

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

2138 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6216

(202) 225-6906
judiciary.house.gov

May 4, 2026

The Honorable Rochelle Bilal
Sheriff
Philadelphia Sheriff's Office
100 South Broad Street, 5th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19110

Dear Sheriff Bilal:

The Committee on the Judiciary is conducting oversight of state and local jurisdictions that endanger American communities through their refusal to cooperate with federal immigration officials. The Philadelphia Sheriff's Office's (PSO) immigration-related policies prioritize criminal and illegal aliens over American citizens and threaten public safety. We write to request information about Philadelphia's sanctuary policies, which ultimately endanger the communities you serve.

To protect communities from dangerous foreign nationals, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) arrests criminal aliens in courthouses, which "is safer for law enforcement because these criminals have gone through security and been verified as unarmed."¹ The arrests are also safer for the community because they ensure criminal aliens are not free to reoffend. Even Biden-Harris Administration ICE officials confirmed that arresting criminal aliens inside a courthouse is safer for law enforcement, the public, and the aliens themselves.² Nonetheless, your office obstructs ICE from making safe immigration arrests at multiple Philadelphia locations, including the city's courthouse.³ Your policies even prohibit ICE from effectuating an arrest with a federal warrant if the warrant is not "filed with the clerk of court 48 hours prior to the individual's court date."⁴ Even then, ICE is required to wait for the criminal alien's transfer

¹ Press Release, DHS Makes Common Sense Courthouse Arrests of Criminal Illegal Aliens, Dep't of Homeland Sec. (May 6, 2025), <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/05/06/dhs-makes-common-sense-courthouse-arrests-criminal-illegal-aliens>.

² See, e.g., Transcribed Interview of Former Senior ICE Official, 105 (May 3, 2024) (on file with Comm.); Transcribed Interview of Former Field Office Director, 77-78 (Aug. 17, 2023) (on file with Comm.); Transcribed Interview of Former Field Office Director, 63 (July 19, 2023) (on file with Comm.).

³ Policy Regarding Immigr. and Customs Enf't (ICE), Off. of the Sheriff, City and Cnty. Of Philadelphia (Jan 13, 2026), <https://phillysheriff.com/policy-regarding-immigration-and-custom-enforcement-ice-january-23-2025/>.

⁴ *Id.*

to the county prison before ICE may “effectuate the valid warrant.”⁵ In addition to actively obstructing ICE efforts to make Philadelphia safer, you have personally demeaned the entire ICE workforce as “made-up, fake, wannabe law enforcement” who violate “not only legal law, but the moral law.”⁶ Even with your sanctuary policies, far-left groups like No ICE Philly have urged you to take even more drastic steps to impede federal law enforcement.⁷

Like other sanctuary jurisdictions we have examined, the shielding of criminal aliens from immigration enforcement in Philadelphia undermines public safety and thwarts the efficient enforcement of federal law. Accordingly, to assist the Committee with its continued oversight of federal immigration policy and to inform potential legislative reforms to address sanctuary policies, we ask that you provide the following information:

1. All documents and communications referring or relating to PSO’s interaction with ICE for the period January 1, 2020, to the present;
2. All documents and communications referring or relating to PSO’s policies, practices, and procedures related to non-U.S. citizens for the period January 1, 2020, to the present;
3. The number of ICE federal warrants PSO has acknowledged for the period January 1, 2020, to the present;
4. All documents and communications between or among PSO, No ICE Philly, Juntos, CAIR Philadelphia, Asian Americans United, the Pennsylvania Immigration Coalition, the New Sanctuary Movement of Philadelphia, and other immigration activist groups for the period January 1, 2020, to the present; and
5. All documents and communications between or among PSO, the Philadelphia Police Department, and the Philadelphia District Attorney’s Office referring or relating to immigration enforcement for the period January 1, 2020, to the present.

Please provide the information requested as soon as possible but no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 18, 2026. The Committee is authorized to conduct oversight of federal immigration law pursuant to the Rules of the House of Representatives.⁸ If you have any questions, please contact Committee staff at (202) 225-6906.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ Melissa Hellmann, ‘You don’t want this smoke’: US sheriff reflects on her viral remarks about ICE, THE GUARDIAN (Jan. 17, 2026, 12:00 PM), <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/jan/17/philadelphia-sheriff-viral-remarks-ice>.

⁷ Emily Neil, *Philadelphia advocates call on Sheriff Rochelle Bilal to keep ICE out of courthouse*, WHYY (Feb. 4, 2026, 1:25 PM), <https://whyy.org/articles/ice-philly-sheriff-bilal-courthouse/>.

⁸ Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, R. X (2025).

The Honorable Rochelle Bilal

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Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jim Jordan".

Jim Jordan
Chairman

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom McClintock".

Tom McClintock
Chairman
Subcommittee on Immigration
Integrity, Security, and Enforcement

cc: The Honorable Jamie Raskin, Ranking Member
The Honorable Pramila Jayapal, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Immigration
Integrity, Security, and Enforcement