

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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May 27, 2026

The Honorable Steven W. Tompkins
Suffolk County Sheriff's Department
20 Bradston Street
Boston, MA 02118

Dear Sheriff Tompkins:

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 Suffolk County Sheriff's Department's (SCSD) 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 SCSD'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, SCSD has not complied with ICE detainers, with your office making clear that "[i]n no instance does [SCSD] hold anyone longer than their sentence prescribes, or past the time that it takes for them to post bail, based on the existence of a detainer."³ In 2019, SCSD also "ended its contract to hold ICE detainees."⁴ Nonetheless, SCSD

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 Eve Zuckoff, *To Boston Police Dept. From: ICE: 'Late-night faxes pressing BPD to turn people over*, WBUR (Apr. 30, 2026), <https://www.wbur.org/news/2026/04/30/boston-police-ice-detainers-fax-immigration>. A Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court decision forbids law enforcement from honoring ICE detainers. See *Lunn v. Commonwealth*, 477 Mass. 517, 537, 78 N.E.3d 1143, 1160 (2017) ("Massachusetts law provides no authority for Massachusetts court officers to arrest and hold an individual solely on the basis of a Federal civil immigration detainer, beyond the time that the individual would otherwise be entitled to be released from State custody.")

⁴ Sarah Betancourt, *Some local police, sheriff and DA offices are communicating often with ICE, records show*, GBH BOSTON (Feb. 19, 2026), <https://www.wgbh.org/news/local/2026-02-19/some-local-police-sheriff-and-da-offices-are-communicating-often-with-ice-records-show>.

has maintained at least some communication with ICE about foreign nationals in its custody.⁵

Boston's pro-illegal alien policies ensure dangerous criminals are released from SCSD's custody and free to reoffend. In the past two years alone, ICE has arrested multiple criminal aliens that SCSD released back into Boston communities instead of honoring ICE detainers, including an illegal alien from El Salvador charged with "indecent assault and battery on a child under 14;"⁶ an illegal alien from Colombia charged with "enticing a child under 16, distribution of obscene matter, and lascivious posing and exhibiting a child in the nude;"⁷ and an illegal alien from Guatemala "charged with two counts of indecent assault and battery on a child."⁸

Despite your goal "to serve and protect the citizens of Suffolk County,"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 SCSD's interaction with ICE for the period January 1, 2022, to the present;
2. All documents and communications referring or relating to SCSD'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 SCSD's 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 SCSD, the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office, and the Boston Police Department referring or relating to immigration enforcement for the period January 1, 2022, to the present; and

⁵ *See id.*

⁶ Bill Melugin (@BillMelugin_), X (Dec. 23, 2024, 4:37 PM), https://x.com/BillMelugin_/status/1871309102665929145; *see* Press Release, ERO Boston arrests El Salvador national facing felony charges of indecent assault and battery on a child, U.S. Immigr. and Customs Enf't (Dec. 19, 2024), <https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/ero-boston-arrests-el-salvador-national-facing-felony-charges-indecent-assault-and>.

⁷ Press Release, ERO Boston arrests Colombian citizen charged with sex crimes against a child, U.S. Immigr. and Customs Enf't (Nov. 1, 2024), <https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/ero-boston-arrests-colombian-citizen-charged-sex-crimes-against-child>.

⁸ Press Release, ICE Boston arrests illegal Guatemalan alien charged with sex crimes against Massachusetts minor, U.S. Immigr. and Customs Enf't (Mar. 18, 2025), <https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/ice-boston-arrests-illegal-guatemalan-alien-charged-sex-crimes-against-massachusetts>.

⁹ *See* Sheriff's Off. Overview, Suffolk Cnty. Sheriff's Dep't, <https://scsdma.org/sheriffs-office/> (last accessed May 5, 2026).

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5. All documents and communications between or among SCSD and the Boston Mayor's Office referring or relating to immigration and immigration enforcement for the period January 1, 2022, to the present.

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).