



CHELLIE PINGREE
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
1ST DISTRICT MAINE

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEES:
INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES, CHAIR
AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES
MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
SUBCOMMITTEES:
BIOTECHNOLOGY, HORTICULTURE, AND RESEARCH
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY

July 17, 2026

Markwayne Mullin
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Mullin,

I write with profound outrage regarding the fatal shooting of my constituent, Johan Sebastián Durán Guerrero, by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers in Biddeford, Maine, on July 13, 2026. I appreciate you making yourself available for a call; however, the reality is that once again, a family and community is grieving because a person is dead after an encounter with your officers. My constituents are being asked to trust that deadly force was justifiable and are left to confront the question of whether federal immigration officers are operating under policies that prioritize aggressive efforts to meet quotas over the preservation of human life. As such, I am following up on several matters I brought up with you.

First, I question the justification your agents have relied on to arrest and detain my constituents. You told me your agents focus their enforcement efforts on individuals with final orders of removal, but, as my office has witnessed firsthand, and heard repeatedly from local lawyers and organizations, ICE is detaining Mainers who are lawfully pursuing asylum or other status through the proper channels. These are not people with final orders of removal at all; they are actively engaged in the legal process your agency claims to respect.

Beyond that, we also know a final removal order does not necessarily indicate the end of the legal process; due process allows for motions to reopen, petitions to review, and applications for humanitarian relief. Arresting and detaining individuals as though they have no legal recourse and their due process is complete ignores the complexity of immigration law, is a waste of taxpayer dollars, and risks needlessly engaging aggressive enforcement tactics. This intentional mischaracterization of the process ignores that immigration enforcement is largely a civil administrative process, not a criminal one. Yet we have seen a clear pattern of that distinction being ignored, with preventable deaths chalked up to “necessary” enforcement.

No family should have to wonder whether their loved one would still be alive had federal officers exercised better judgement, had received better training, or followed different procedures. Every use of deadly force demands rigorous oversight, complete transparency, and total accountability. Anything less is unacceptable.



For months, even in the past week, Americans have witnessed increasingly aggressive ICE operations conducted in their communities. Despite repeated warnings and calls for greater transparency after the deaths of Renee Good, Alex Pretti, and Lorenzo Salgado Araujo, another person has been killed during an immigration enforcement operation. Mainers demand and deserve accountability.

Congress has the responsibility and authority to determine whether ICE has created an enforcement culture that unnecessarily escalates encounters and places civilians at greater risk. Therefore, I need answers to the following questions:

- Was the July 13th operation in Biddeford a targeted enforcement operation?
 - What planning and operational risk assessment occurred before the operation?
- You told me officers involved in the operation were not equipped with or actively wearing body cameras. Recent reporting indicates there were officers at the scene equipped with devices capable of audio and visual recording.
 - If that's the case, what entities will have access to the footage, and when will it be made available to the public?
 - Why were visual recording capabilities not utilized?
 - Given that Congress has provided specific appropriations to acquire body cameras, what is the justification for the delay in deployment?
 - Are there any additional recordings captured by DHS-owned devices, including dashboard cameras or cell phone recordings?
- Were all officers conducting the operation local to the community or were some brought in from outside of Maine?
 - If the officers were from out of state, why was it necessary for them to carry out this operation?
 - Will the officers themselves be subject to an investigation?
- What is the status of the officers involved in the incident?
 - How long had the officer(s) been conducting enforcement activity and what training had they received?
 - If they are on leave, how long is that leave period?
- There have been credible and alarming reports about the officer who allegedly discharged the weapon that resulted in Mr. Guerrero's death, including a history of "terrifying and violent" behavior¹. Further, DHS reported that ICE had hired 12,000 new officers and agents in less than a year. How do you ensure the quality and experience of these new hires?
 - What information is reported from the background checks you require before hiring?
 - What information would disqualify an applicant from being hired?
 - What is the average time between an individual submitting an application and a final job offer being extended?

¹ <https://apnews.com/article/ice-david-brouillette-johan-guerrero-maine-shooting-dbc30d6d59e2a95fb470afc188e125c6>

- What training does DHS currently require for officers engaging with occupied or moving vehicles?
 - How frequently is this training conducted?
 - Are officers instructed to de-escalate rather than result in deadly force?
 - How did the officers use that training to de-escalate this situation to avoid the use of deadly force?
 - Has this training been modified following the death of Renee Good or any other fatal officer-involved shooting?
- Has DHS initiated an administrative review of the operation?
 - If not, when will such a review begin?
 - What office is/will be conducting the review?

The people of Maine deserve better than vague assurances after another fatal encounter involving immigration officers. We are a nation of immigrants. They are our family, friends, and our neighbors. A community is grieving and angry - as is our state. If that is not enough for the Department, immigrants are vital to Maine's workforce; without them, our economy would crumble. To this end, I expect full cooperation between your department and Maine State Police and Biddeford Police Department in any independent investigation that they pursue, including full access to evidence and witnesses.

This needless death raises the question of whether DHS has learned anything from prior tragedies, or whether DHS has the decency to care. If the Department continues to ignore systematic failures and dismiss each fatal shooting as an isolated event, then the loss of trust in this institution is well and truly deserved, and we need to consider how to fundamentally change our approach to immigration enforcement.

I expect a complete written response to these questions no later than July 24, 2026. Given the gravity of this incident, I also request that DHS promptly brief my office on the status of its internal review and any immediate policy changes under consideration.

Sincerely,



Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress