

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 6, 2025

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20528

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary
Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Noem and Secretary Rubio:

With zero input from Congress, this administration has taken it upon itself to completely reshape how immigration in this country works. While we can all agree that the immigration system is badly outdated and in need of comprehensive reforms from Congress, it is not an appropriate solution to simply ignore the Constitutionally-protected right to due process, the laws that currently exist, and judges' orders. In its zeal to deport as many immigrants as it can, as quickly as possible, this administration has been breaking the law and putting innocent people in harm's way.

One particularly egregious example is the administration's determination to ship people, even those with valid protection claims, to third countries, including attempts to deport people to South Sudan, Libya, Panama, and Costa Rica, in which they have no ties or protection, without conducting a legally required screening for risk of torture in that third country, in violation of our laws and international treaty obligations.

The administration sent hundreds of non-Panamanian migrants and asylum seekers to Panama, including Artemis Ghasemzadeh, an Iranian national who secretly converted to Christianity, a crime punishable by death in Iran.¹ She was held by the Panamanians in a hotel and then a makeshift migrant camp on the edge of the jungle, before being released with a short-term humanitarian permit.² Now, she and the other released immigrants are in limbo, unsure if there is any country that will offer them protection or if they will be forcibly returned to their home countries to face persecution, detention, and even death.³

The administration has been removing individuals with protection claims to other countries as well, in some cases trying to do so against the wishes of both the individual and the country, and without a legally required screening as to their fear of persecution or torture. In February 2025, an immigration judge granted Adriana Quiroz Zapata, a Colombian national and rape and torture survivor, protection from removal to Colombia under the Convention Against Torture.⁴ While this grant could have allowed Ms. Zapata to be released from immigration

¹ Farnaz Fassihi & Hamed Aleaziz, *This Christian Convert Fled Iran, and Ran Into Trump's Deportation Policy*, N.Y. TIMES (Feb. 23, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/23/world/middleeast/this-christian-convert-fled-iran-and-ran-into-trumps-deportation-policy.html>.

² Omar Jimenez & Elizabeth Gonzalez, *She was expelled from the United States, but still thought America would help. She was wrong*, CNN (Mar. 30, 2025), <https://www.cnn.com/2025/03/30/world/us-panama-immigration-migrants-asylum/index.html>.

³ *Id.*

detention, ICE instead tried to remove her to Mexico in March.⁵ When the Mexican authorities heard Ms. Zapata's story of abuse, they refused to accept her as an undocumented immigrant and sent her back to the United States.⁶ Now, she languishes in immigration detention, despite having protection under the Convention Against Torture, which could not have been granted if she was in any way a danger to public safety.⁷

The administration's numerous third country removals led to a class action lawsuit, *DVD vs. DHS*. The judge in that suit, Judge Brian Murphy, preliminarily enjoined the administration from removing people to third countries without giving them meaningful notice and an opportunity to raise a fear of torture.⁸ Despite this ruling, the administration has appeared to charge ahead with attempting to remove people to third countries, first trying to remove individuals to Libya, and when that failed, to South Sudan.⁹ Judge Murphy found this latest move to be "unquestionably in violation" of his previous order.¹⁰ The White House responded by publicizing the criminal records of some of the deported people and detaining those individuals on a military base in Djibouti.

Every single person in this country is entitled to due process under the law, no matter who they are or what they have done. We have laws and procedures in place to remove people from this country. The administration cannot willfully ignore those laws and send people to third countries, in some cases, countries suffering from humanitarian disasters and armed conflict. Having a criminal record does not exempt you from the law's protection. As a thirty-four-time convicted felon, the President should know that better than anyone.

Given these extraordinary circumstances, we request you provide the following information no later than June 20, 2025:

1. All transfer agreements between the United States and any foreign country to accept and/or hold and/or facilitate onward deportation of third country nationals.
2. The source of funds for the transfer agreements between the United States and any country receiving funds from the United States in exchange for receiving third country nationals.
3. A detailed briefing regarding how immigrants are screened for protection or fear of torture, their access to legal counsel, and their ability to seek review of a

⁴ Adrian Carrasquillo, *How ICE Tried—and Failed—to Send a Torture Victim to Mexico*, THE BULWARK (Apr. 2, 2025), <https://www.thebulwark.com/p/how-ice-tried-failed-send-torture-victim-mexico-deport-adriana-quiroz-zapata-ice-colombia>.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ *D.V.D. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security*, 1:25-cv-10676, (D. Mass. Mar 28, 2025) ECF No. 34.

⁹ Lindsay Whitehurst, *et. al*, *Judge says Trump administration violated court order by deporting migrants to South Sudan*, PBS (May 21, 2025) <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/judge-says-trump-administration-violated-court-order-by-deporting-migrants-to-south-sudan>.

¹⁰ Lindsay Whitehurst, *et. al*, *'Unquestionably in violation': Judge says US government didn't follow court order on deportations*, ASSOC. PRESS (May 23, 2025), <https://www.ap.org/news-highlights/spotlights/2025/unquestionably-in-violation-judge-says-us-government-didnt-follow-court-order-on-deportations/>.

negative decision by an Immigration Judge prior to being removed or transferred out of the United States.

4. The number of individuals with Withholding of Removal currently in immigration detention.
5. The number of individuals with protection under the Convention Against Torture currently in immigration detention.
6. The number of individuals with Withholding of Removal who have been removed to the country from which they sought protection since January 20, 2025, and if a hearing was held to strip them of their lawful status prior to their removal.
7. The number of individuals with Withholding of Removal who have been removed or transferred to a third country since January 20, 2025.
8. The number of individuals with protection under the Convention Against Torture who have been removed to the country from which they sought protection since January 20, 2025.
9. The number of individuals with protection under the Convention Against Torture who have been removed or transferred to a third country since January 20, 2025.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this serious matter.

Sincerely,



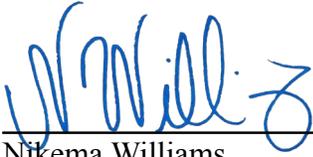
Pramila Jayapal
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on
Immigration Integrity,
Security, and Enforcement



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams
Member of Congress



Becca Balint
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



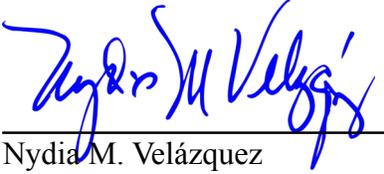
Dina Titus
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



Jim Tokuda
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



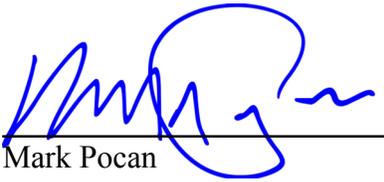
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



Glenn Ivey
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress



Maxine Dexter
Member of Congress



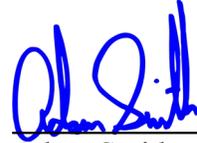
Greg Casar
Member of Congress



Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



Mike Thompson
Member of Congress



Adam Smith
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



Jasmine Crockett
Member of Congress



Andre Carson
Member of Congress