servant.
- But to really understand the kind of leader Markwayne is, you need to start at his roots.
- Throughout his life, he and his beautiful family have poured so much of their time, energy, and efforts into serving their community, state, and nation.
- Oklahomans first elected Markwayne to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives in 2012, and nearly a decade later, they sent him to the U.S. Senate.
- His constituents recognized he was uniquely positioned to represent them, because his story is similar to the communities he serves.
- He is a true 'son of Oklahoma'.
- Markwayne was born in Tulsa, grew up in Westville, Oklahoma, began his education on a wrestling scholarship to Missouri Valley, but when his father got sick, he left his scholarship behind and didn't hesitate to take over his family business.
- He and Christie – who has been part of his success since day one – took a struggling business and turned it around over 20 years. They expanded it to one of the largest provider companies in the region. They built this family business into an incredible success.

- Markwayne's willingness to step into the arena is evident in every aspect of his life.
- He fights for his family, his friends, and he fights for this country and the American people.
- His grit is absolutely unmatched and he never backs down from a cause, person or purpose he believes in...
- Markwayne is driven by principle. And there is no challenge, no matter how great, that he is afraid of.
- Markwayne has already stepped up twice to serve the United States in Congress and now, he has answered the call again by accepting the incredible responsibility of Department of Homeland Security Secretary.
- As Chair of the Senate DHS Appropriations Subcommittee, I can say from personal experience that navigating the Department of Homeland Security is no small task.
- It is one of the largest and most complex agencies in the federal government, with responsibilities that span border security, disaster response, counterterrorism, cybersecurity, and the protection of our nation's leaders.
- Leading this Department at this point in our country's history requires a leader willing and able to solve issues facing our nation.
- And that's why I am here today to tell you that I know that Markwayne is not only qualified—I know.....without a shadow of a doubt—that he is the right person at the right time to lead this important agency.
- It's worth noting that as I introduce him today, the Department is currently shut down.

- But Markwayne is no stranger to tackling challenges, and he has repeatedly demonstrated incredible skill in the way he approaches them.
- Over the past several years in the Senate, he hasn't just served his constituents, he has frequently served as an intermediary between the Senate, the House and the White House.
- His ability to build relationships and to have the tenacity to figure out the challenges in front of us – is why Leader Thune tapped him to serve on his leadership team,
- And it's also why we both serve together as deputy whips under Majority Whip John Barrasso.
- Markwayne doesn't just talk about problems or issues we are facing, he puts in the work...the time...to find a solution. That is a rare breed in this town and something we undoubtedly need more of.
- With strong relationships on both sides of the aisle – he is willing to sit down with anyone, anywhere ... discuss priorities and issues, and find a pathway forward.
- His strong character, love of our nation, and determination are exactly what this country deserves in our leaders.
- President Trump was elected to a second term with a clear mandate: to secure our nation from threats at our borders, here at home, and abroad.
- I have absolute confidence in Markwayne's ability to carry out that mission at the Department of Homeland Security. He believes in our laws and enforcing them. He knows that the way you do it matters, and Markwayne is committed to doing it the right way.

- From our ICE and CBP officers, to our Coast Guard servicemembers, to the men and women at FEMA, to our cybersecurity professionals at CISA, to our hardworking Secret Service agents, to our TSA officers, and so many more,
- Markwayne will never back down from supporting the men and women who serve this Department,
- And he will never back down from the responsibility of ensuring the safety and security of the American people. He will never back down from protecting our homeland. He will never back down from protecting his family or yours.
- He is going to be the best Secretary of Homeland Security our nation has ever had.
- I look forward to seeing his leadership and the success he will bring our nation as our next DHS Secretary.

RAND PAUL, KENTUCKY, CHAIRMAN

RON JOHNSON, WISCONSIN
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA
RICK SCOTT, FLORIDA
JOSH HAWLEY, MISSOURI
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ANDY KIM, NEW JERSEY
RUBEN GALLEGOS, ARIZONA
ELISSA SLOTKIN, MICHIGAN

United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

March 11, 2026

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin
U.S. Senator
330 Hart Senate Building
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Mullin:

As the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee (Committee) considers your nomination to be the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, additional information has come to my attention that was not included in the background materials you are required to provide to the Committee, including that you may have participated in "special assignments" related to the Department of Defense (DOD), although you were never employed by the DOD.¹ To fulfill the obligation to thoroughly review your background and qualifications, I need complete information about your past experience.

Therefore, please provide the Committee with an addendum to the Biographical Questionnaire you submitted on March 11, 2026, including:

- a. The dates of any activity related to any special assignments you have been involved in;
- b. The nature of your involvement;
- c. Whether you received compensation and if so, how much;
- d. The company or entity involved;
- e. Whether that company or entity had a contract or agreement with the United States government, and if so all related contract information; and
- f. Whether that company or entity had a contract or agreement with a foreign government, and if so, what government.

All information should be provided in an unclassified manner unless required by law to be classified. If classified, that information should be provided with the appropriate classification markings and made available in a classified setting. Any classified information should include three copies, one for the majority, one for the minority, and one for the Committee

¹ Hour 3 – *Trans Care Debate*, The Clay Travis and Buck Sexton Show (Mar. 3, 20260 (<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/hour-3-trans-care-debate/id1498106610?i=1000752937833>)).

clerk. For any information at any classification level, please also provide the legal justification for the classification.

I appreciate your prompt attention to this matter.

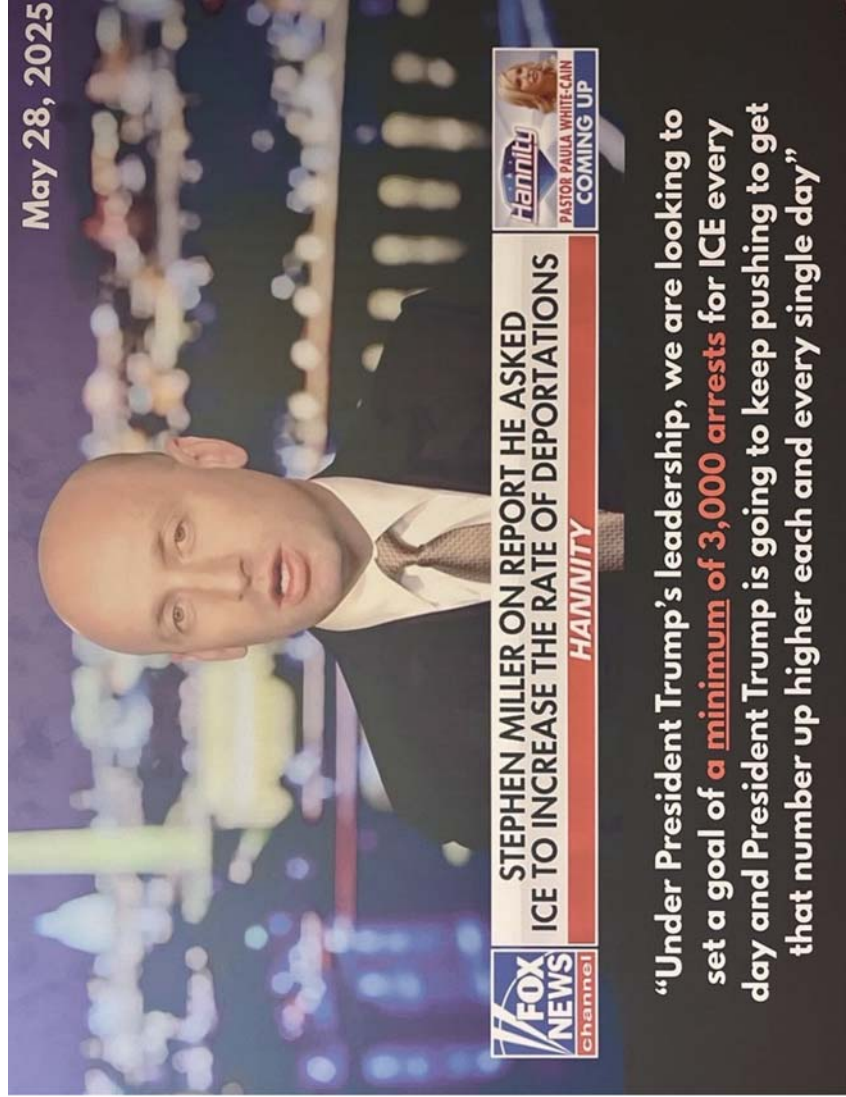
Sincerely,



Gary C. Peters

United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee
on Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs






Office of the Director

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
500 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20536U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

May 12, 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR: All ICE Personnel

FROM: Todd Lyons 
Acting Director

SUBJECT: Utilizing Form I-205, Warrant of Removal

On January 20, 2025, President Donald J. Trump issued Executive Order 14159, *Protecting the American People Against Invasion*, directing the Secretary of Homeland Security to "ensur[e] the successful enforcement of final orders of removal." 90 Fed. Reg. 8443, 8444 (Jan. 20, 2025) (E.O. 14159). Essential to the removal of aliens subject to final orders of removal is the ability to locate and arrest them. To this end, certain supervisory immigration officers within both Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) and Homeland Security Investigations (HSI)¹ are authorized to issue an administrative warrant, Form I-205, *Warrant of Removal* (Form I-205), for the arrest of an alien with a final order of removal. 8 C.F.R. § 241.2(a)(1). All U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) special agents and deportation officers are authorized to execute Forms I-205. 8 C.F.R. § 287.5(e)(3)(iii)-(v).

Although the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has not historically relied on administrative warrants alone to arrest aliens subject to final orders of removal in their place of residence, the DHS Office of the General Counsel has recently determined that the U.S. Constitution, the Immigration and Nationality Act, and the immigration regulations do not prohibit relying on administrative warrants for this purpose. Accordingly, in light of this legal determination, ICE immigration officers may arrest and detain aliens subject to a final order of removal issued by an immigration judge, the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA), or a U.S.

¹ See, 8 C.F.R. § 241.2(a)(1)(X)-(xiii); ICE Delegation Order No. 0001, *Delegation of Authority to the Directors, Detention and Removal and Investigations, and to Field Office Directors, Special Agents in Charge and Certain Other Officers of the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement* (June 6, 2003); ICE Delegation Order No. 73005.1, *Immigration Enforcement Authority of the Director of the Office of Investigations* (Mar. 5, 2007); ERO Delegation Order 0001.1, *Re-delegation of Certain Detention and Removal Authority* (July 23, 2019).

REDACTED FOR CONGRESS



Source: US Department of Justice, ICACOPS



DHS Law Enforcement Experienced More Than 180 Vehicle Attacks Since President Trump Took Office

Release Date: February 3, 2026

8,000% increase in death threats

1,300% increase in assaults

124% increase in vehicular attacks
against CBP law enforcement

Our apartment was searched soon after and my husband and I
 ran away to Brazil, leaving Iran behind.

I was threatened for my life along with my husband's, sexually abused, and
 detained by the cartels at gun point in South America and Mexico.

I also became heavily sick with pneumonia in Mexico.

We were forced to cross the United States border fearing for our lives
 and were taken into custody by CBP.

Case Status:

I passed the credible fear interview and was given a court hearing date
 of September 2025. The judge has denied my asylum claim,
 denied withholding of removal under INA 241(b)(3) and denied withholding
 of removal under CAT.

In his order, my judge has provided no explanation, and has just mentioned
 his denials. I have appealed this decision on Oct 2025.

Solely basing my appeal grounds on the matters that I imagined the judge
 might have taken issue with, basically repeating my claims.

Due Process Concerns:

1. Judge: In the beginning of my hearing, Judge started by
 attacking my lawyer for his neglects in every case brought to
 the judge's court by him: screaming, reprimanding, angrily stating,
 why do you submit everything last minute. The judge stated that he is not
 going to consider anything submitted late. This is despite the fact that I
 had given these documents months before to my lawyer. My attorney sat
 down fidgety and nervous, and almost didn't participate in the hearing any
 more. Seeing this situation, my head became foggy, seeing such a
 powerful man taking over me, it reincarnated my dad's memory beating
 me.

The judge also has strong biases against me, as he and the DHS attorney
 were there to get me and deny my claims rather than hearing my case.

The Judge ~~started~~ started by saying my testimony during the course will be the only thing he would consider, after having beaten down my lawyer and demoralized me, triggering my ACE-related trauma.

One of his serious questions was about Marian who invited me to Christianity and why she wasn't tortured. I explained that I was identified by the regime not her. That was not enough for him as an explanation. I told him that the authorities searched my father-in-law's house looking for me, and even asked for me. His response was, why ~~was~~ is it that your father-in-law ~~was~~ not tortured. Seeing this, I became sure that my fate was already chosen, before I had even entered the courtroom.

When I told him, I was sentenced to prison in Iran, he told me, you will only go to prison in Iran ~~for a few years~~ for a few years and be released afterwards. I mentioned that I will be tortured in Prison in Iran. He said, not every Prison in Iran does torture. ~~And so he ordered without explanation.~~ And so he ordered without explanation.

Fears of Going Back:

If I go back to Iran, I will be imprisoned, and will be tortured to give the names of the people I was in church with, and might be hanged with the charge of apostasy for changing my religion, and espionage for foreign governments for taking videos and images of protests.

Interference by Iranian Government Representative in U.S. Detention:

While detained, I experienced direct contact with representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which caused extreme fear and represents a grave security incident.

One day, facility managers told us, Iranian detainees — including me — had to report for a visit from the Iranian "Consul". Present were myself, [REDACTED], and several Iranian men. Later, [REDACTED] were taken to meet him as well.

The official was Mr. [REDACTED] from the Interests Section of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Washington, D.C.

When he entered, he had our names written down and possessed specific information about our detention status and court proceedings.

When we saw him I felt ~~like~~ cold; he looked like the regime guys, with that specific collar they wear, his demeanor, and the uncleaned soulless face.

His appearance was identical to security/intelligence agents I have encountered in Iran. ~~Seeing him caused a physical~~ Seeing him caused a physical reaction of fear and cold shock, because it reminded me of officers involved in repression in Iran.

In the beginning, some left as they saw him. Then I told him to leave us alone, he replied that nothing would happen to us. I sarcastically asked if "there are no more hijab problems now?" He replied that "even in the US, if you are Political, the same things can happen to you" clearly implying arrest, detention, and persecution - which is what the Iranian Regime does. I told him that in Iran, you do not have to choose politics; "your daily life becomes political."

I gave examples such as Aban 1398, where ordinary people rose up because of extreme economic pressure and were met with violence or even when we just went to the funeral of the people killed by the regime to pay respects.

He encouraged us to return to the Islamic Republic of Iran. Upfront, I told him to distinguish between Iran and the Islamic Republic. I said, I can't go back. The regime is the issue. I made clear that I only came to meet him because I thought he was an Iranian individual, not a regime representative.

When he came in, he had our names and A-numbers jotted down. He had specific info about our status and court details.

I asked him whether my husband was on a deportation ~~list~~ list. He said when the U.S. wants to deport people, they give us information and confer with us, and if Iran agrees, then it happens. I asked ~~them~~ them to check notes and saw that ~~my husband~~ ~~my husband~~, my husband, will be on the removal flight to Iran on December 7, 2025. His life is in serious Peril. His knowledge of internal ICE scheduling was extremely disturbing and suggests improper communication between U.S. authorities and a foreign government known for torture.

At the end, we realized this is a mockery, as he even said there will be no problem for you because hijab is freed now. So we left and went back to our abd.

fear of Return for my husband, [REDACTED] As I mentioned before the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran's, interest section told me, which was confirmed by the ICE officer at the scene, that my husband will be deported on December 7th 2025 on a new flight that will take Iranian detainees to Iran by a chartered flight. my husband, similar to me, will be subject to interrogation, torture, imprisonment, and possibly hanged for apostasy, for his change of religion to christianity and also for inviting other muslims to christianity, and for claiming asylum in the U.S, information of which were all shared by the U.S government with the Iranian regime. this is in addition to his political activities for which he has been bodily harmed.

NA
(3)

Declaration

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America, and for all relevant international bodies, that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on: 12/22/25
Location: Elm Detention Center

Signature:  



②

DECLARATION OF [REDACTED]

Date: November 26, 2025

I, [REDACTED] hereby declare under penalty of perjury that the following is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief:

I. Background and Entry Into the United States

I entered the United States with my spouse, [REDACTED] on January [REDACTED] 2025. Upon arrival, we were taken into custody and transferred to the Yuma holding facility (Arizona), where—on the first night—officers separated me from my wife.

We remained separated for seven days, and I saw my wife only briefly on the 7th day before we were shackled with handcuffs and leg restraints and transported to Eloy Detention Center.

That was the last time I saw my wife in person. As of the date of this declaration, it has been nearly eleven months without any physical contact. During these eleven months, we were allowed to speak only three times on the phone, each call only for approximately ten minutes.

II. Transfers and Detention Conditions

I spent nine days in Eloy Detention facility, then on January [REDACTED] was transferred to Georgia, where I was moved between three different buildings: Alpha, Charlie, and ultimately to D. Ray James ("D-Ray") facility. Upon arrival at the D-Ray James facility—which I was informed was recently



reopened during the Trump Administration—conditions were drastically worse. Uniforms changed from blue to khaki, and detainees wearing red uniforms—identified as dangerous criminals—were housed near us.

- Facility Rules and Intimidation: On the first day at D-Ray James, the facility head, whom I do not know by name, but who could be described as tall, thin, and having a military bearing, has an explicit moto "I don't give a fuck. During Biden you all had the high ground. Now it's in our hands." This is implying the power dynamic had shifted entirely to the facility staff.
- Security/Classification: The color of our uniforms was changed from blue to khaki. In this facility, there are also individuals wearing red uniforms, who are identified as dangerous criminals. The presence of armed guards is constant, and the approach is significantly harsher than at Alpha or Charlie.
- Recreation and Sleep: Our pod, housing approximately 100 people, has access to a very small exercise yard daily, the size of a room, and a larger yard twice per week. The sleeping conditions are poor. Lockdown occurs at 12:00 AM, and breakfast is served at 5:00 AM.
- Work Pay: Detainees are paid approximately \$3.75 per day for cleaning duties. I am paid \$4.50 for 4-5 hours of kitchen work.

III. Due Process Violations in My Immigration Proceedings

A. Inadequate Legal Representation

MY CFI(RFI) interview was on about Feb [REDACTED] and I wasn't represented then. My wife met an Iranian woman in Eloy named I think [REDACTED] who introduced us to the attorney from Louisiana. He demanded \$3,000 to represent both of us. After receiving the money and the



documents he stopped communicating with us, no matter how many times we tried to. And On the night before my merits hearing—at 7 PM while I was in Charlie—He called and told me I was “missing witnesses statement,” something he had never told me before. Because of his call the night before the court date, we asked the court which it granted a one-month continuance so we could obtain witness statements from Iran—which I did. Between the first and second hearings, I lost all communication with my attorney again.

B. Hearing Irregularities and Judge's Failure to Consider Evidence

My CFI (RFI) interview was on or about February 12, which I attended alone.

My joint merits hearings lasted 2.5 hours (first hearing) and the second hearing was scheduled 28 days later.

At the first hearing, my attorney spent around 2.5 hours asking me questions. A second hearing was scheduled then that the judge and DHS spent time asking me questions. After the second hearing the judge mentioned he will make a decision asap which came to be two months.

During the hearings, the judge demonstrated a material lack of understanding of Islamic Republic of Iran's system—for example questioning why the arrest warrant for us was dated after the date of the home search, even though this is a well-documented practice done by the regime apparatus in Iran.

I submitted court documents showing a 9-year prison sentence for me and an 11-year sentence for my wife ordered in absentia in Iran; these were not meaningfully considered.

C. Judge's Refusal to Allow Critical Testimony About Mexico

On three separate occasions, I attempted to explain the life-threatening dangers we faced in Mexico, including:

- my wife developing pneumonia, losing the ability to breathe. That is one of the reasons why we crossed the border. We went to public hospital in Tapachula before we were arrested by Mexican police and immigration, and they give [redacted] Asthma medication and spray.
- We were detained for 17 days in Mexican jail.
- On our way to Tuxla, they arrested us took us back to a jail in Tapachula in the south.
- multiple kidnappings attempts and detentions by cartel-type groups.
- We were held 8 days in a relatively small room with 18 people under armed control by the traffickers.
- On another incident, we were ^{staying} at a hotel called Freedom if I am not mistaken. At the middle of the night, a number of people with masks and heavy guns came banging on the main door of the hotel showing us their weapons and asking us to open up. We were in the yard and I just grabbed [redacted]'s hand and ran inside. These were gang looking guys with non-normal military clothing, each wearing different things. They interrogated us for 14 hours and then took us to jail for 4 days.
- We were detained in Tapachula, Tuxla, and Yucatán.
- On one occasion, cartel members with M4 rifles threatening us at the middle of the night and robbed us point blank.
- These were our Mexican stories until we got to Mexico City.
- There were multiple attempts to sexually assault my wife by traffickers and others by trying to separate us. (Although we stood hard throughout our journey and no one separated us, even after crossing the border to Yuma, the officers gave [redacted] red Vest as she was Sick and gave her spray and anti-biotics.

neither the Ayatollahs nor the gangs and traffickers, the US government has separated us for almost a year with no visitation right).

I wanted to explain all of these incidents and the like at my hearing, I attempted three times, but the judge prevented me from stating these facts, repeatedly saying: "If I want to ask you, I will ask."

The Mexico ordeal was central to explaining why we crossed the border and why my wife was in medical crisis. It was not allowed into the records.

D. DHS Misrepresentation and Unfounded Fraud Allegations

DHS argued my Christian baptism certificate was fraudulent because it was in English despite being issued in Turkey. They asked why wouldn't it be in Turkish or Farsi. I explained I did not speak Turkish and therefore the church issued it in English.

DHS also wrongfully claimed that a name on my baptism certificate were misspelled, arguing "Bijan" should be spelled with "ee" not "i" and "g" and not "j" transliteration. Now he is absolutely wrong in his assessment and we Iranians used spelling is "Bijan" and it was on my certificate. DHS insisted they were proof of fraud.

The judge ultimately relied on fraud allegations rather than engaging with the substantial evidence of persecution, as they were just trying to look for issues to deny my case and remove me rather than providing due process and hearing me.

IV. Persecution and Harm in Iran

I was arrested by plain-clothes Iranian security forces during the 2009 protests, taken in a police van to a garden location, blindfolded, zip-tied, and tortured.

During the 2022 Mahsa Amini protests, security forces fired tear gas at me, my wife, my cousin, and my brother on [REDACTED] Boulevard. As I was trying to light fire and cigarette to blow in our faces to alleviate the effect of tear gas, I asked my wife to run to me from across the street and the regime bikers saw us. We escaped and started running separately. As we escaped into side streets, government-associated bikers attacked us; one stopped by my side and another attempted to strike me, causing a deep cut on my left hand, here is the scars. I was rescued by a nearby residents.

My wife was also kicked by the another bike group but left alone after asserting she was with a random elderly couple who were watching on the sidelines.

The court dismissed this testimony also claiming as the attackers were "plain-clothes" and therefore, according to the judge, it was "unclear they were government agents," even though plain-clothes units are a well-known part of the Iranian regime's security apparatus and this was during the Mahsa Amini protests in Iran.

And the last straw in Iran was that I was with my wife who wasn't wearing hijab one day and the Basijis got into an altercation with me about her hijab. I was taken in by the Basij. They confiscated my wife's phone and asked for its password which I said I don't have it. I was given a notice and freed by they kept the phone.

My wife's phone contained extensive evidence of our Christian conversion which was taken by Basij forces. After this incident, our home was later raided, and we were issued in-absentia arrest warrants because of our activities.

The judge dismissed this as well claiming these guys were plain clothed as well, how did you know they were from the government, even though they had the power to arrest me, they searched my house afterwards, and any one slightly aware of the situation in Iran would know.

It seemed to me that the judge and DHS were just trying to poke holes and didn't want to hear my case.

V. Severe Intimidation, Retaliation, and Coercion by ICE/GEO

A. Failure to Provide Mail and Legal Notices (Mail Issue)

During my stay at ICE detention, I have not receive any immigration court notices, instructions, or sponsor mail. I don't even know what the judge has written in my asylum denial order.

My sponsor mailed supporting documents for court twice, neither of which I received [REDACTED] although my sponsor told me that the mail tracking shows it was received by the facility.

This lack of notice significantly compromised my ability to file motions, prepare evidence, and communicate.

- I observed over 15 nepalese being deported to Nepal from D-Ray while their legal court process was still pending. they were forcibly removed.

B. Intimidation to Force Deportation

My appeal deadline of the asylum decision was I think November 13. I filed my appeal sending it to the Virginia address the Monday before. I personally wrote my appeal request based on what I wasn't allowed to enter into evidence in my hearing date, otherwise I had no access to the asylum decision. I still have no idea as to what happened to my appeal. I am just told it was denied but no idea why or how. No document was given to me.

On that day that was my appeal submission deadline, although I had just filled for my appeal, ICE took me to a federal prison in Atlanta, I think Berbao company, to be deported. Now the story of this incident and what had happened leading to it is that a few days before moving me to Atlanta, my ICE officer came to me and handed me a letter asking me to sign for my deportation. On the signature line, I wrote refuse. The day after this a GEO officer came with a list of detainees to take with him to talk at a separate location with ICE. Now to give context, since I had been moved to Georgia, ICE officers entered the POD with lists of detainees they intended to remove. This was new.

That day, I was brought to the visitation room to meet with the ICE officer. The officer told me to put my finger print on the same document I had signed "Refused" a few days earlier and tried to pressure me to sign deportation documents. When I refused, officers told me: "Either you sign, or we will make you." This officer has a crooked lip. After a few back and forths and loud screams and my refusal, another four or five officer walked in and surrounded me while I was sitting ask asked again to put my finger print. At this point the tone of the crooked lipped officer was way worse and he said: "If you get hurt, see harm, it's your own fault. Put your finger print here." Which again I refused which inflamed them. At this point a GEO officer finally told me: "Your

refusal signature is already on file. Just give the fingerprint so they stop threatening you." 3 or 4 days later they took me to the Atlanta prison to deport me!

^{The day}
A few days ago after I was returned from the Atlanta Prison back to Folkston D-Ray, the ICE officer again came to me with new refreshed deportation papers to sign which I refused again and said I need to talk to my wife. This was a new document and not the one they forced me to fingerprint!

C. Violent Treatment of Other Detainees Used as Intimidation

I remember while housed in Charlie, I witnessed officers violently remove a detainee who refused transfer—5-6 officers in helmets and riot gear pulled him from his bed and shackled him. I remember this was after he had refused to be deported to the POD officer. The POD officer then calls the captain and he says he has to!

Now, in D-Ray, ICE officers deliberately humiliated and publicly coerced detainees. Two other examples to give you. There was this Indian speaking detainee that had refused to sign the deportation documents as well. One day they sat him in the middle of the POD for everyone to see, and surrounded him asking him to sign the papers. They had even brought an Indian speaking officer to talk to him. He refused. The back and forth continues and he refused. Then suddenly they handcuffed him and forcefully took him to a room ^{outside of the POD}. He returned quickly after one minute distressed but had signed the papers. On another occasion A Bangladeshi detainee (" ") was walking towards the library as he had a shift there. The ICE agents surrounded him in corridor and asked him to sign his deportation papers. After he refused a few time, they handcuffed him from behind and forcibly moved his finger on the papers to leave a finger print!! The Indian speaking guy was deported that night, but ^{finger print} is still here.

These events were intentionally conducted in view of other detainees to create fear.

VI. Additional Hardship Factors

I am at the end of my rope. My mother suffers from Multiple Sclerosis (MS). Her condition has severely worsened due to the news of my detention for almost a year. I fear that if deported to Iran, I will be imprisoned, tortured, or killed due to my political activities, participation in protests, Christian conversion, and escape from Iran. But the US has not been much better than the regime. Here I have received no real due process and no hope for it in the future. I am intimidated and threatened to sign papers. I cannot even speak with my wife once a month! I haven't seen my wife for almost a year and all I had was three ten-minute phone conversations. The regime, cartel, traffickers couldn't take her from me, but this government did.

VII. Declaration

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on: 11/26/2025

Location: Golksstan Detention Facility D. Ray James

Signature: 





HSGAC BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTIONS FOR EXECUTIVE NOMINEES

Addendum to 3/10/26 Submission

3. Employment

(A) List all of your employment activities, including unemployment and self-employment. If the employment activity was military duty, list separate employment activity periods to show each change of military duty station. Do not list employment before your 18th birthday unless to provide a minimum of two years of employment history.

<u>Type of Employment</u> (Active Military Duty Station, National Guard/Reserve, USPHS Commissioned Corps, Other Federal employment, State Government (Non- Federal Employment), Self- employment, Unemployment, Federal Contractor, Non- Government Employment (excluding self-employment), Other	<u>Name of Your Employer/ Assigned Duty Station</u>	<u>Most Recent Position Title/Rank</u>	<u>Location</u> (City and State only)	<u>Date Employment Began</u> (month/year) (check box if estimate)	<u>Date Employment Ended</u> (month/year) (check box if estimate) (check "present" box if still employed)
Federal Government	U.S. House of Representatives	U.S. Representative for Oklahoma	Washington, D.C. and Oklahoma	Est <input type="checkbox"/> January 3, 2013	Est <input type="checkbox"/> January 3, 2023
Federal Government	U.S. Senate	U.S. Senator for Oklahoma	Washington, D.C. and Oklahoma	Est <input type="checkbox"/> January 3, 2023	Est <input type="checkbox"/> Present
Independent <i>See attached appendix</i>	N/A	N/A	Various	Est <input type="checkbox"/> 2006	Est <input type="checkbox"/> 2011
				Est <input type="checkbox"/>	Est <input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix:

Please provide the Committee with an addendum to the Biographical Questionnaire submitted March 11, 2026, including:

- (A) The dates of any activity related to any special assignments you have been involved in;**
 - a. Intermittently and for brief periods of time between the years of 2006 – 2011.
- (B) The nature of your involvement;**
 - a. My volunteer work involving special assignments outside of DOD was that I offered support and mentorship from a Christian perspective to both Afghans that supported our war efforts and U.S. personnel that served in war zones as they transitioned back to the United States to be with their family, friends and loved ones. I had no employer, no contract, and I was not compensated.
- (C) Whether you received compensation and if so, how much;**
 - a. I did not receive compensation.
- (D) The company or entity involved;**
 - a. I had no employer and no contract.
- (E) Whether that company or entity had a contract or agreement with the United States government, and if so, all related contract information; and**
 - a. See response to item (D).
- (F) Whether that company or entity had a contact or agreement with a foreign government, and if so, what government.**
 - a. See response to item (D).