

March 19, 2026

The Honorable Mark Amodei
Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Homeland Security

The Honorable Katie Britt
Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Homeland Security

The Honorable Henry Cuellar
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Homeland Security

The Honorable Chris Murphy
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Homeland Security

Dear Chairman Amodei, Chairwoman Britt, Ranking Member Cuellar, and Ranking Member Murphy:

On behalf of UnidosUS, we write to urge you to advance a Homeland Security FY2027 appropriations package that includes guardrails to ensure accountable immigration enforcement, uphold constitutional protections, and protect civil rights.

UnidosUS, formerly the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), is the nation's largest Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization. Since 1968, we have worked to eliminate the barriers that prevent Latinos from reaching their full potential through research, policy advocacy, programs, and a national network of nearly 300 community-based Affiliate organizations.

Recent immigration enforcement actions have produced documented violations of civil rights and civil liberties across the country. The Department of Homeland Security has conducted roving patrols and is seemingly targeting individuals by perceived ethnicity, executed warrantless searches at homes and workplaces without consent, used force with disturbing regularity and minimal oversight or consequences, and held people in prolonged detention before verifying their citizenship or immigration status. These are not isolated failures, but instead are evidence of a system operating without oversight, accountability, or guardrails.

As the House Appropriations Subcommittee considers FY2027 DHS funding, appropriations should be paired with clear immigration enforcement guardrails and oversight requirements. To accomplish that, UnidosUS strongly recommends the following:

- Rebuild principles of transparency and accountability into the immigration system, including:

- Reconstitute and ensure the independence of key DHS oversight offices, including the Office of Inspector General, the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, the Office of the Immigration Detention Ombudsman, and the Office of the Citizenship and Immigration Ombudsman.
- Establish a federal civil detention trustee office to manage conditions of confinement at all immigration-related detention facilities.
- Establish an independent immigration enforcement oversight body authorized to conduct independent investigations of serious use of force incidents and report directly to Congress.
- Require visible officer identification and prohibit the use of masks with limited exceptions.
- Require that body-worn cameras be provided to all federal law enforcement officers conducting immigration enforcement and impose binding safeguards that require their use during enforcement actions, ensure release and safe storage of relevant footage, and protect the privacy of law enforcement officers, enforcement targets, and others.
- Require monthly public reporting on defined categories of enforcement data, including arrests, detentions, removals, and alternatives to detention.
- Ensure immigration enforcement is targeted, non-discriminatory, and protects local communities:
 - Prohibit enforcement activity based on race, ethnicity, national origin, language, or appearance.
 - Restrict indiscriminate tactics such as roving patrols and neighborhood sweeps.
 - Require targeted, prioritized enforcement and judicial warrants for forcible entry into homes or other non-public spaces.
 - Limit enforcement at specific locations including schools, religious institutions, hospitals, polling places, and courthouses. Ensure that restrictions on enforcement apply to anyone conducting immigration enforcement, including federal, state, or local officers acting under a 287(g) agreement or similar authority.
 - Establish clear legal guardrails for surveillance and data-driven enforcement, including limits on the use of commercial data brokers, location-tracking tools, facial recognition, biometric collection, and predictive analytics.
- Ensure fair and humane detention and removal practices, including:
 - Prohibit the use of detention facilities larger than 1,000 beds. Anything larger becomes increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to provide an adequate level of protection and services, including medical and mental health care.
 - Prohibit the detention of families and children and place significant limitations on the detention of pregnant women and other vulnerable populations.
 - Allow ICE detention to include places where people have public access and some freedom of movement, like halfway houses.

- Redefine mandatory detention to exclude long-term residents and those who entered without inspection from the definition of “applicants for admission.”
- Require mandatory custody reviews, including internal ICE reviews after 30 days in detention and judicial reviews after 60 days.
- Allow bonds below \$1,500 to ensure that people who should be released from custody can afford to be released from custody.
- Mandate timely verification of citizenship and lawful status to prevent wrongful detention of U.S. citizens and lawfully present individuals. Absent specifically articulated public safety or national security concerns, require release from detention after 48 hours if citizenship or legal status is undetermined.
- Place restrictions on third country removals to ensure that the U.S. is not removing people with the explicit or implicit understanding that they will be imprisoned on arrival.

Public confidence in immigration enforcement depends on transparency, accountability, and adherence to the Constitution and laws. As leaders of the House Appropriations Subcommittee with jurisdiction over immigration funding, we urge you to advance a DHS Subcommittee FY2027 appropriations bill that establishes clear guardrails and oversight requirements.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Eric Rodriguez
Senior Vice President
Policy and Advocacy
UnidosUS

cc:

The Honorable Tom Cole, Chair, House Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Susan Collins, Chair, Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Patty Murray, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Appropriations