

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 13, 2026

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
300 7th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20528

The Honorable Todd Lyons
Acting Director
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
500 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20536

Dear Secretary Noem and Acting Director Lyons:

As Members of New Jersey’s congressional delegation, we are deeply concerned by reports that the Department of Homeland Security (“DHS”) is considering opening a new Immigration and Customs Enforcement (“ICE”) warehouse detention facility in Roxbury, New Jersey. Any expansion of immigrant detention in New Jersey, especially under warehouse conditions that are fundamentally inappropriate for human habitation, contradicts both the interests and values of our state. We urge you to immediately cease any efforts to establish new detention facilities in New Jersey.

New Jersey is home to more than two million immigrants who are integral to the strength of our communities and vitality of our economy. The Trump Administration’s efforts to target, detain, and deport our immigrant community members have inflicted lasting harm in our districts. ICE and federal law enforcement officers have increasingly relied on aggressive enforcement tactics, often employing excessive force, concealing their identities, and arresting parents and neighbors at workplaces, schools, and local businesses.¹ Families have been needlessly ripped apart, and local economies have suffered as the detention and deportation of immigrants disrupt local labor markets and strain small businesses.² Compounding these harms, immigration detention facilities in New Jersey have become notorious for inefficiency and waste in addition to humanitarian failure. These failures have inflicted trauma both on detained individuals and on surrounding families, communities, and local governments who have been forced to grapple with the ongoing harms associated with immigrant detention.

In an effort to prevent this immense harm to our state, we sent an initial letter in February 2025 detailing the dangers of expanding immigrant detention in New Jersey and urging you to reverse plans to establish new facilities. Despite our warnings, ICE entered into a 15-year, nearly \$1

¹ “FACT SHEET: Trump’s Mass Deportation Machine Operates with Haste, Deception, and Violence.” *Insider NJ*, November 6, 2025. <https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/fact-sheet-trumps-mass-deportation-machine-operates-with-haste-deception-and-violence/>.

² Reichlin-Melnick, Aaron. “Trump’s Immigration Actions Are Taking a Toll on Local Economies – Here’s What the Data Says So Far.” *American Immigration Council*, August 27, 2025. <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/blog/immigration-toll-on-local-economies-what-the-data-says/>.

billion contract with GEO Group for the operation of Delaney Hall and later announced plans to detain immigrants at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst.³ Predictably, this effort to rapidly increase detention capacity to meet the Trump Administration's mass deportation goals wasted taxpayer dollars and has resulted in unsafe and inhumane conditions for individuals in ICE custody. In June, after the severe deterioration of conditions in Delaney Hall led to unrest within the facility, four individuals escaped through an unsecure wall.⁴ This incident followed persistent reports of infrequent and insufficient meals and overcrowding, as well as significant community opposition to the continued operation of Delaney Hall. Most recently, an individual who had been detained at Delaney Hall died in ICE custody after suffering a reported medical incident.⁵

We find it unconscionable that your department would build upon these clear failures to further expand immigrant detention in New Jersey. According to reports of internal agency documents, ICE is considering the use of industrial warehouses to expand the DHS' detention capacity.⁶ This expansion includes seven large-scale warehouses that would hold up to 10,000 people each and 16 smaller-scale warehouses that would hold up to 1,500 individuals each, with one potential location in Roxbury, New Jersey.⁷ This plan also includes the use of nine existing detention facilities. The proposal would subject thousands of people, the majority of whom pose no threat to public safety, to confinement under cruel and inhumane conditions. Warehouses are designed for storage and shipping, not for safely housing people. ICE detention facilities already have a poor track record, including poor ventilation, lack of temperature control, sanitation, and medical care.⁸ While those standard facilities are minimally designed for human habitation, there is no precedent for detaining people in warehouses – let alone people held on civil immigration violations. Furthermore, detention in these cases is not only unnecessary to ensure compliance with immigration proceedings, but demonstrably more harmful and costly than community-based alternatives that protect due process and human dignity.

As such, we strongly oppose any effort by DHS and ICE to pursue the use of warehouse facilities for immigration detention and demand that DHS immediately abandon any plans to expand detention capacity in New Jersey. We further request a full accounting of any site selection, contracting, or planning activities related to detention facilities in New Jersey.

³ Blackburn, Zach. "Ice Opens Newark Detention Center amid Lawsuit over Permits, Inspections." *New Jersey Globe*, May 4, 2025. <https://newjerseyglobe.com/immigration/ice-opens-newark-detention-center-amid-lawsuit-over-permits-inspections/>.

⁴ Tully, Tracey, Luis Ferré-Sadurni, and Raúl Vilchis. "What Led to 4 Detainees Escaping a Migrant Facility in Newark?" *The New York Times*, June 14, 2025. <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/14/nyregion/newark-ice-detainees-escape.html>

⁵ Nieto-Munoz, Sophie. "41-year-old detainee at Newark migrant jail died in custody, ICE says." *New Jersey Monitor*, December 19, 2025. <https://newjerseymonitor.com/2025/12/19/ice-detainee-newark-jail-died/>.

⁶ MacMillan, Douglas and Jonathan O'Connell. "ICE documents reveal plan to hold 80,000 immigrants in warehouses." *The Washington Post*, December 24, 2025. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2025/12/24/ice-immigrants-detention-warehouses-deportation-trump/>.

⁷ Gaggis, Joanna. "Roxbury residents oppose plan for immigration detention facility." *NJ Spotlight News*, January 6, 2026. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/roxbury-residents-oppose-plan-for-immigration-detention-facility/>.

⁸ Pillai, Akash, Drishti Pillai, and Samantha Artiga. "Health Issues for Immigrants in Detention Centers." *KFF*, September 30, 2025. <https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/health-issues-for-immigrants-in-detention-centers/>.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We request a detailed written response no later than February 2, 2026.

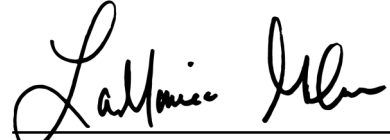
Sincerely,



Robert J. Menendez
Vice Chair of Policy
Congressional Hispanic
Caucus



Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



LaMonica McIver
Member of Congress



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Andy Kim
United States Senator



Herbert C. Conaway, Jr.
Member of Congress



Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress



Nellie Pou
Member of Congress



Donald Norcross
Member of Congress