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COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND
COOPERATION IN EUROPE (U.S.
HELSINKI COMMISSION)

November 19, 2025

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave, SE
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Noem:

I am increasingly concerned that, in Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) zeal to fulfill President Trump's stated goal of deporting one million people per year, the agency may seek to recruit individuals fundamentally unsuited for professional law enforcement. I am writing to request clarification regarding ICE's hiring policies and standards.

Despite frequent "tough on crime" rhetoric, President Trump and his Administration have repeatedly excused or even encouraged political violence—including violence directed against law enforcement officers—when he believes it serves a political purpose. On his first day in office, the President pardoned nearly 1,600 individuals who were charged with or convicted of attacking the United States Capitol on January 6, 2021. At Donald Trump's urging, a mob stormed the Capitol that day to prevent Congress from counting electoral votes. The attack killed several police officers and injured approximately 140 more, including 15 who required hospitalization. It was the most serious assault on the Capitol since the British burned the building during the War of 1812.

The conduct on January 6 reflects both a profound contempt for law enforcement and a disregard for the United States Constitution. For these reasons, anyone pardoned for their participation in that attack should be categorically disqualified from serving as an ICE agent. It is impossible to

see how such an individual could credibly enforce federal law or uphold the Constitution they once sought to overturn.

I recognize that ICE requires applicants to undergo comprehensive background checks and suitability reviews. In light of that, I request answers to the following questions:

- How many current ICE employees, including agents and officers, received a presidential pardon from Donald Trump for conduct related to the January 6, 2021, attack on the United States Capitol?
- Can you confirm that participation—whether charged, convicted, or pardoned—in the January 6 attack would render an applicant ineligible for employment as an ICE agent or officer?
- What policies or safeguards does ICE have in place to ensure that individuals who attacked law enforcement officers or attempted to undermine our democratic system cannot be hired into positions of federal law enforcement authority?

Effective law enforcement depends on credibility, integrity, and adherence to constitutional obligations. Ensuring that ICE's workforce meets those basic standards is essential to its mission and to public trust.

Sincerely,



Steve Cohen

MEMBER OF CONGRESS