

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6216

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judiciary.house.gov

May 27, 2026

Police Commissioner Michael A. Cox
Boston Police Department
One Schroeder Plaza
Roxbury Crossing, MA 02120

Dear Mr. Cox:

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 Boston Police Department's (BPD) immigration-related policies prioritize criminal and illegal aliens over American citizens and threaten public safety. We write to request information about Boston's sanctuary policies, including BPD's 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, BPD has not complied with ICE detainers, which you have attributed to the Boston Trust Act's prohibition on cooperation with federal immigration officials.³ The Trust Act also prohibits BPD from notifying ICE about an alien's release from BPD custody.⁴

Boston's pro-illegal alien policies ensure dangerous criminals are released onto Boston

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 Gayla Cawley, *Boston City Council votes to shield Michelle Wu from disclosing whether ignored ICE detainer requests include criminal cases*, BOSTON HERALD (Feb. 25, 2026, 5:45 PM), <https://www.bostonherald.com/2026/02/25/boston-city-council-votes-to-shield-michelle-wu-from-disclosing-whether-ignored-ice-detainer-requests-include-criminal-cases/>. The Boston Trust Act was "originally enacted in 2014 and amended in 2019." See *Council Reaffirms the Trust Act*, CITY OF BOSTON (Dec. 6, 2024), <https://www.boston.gov/news/council-reaffirms-trust-act>.

⁴ See City of Boston Municipal Code § 11-1.9.

streets and free to reoffend. According to ICE, last year alone BPD ignored 167 detainers for aliens whose criminal histories included indecent assault and battery on a person 14 years or older, assault and battery on a family member, strangulation, felony assault, aggravated assault with a weapon, and cruelty toward a child.⁵ Although you claimed the number of declined detainers was 57, the Boston City Council voted earlier this year to keep the full detainer-related information hidden from the public.⁶ Boston officials' lack of transparency also means that the criminal histories of the aliens' for whom the detainers were lodged remain shrouded in secrecy.⁷

Despite your goal “to increase transparency”⁸ and to “improve the quality of life in [Boston] neighborhoods,”⁹ Boston’s sanctuary policies endanger the communities you serve. Like other sanctuary jurisdictions we have examined, the shielding of criminal aliens from immigration enforcement in Boston 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 BPD’s interaction with ICE for the period January 1, 2022, to the present;
2. All documents and communications referring or relating to BPD’s policies, practices, and procedures related to non-U.S. citizens for the period January 1, 2022, to the present;
3. The number of ICE detainers that BPD has received and has declined to honor for the period January 1, 2022, to the present, including the criminal histories of the non-U.S. citizens for whom the detainers were placed;
4. All documents and communications between or among BPD, the Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office, and the Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department referring or relating to immigration enforcement for the period January 1, 2022, to the present; and
5. All documents and communications between or among BPD and the Boston Mayor’s Office referring or relating to immigration and immigration enforcement for the period January 1, 2022, to the present.

⁵ Gayla Cawley, *ICE hits back at Boston, says police ignored 167 detainer requests in 2025, not 57*, BOSTON HERALD (Mar. 3, 2026, 10:31 AM), <https://www.police1.com/federal-law-enforcement/ice-hits-back-at-boston-says-police-ignored-167-detainer-requests-in-2025-not-57>.

⁶ Cawley, *Boston City Council votes to shield Michelle Wu from disclosing whether ignored ICE detainer requests include criminal cases*, *supra* note 3.

⁷ *See id.*

⁸ *See* Who We Are, Boston Police Dep’t, <https://police.boston.gov/542-2/> (last accessed May 5, 2026).

⁹ *See* Boston Police Dep’t, <https://police.boston.gov/> (last accessed May 5, 2026).

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Please provide the information requested as soon as possible but no later than 5:00 p.m. on June 10, 2026. The Committee is authorized to conduct oversight of federal immigration law 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

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).