

January 20, 2026

via email

Dear Members of Congress,

Our government should not spy on us, yet right now ICE agents are leveraging a multi-billion dollar budget to terrorize our communities and build a surveillance panopticon.

There is a clear path to stop ICE surveillance in its tracks and also reject the executions of Renee Good¹, Silverio Villegas Gonzalez², and Keith Porter³, as well as the deaths of many other people who were shot⁴ or died in custody⁵ over the past year. **Lawmakers need to block funding for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and with it, funding of surveillance tech and other tools ICE is deploying against people in the US to deprive them of their privacy and liberty.**

A major part of the \$170 billion⁶ in funding that ICE has received from the Trump Administration is being leveraged to supercharge ICE violence and intimidation using surveillance tech. DHS, ICE, and CBP are:

- Building databases⁷ of biometrics, sensitive personal data, and daily movements of not only immigrants⁸, but everybody⁹ in the US. ICE is also using Palantir's app ELITE to determine which neighborhoods to raid.
- Tapping into a nationwide network of insecure¹⁰ & dangerous¹¹ Flock¹² automatic license plate readers and Amazon Ring¹³ doorbell cameras that when combined can track any resident's

¹ <https://apnews.com/article/ice-shooting-minneapolis-victim-renee-good-d95e86716eec328a288866108acf78eb>

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Killing_of_Silverio_Villegas_Gonz%C3%A1lez

³ https://www.democracynow.org/2026/1/13/keith_porter_jr_ice_shooting

⁴ <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/full-list-of-ice-shootings-since-donald-trump-took-office/ar-AA1TMi4f>

⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2026/jan/04/ice-2025-deaths-timeline>

⁶ <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/big-budget-act-creates-deportation-industrial-complex>

⁷ <https://fedscoop.com/house-democrats-pushback-dhs-data-collection-expansion/>

⁸ <https://www.wired.com/story/ice-palantir-immigration/>

⁹ <https://epic.org/press-release-epic-files-suit-challenging-federal-governments-national-data-banks-of-sensitive-personal-information/>

¹⁰ <https://www.404media.co/police-unmask-millions-of-surveillance-targets-because-of-flock-redaction-error/>

¹¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vU1-uiUIHTo>

¹² <https://jsis.washington.edu/humanrights/2025/10/21/leaving-the-door-wide-open/>

¹³ <https://www.cnbc.com/2025/10/16/amazon-ring-cameras-surveillance-law-enforcement-crime-police-investigations.html>

movements in essentially real time.

- Purchasing technology to surveil all the phones¹⁴ in a neighborhood without a warrant. This includes exact location data of where a phone is located and where it has traveled in the past.
- Recklessly relying on facial recognition¹⁵ technology that is banned¹⁶ in some states, and misusing¹⁷ that data to intimidate protesters and witnesses by revealing that the ICE agent knows personal details of people exercising their First Amendment rights.
- Preparing to purchase and deploy¹⁸ AI drones¹⁹ that may be weapons-capable.

Lawmakers must act immediately to stem the tide on ICE violence and the technology and data spending that help it spread. The best thing that Congress can do to protect targeted communities is to block any DHS funding bill that includes money for ICE. The second best thing Congress can do is to severely restrict what ICE can spend money on, including a complete moratorium on the purchase and use of surveillance tech. Such a moratorium should include automated license plate readers, access to data broker databases, spyware, drones, facial recognition, phone snooping and surveillance, and social media and internet use trackers.

We urge you to do everything within your power in order to block ICE's reign of terror in our communities and halt the build out of surveillance tech infrastructure that will make it impossible for everyday people to do anything at all without Big Brother watching. Milquetoast calls for better identification, bodycams, and training fall far short of what is required of you to meet this moment.

Sincerely,

18 Million Rising

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Arkansas Black Gay Men's Forum

Black Alliance for Justice Immigration

¹⁴ <https://www.404media.co/inside-ices-tool-to-monitor-phones-in-entire-neighborhoods/>

¹⁵ <https://www.techpolicy.press/ices-reckless-reliance-on-facial-recognition-puts-us-all-in-danger/>

¹⁶ <https://chicago.suntimes.com/the-watchdogs/2025/10/31/ice-trump-facial-recognition-clearview-police-oversight>

¹⁷ <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2026/01/13/ice-using-private-data-to-intimidate-observers-and-activists-advocates-say>

¹⁸ <https://www.404media.co/cbp-flew-drones-to-help-ice-50-times-in-last-year/>

¹⁹ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/thomasbrewster/2025/09/10/ice-preps-for-new-hiring-surge-with-ai-drones-armor-and-weapons/>

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