

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6216

(202) 225-6906
judiciary.house.gov

May 20, 2026

Sheriff Elias Diggins
Denver Sheriff Department
490 West Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80204

Dear Sheriff Diggins:

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 Denver Sheriff Department's (DSD) immigration-related policies prioritize criminal and illegal aliens over American citizens and threaten public safety. We write to request information about Denver's sanctuary policies, including your lack of cooperation with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to ensure that dangerous aliens are not released onto American streets.

To protect communities from criminal aliens in law enforcement custody, ICE uses detainers, which are simple requests that a law enforcement agency "notify [ICE] as early as possible before [the agency] release[s] a removable alien" and "[h]old the alien for up to 48 hours beyond the time [the agency] would ordinarily release them so [the Department of Homeland Security] has time to assume custody in accordance with federal immigration law."¹ Federal law prohibits jurisdictions from restricting ICE's requests for and receipt of individuals' citizenship information.²

For years, DSD has been prohibited from complying with simple detainer requests, imperiling the community and law enforcement in the process.³ These pro-illegal alien policies ensure dangerous criminal aliens are free to reoffend in Denver and beyond. In one instance from last year, your office released Abraham Smith Gonzalez, a criminal alien and suspected Tren de Aragua gang member, instead of honoring an ICE detainer.⁴ As a result, when ICE officers

¹ U.S. Immigr. and Customs Enf't, *Immigr. Detainers* (May 13, 2025), <https://www.ice.gov/immigration-detainers>.

² See 8 U.S.C. § 1373.

³ See, e.g., Colo. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 24-76.6-102(1)(b).

⁴ Peter Pinedo, 'Sanctuary' city mayor confronted after gang member allegedly assaults federal officers, FOX NEWS (Mar. 5, 2025, 3:03 PM), <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/sanctuary-city-mayor-confronted-allowing-gang-member-assault-federal-officers>; Info. provided to H. Comm. on the Judiciary by Immigr. and Customs Enf't (Mar. 4, 2025) (on file with Comm.).

attempted to arrest the alien outside a Denver jail, the Venezuelan national assaulted one officer.⁵ The alien had been in DSD custody for nearly a year after he was charged with aggravated assault, motor vehicle theft, felony menacing, and other crimes.⁶ If DSD had been allowed to honor the immigration detainer, ICE officers could have taken custody of the alleged gang member in a controlled environment instead of in the community. In just the past month, ICE has warned that three criminal aliens are now at-large in the Denver area because your office has not been permitted to honor ICE detainers.⁷ The aliens were previously arrested for crimes including child abuse, assault with a weapon, burglary, theft, possession of a controlled substance, selling cocaine, resisting arrest, and failure to appear.⁸

Despite your purported mission to “provide safe and secure custody for those placed in [your] care and to perform all of [your] duties in a manner that is responsive to the needs of [your] diverse community,”⁹ Denver’s sanctuary policies endanger the communities you serve. Like other sanctuary jurisdictions we have examined, the shielding of criminal aliens from immigration enforcement in Denver 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 DSD’s interaction with ICE for the period July 1, 2020, to the present;
2. All documents and communications referring or relating to DSD’s policies, practices, and procedures related to non-U.S. citizens for the period July 1, 2020, to the present;
3. The number of ICE detainees that DSD has received and has declined to honor for the period July 1, 2020, to the present; and
4. All documents and communications between or among DSD, the Denver Police Department, and the Denver District Attorney’s Office referring or relating to immigration enforcement for the period July 1, 2020, to the present.

Please provide the information requested as soon as possible but no later than 5:00 p.m. on June 3, 2026. The Committee is authorized to conduct oversight of federal immigration law

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ Info. provided to H. Comm. on the Judiciary by Immigr. and Customs Enf’t (Mar. 4, 2025) (on file with Comm.).

⁷ ERO Denver (@ERODenver), X (Mar. 13, 2026, 5:54 PM),

<https://x.com/ERODenver/status/2032576041819021721?s>; ERO Denver (@ERODenver), X (Apr. 18, 2026, 12:30 PM), <https://x.com/ERODenver/status/2045540359535472703?s>; ERO Denver (@ERODenver), X (Apr. 18, 2026, 1:30 PM), <https://x.com/ERODenver/status/204555458182693332?s>.

⁸ *See id.*

⁹ About the Denver Sheriff Dep’t, Denver, Colo., <https://www.denvergov.org/Government/Agencies-Departments-Offices/Agencies-Departments-Offices-Directory/Sheriff-Department/About#section-1> (last accessed Apr. 22, 2026).

Sheriff Elias Diggins

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pursuant to the Rules of the House of Representatives.¹⁰ If you have any questions, please contact Committee staff at (202) 225-6906.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jim Jordan
Chairman



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



Gabe Evans
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Jamie Raskin, Ranking Member

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

¹⁰ Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, R. X (2025).