

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 25, 2026

The Honorable Phillip Swagel
Director
Congressional Budget Office
Ford House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dr. Swagel:

We are deeply concerned by the Trump administration's reckless immigration enforcement surge—unfolding on our streets and undertaken with virtually no transparency or accountability. It represents one of the largest expansions of federal immigration enforcement in modern history, including unprecedented increases in detention capacity, personnel, transportation, surveillance systems, and tactical deployments.

Last summer, Congress provided extraordinary supplemental resources for immigration enforcement in H.R. 1, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, including roughly \$75 billion for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and approximately \$65 billion for Customs and Border Protection (CBP). These sums represent a dramatic expansion of those agencies' typical annual budgets. Yet there is no comprehensive public accounting of how funds provided for immigration enforcement in H.R. 1 are being obligated and/or spent.

This lack of transparency is part of a broader pattern in which the Trump administration has expanded domestic security operations while withholding basic cost information from Congress. We have serious concerns that this pattern reflects an increasingly authoritarian and unchecked approach to executive power. Congress has a responsibility to ensure that federal agencies are not using taxpayer dollars in ways that vitiate Americans' civil rights or expand executive overreach.

To support constitutional and statutory oversight, we request that CBO provide an independent assessment of the costs, obligations, and spending patterns associated with the Trump administration's immigration enforcement policies—both at the border and throughout the interior of the United States. Specifically, we ask CBO to:

- Determine how much of the \$75 billion provided by H.R. 1 to ICE has been obligated and/or expended to date, broken out by major categories such as detention, transportation, enforcement operations, personnel, technology, and security contracting.
- Determine how much of the \$65 billion provided by H.R. 1 to CBP has been obligated and/or expended to date, including spending on personnel, facilities, surveillance systems, vehicles, and border infrastructure projects.
- Determine how much of the \$12 billion provided by H.R. 1 to the Department of Homeland Security (in sections 90007 and 100051) has been obligated and/or expended to date.

- Determine the total amount of funds that ICE, CBP, and DHS have obligated and/or expended since January 2025 for expanded interior enforcement operations, including any funding sources in addition to the supplemental appropriations provided by H.R. 1.
- Identify future costs associated with sustaining the administration’s expanded enforcement posture, including staffing, detention, transportation, and technology requirements.
- Provide any additional information CBO believes is necessary to understand the budgetary implications of these activities.

This request follows an earlier inquiry seeking a cost assessment of the Trump administration’s National Guard deployments to American cities. CBO found that the administration’s National Guard domestic deployments have cost taxpayers over half a billion dollars—information that Congress and the public had no access to until CBO’s report. Congress and the American people deserve the same level of independent scrutiny for ICE, CBP, and DHS’s use of the extraordinary funds provided by H.R. 1.

We request this analysis as soon as practicable. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Andy Kim
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Senate
Committee on the Judiciary



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator