

February 11, 2026

The Honorable Kristi Noem	Mr. Todd Lyons
Secretary of Homeland Security	Acting Director
U.S. Department of Homeland Security	U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE	500 12 th St., SW
Washington, DC 20528	Washington, DC 20536

Dear Secretary Noem and Director Todd Lyons:

We write to request your prompt response to our outstanding questions regarding Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) recent surge in activity in Maine.

It has been 22 days since the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced that ICE would launch “Operation Catch of the Day” (OCOTD) in Maine. The January 20, 2026, announcement from DHS stated that this operation was “an immigration enforcement effort across the state of Maine targeting the worst of the worst criminal illegal aliens who have terrorized communities.” ICE officials told the media in Maine that the target for the operation was 1,400 individuals and that roughly 200 individuals have reportedly been apprehended thus far. The DHS website “Worst of the Worst” lists only 19 individuals apprehended in Maine.

On January 29, 2026, we learned from Senator Collins that Secretary Noem would be halting the operation; however, we have not seen any written correspondence corroborating this announcement.

While state and municipal leaders along with stakeholders in Maine have reported a reduction in ICE’s presence related to this recent surge—absent a formal notice from DHS of the end of the operation—we have outstanding questions regarding the scope of this operation as detailed in various correspondence with the Legislative Affairs offices of DHS and ICE. To address these urgent concerns, we request that you provide answers to the following questions and information requests by Wednesday, February 18, 2026:

1. Please confirm whether Operation Catch of the Day is ongoing in Maine?
 - a. Please clarify if the operation has been completely halted, reduced, or has not yet changed?
 - b. If it has only been reduced, please detail the current scope and nature of this operation?
 - c. What further information can ICE provide regarding any ongoing activity?
2. What is the objective of launching “OCOTD” in Maine?
3. Which individuals are being targeted?

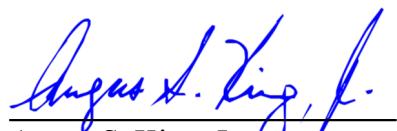
4. How many DHS/ICE (any federal) agents were deployed to Maine specifically for “OCOTD?”
 - a. How many additional agents have arrived to Maine for this operation?
 - b. What agencies did they represent?
5. What is the total number of arrests made to date (from the time you are responding to this inquiry) as part of OCOTD?
 - a. Barring any legal restrictions, please provide a name and justification for each criminal arrest—such as what is posted on DHS’ “Worst of the Worst” website and clarify whether the individual has been convicted of or just charged with the crime listed?
 - b. Where are detainees apprehended in this operation being taken (please list name of states and facilities)?
 - c. Among those arrested, do any have final removal orders?
 - d. Among those arrested, how many have criminal convictions verses criminal charges?
 - e. How many discretionary arrests of asylum seekers?
 - f. How many arrests are of refugees whom US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) have decided to re-interview?
6. Please share where and how ICE compiled its list of “1,400 targets” for OCOTD?
7. Why are detainees of OCOTD who are asylum seekers, those without a criminal record, and waiting to appear before an immigration judge, being taken into custody?
8. There have been numerous arrests of individuals without criminal records—what is the justification for these arrests? This is contrary to the DHS statement that the objective of OCOTD is to arrest the “worst of the worst.”
 - a. How is ICE classifying “the worst of the worst?”
 - b. Does this include those with parking citations, for example?
9. Are there any concurrent, separate operation(s) and/or targets being pursued in tandem with OCOTD?
 - a. If so, please what are those operation(s)?
 - b. Are there any U.S. citizens on ICE’s target list in Maine?
10. It appears the individuals who have been listed in DHS’s announcement about “Operation Catch of the Day” do not also appear on the ““Worst of the Worst” website under Maine arrests, despite being characterized as “worst of the worst”? Please explain.

We have repeatedly asked for this basic information over the past three weeks. Senator King made request on January 23; Congresswoman Pingree sent you [a letter](#) with a similar series of questions on January 22; and further, we have jointly requested to be briefed on your agency’s

operation—all with no response. We expect answers to the questions posed here, as well as responses to our previous inquiries, within a week, as congressional oversight is not optional.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress