

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 12, 2026

Secretary Kristi Noem  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
2707 Martin Luther King Jr., Ave SE  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Acting Director Lyons  
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)  
500 12<sup>th</sup> St. SW  
Washington, D.C. 20536

Dear Secretary Noem and Acting Director Lyons:

We write to express deep concern and strong opposition to any plans to open or expand Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention facilities in Oregon. We also write with particular concern about the promulgation of “soft-sided” ICE detention facilities and any plans to repurpose existing structures with the goal of rapidly expanding the number of detention facilities in Oregon and across the country.

Under the Trump Administration, the number of people in ICE detention centers has skyrocketed. Just last month, it was reported that there were 73,000 people in ICE detention centers, which is a record high. And from the start of 2025 to November 2025, the number of ICE facilities increased by over 90%.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act includes \$45 billion for ICE detention capacity over the next four years, which will further balloon a detention system with a budget larger than the entire federal prison system.<sup>2</sup> Due to the sharp increase in both funding for detention facilities as well as the sharp increase in the detained population, we request detailed information about plans for facilities from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and ICE. In particular, we request detailed information on plans or communications regarding the development of immigration detention facilities in Oregon.

In addition to our concerns about an increase in detention facilities in Oregon and nationwide, we also have concerns regarding the type of detention facilities DHS and ICE plan to develop. Reports indicate that ICE plans to reach its detention facility expansion goals through increased reliance on temporary, “soft-sided” structures or repurposing existing structures, including in Newport, Oregon.<sup>34</sup> Given the cold and wet climate of the Oregon Coast, a soft-sided detention facility or an existing structure not intended to safely house people would threaten the safety and well-being of the people who would be detained there.

Moreover, we find it increasingly difficult to believe that ICE can responsibly house and care for people humanely given the well-documented cases of overcrowding, medical neglect, and insufficient nutrition at the facilities it currently operates.<sup>5</sup> In addition to human rights concerns, we also request information on how the facility’s construction will comply with the National Environmental Policy Act.<sup>6</sup>

Given these grave concerns, we urge you to stop any plans to repurpose existing structures or build facilities for the purpose of detaining people in Oregon. We also request answers to the following questions and requests for information:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/blog/ice-expanding-detention-system/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/1/text>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/immigration/2025/08/15/ice-documents-reveal-plan-double-immigrant-detention-space-this-year/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/2025/11/25/ice-contractor-informs-oregon-agency-of-incoming-newport-action-somethings-going-on/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.vera.org/news/more-people-are-in-immigration-detention-than-ever-before>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.notus.org/immigration/ice-oregon-detention-facility-detainees-coast-guard>

1. Is ICE planning to expand current detention facilities or open any new long or short-term detention facilities in Oregon?
2. If ICE is moving forward with detention, will any contracts be issued through ICE or through a separate agency contracting process?
3. If ICE is planning to expand or open facilities in Oregon, please confirm the estimated size of each facility and type of structure.
4. Is ICE planning on purchasing, renting, or repurposing any existing property or structures in Oregon for the purpose of detaining people?
5. Please provide information on the environmental impacts of any planned facility construction or expansion in Oregon and how the agency will comply with requirements under the National Environmental Protection Act. Please also provide the results of any environmental assessment, and the names of the individuals who completed the assessment.
6. Has ICE coordinated with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Geological Survey, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and state emergency management officials to assess, mitigate, and plan for potential facility or detainee risks from natural disasters including a tsunami?
7. Please provide any reports or analysis DHS or ICE have conducted on the impacts of military readiness and coastal safety if the Coast Guard is affected or displaced.
8. Please provide detailed data on the location, capacity, and average length of stay at each soft-sided facilities in the U.S.
9. Please provide detailed information on any plans for new or additional soft-sided facilities or detention capacity in FY 2026 and FY 2027.
10. How does ICE maintain the Performance Based National Detention Standards (PBNDS) in soft-sided facilities to meet requirements for care related to food, hygiene, bedding, access to legal counsel, and temperature?
11. Please provide detailed data regarding all areas of non-compliance and violations of PBNDS 2011 or other detention standards at soft-sided facilities.
12. Please provide a detailed list of every detention standard that has been waived for a soft-sided facility in CY 2025 including the date of the waiver, reasoning, and who signed off on issuance.

Please respond to these questions and requests for information by Monday, February 23, 2026.

Sincerely,



Andrea Salinas  
Member of Congress



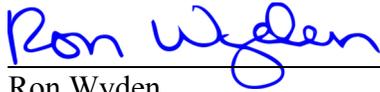
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Member of Congress



Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator



Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress



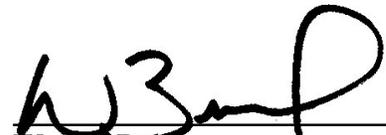
Maxine Dexter  
Member of Congress



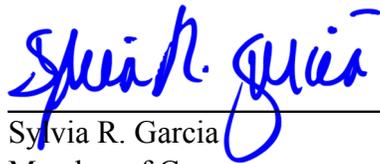
Greg Casar  
Member of Congress



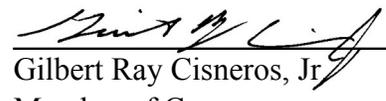
Nanette Diaz Barragan  
Member of Congress



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Sylvia R. Garcia  
Member of Congress



Gilbert Ray Cisneros, Jr  
Member of Congress



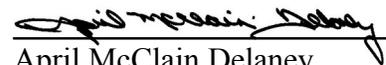
Janelle S. Bynum  
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Rashida Tlaib  
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April McClain Delaney  
Member of Congress



Marilyn Strickland  
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