

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 11, 2026

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane SW
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Mullin:

We write to oppose the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) plan to convert a commercial facility at 7525 Cogswell Street in Romulus, Michigan, into an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention facility, and urge you to reverse this decision.

ICE currently operates one detention facility in Michigan—the North Lake Processing Center in Baldwin. Reports from that facility, which houses 1,400 detainees and has capacity for hundreds more, paint a dark picture. Further, reporting indicates that on April 19, 2026, detainees began a hunger strike over “dangerous” detention conditions, poor medical care, and limited opportunities for legal recourse.¹ My colleagues and I recently expressed our concerns to you regarding the ongoing situation in Baldwin and expect a prompt response.²

Since DHS announced its proposed facility in Romulus, the local community has been clear that they do not want what is happening in Baldwin to be replicated in other parts of our state.³ On February 23, 2026, the Romulus City Council passed a resolution unanimously opposing the Romulus site's use for this purpose.⁴ Equally concerning, DHS purchased the facility earlier that month without prior notice to the State of Michigan or the City of Romulus.⁵

DHS has also overlooked multiple issues that make this site unsuitable for a detention facility. First, this warehouse has not been zoned or developed to house individuals. The facility is located in the city's M-1, Light Industrial District, which is zoned for light manufacturing, small-scale warehousing, and other uses that “generate less truck traffic” than other nearby industrial locations.⁶ Second, local officials have not been contacted or notified regarding plans to initiate rezoning procedures and turn this commercially-zoned property into a detention facility.⁷ Third, this facility will displace a local automotive manufacturer that had received permits from the City to renovate the site prior to DHS's purchase.⁸

¹Protestors Gather Outside Baldwin Facility as Immigrant Detainees Held by ICE Launch Hunger Strike, Michigan Advance (Apr. 22, 2026) (michiganadvance.com/2026/04/22/protestors-gather-outside-baldwin-facility-as-immigrant-detainees-held-by-ice-launch-hunger-strike/).

²Letter from Rep. Debbie Dingell et al. to Secretary Markwayne Mullin, Department of Homeland Security, and Acting Director Todd M. Lyons, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (Apr. 27, 2026) (debbiedingell.house.gov/uploadedfiles/ice_facility_hunger_letter.pdf).

³Hundreds Protest in Romulus Against Proposal to Convert Warehouse into ICE Detention Center, Michigan Advance (Apr. 25, 2026) (michiganadvance.com/2026/04/25/hundreds-protest-in-romulus-against-proposal-to-convert-warehouse-into-ice-detention-center/).

⁴City of Romulus, Resolution No. 26-044, A Resolution of the City of Romulus City Council Opposing the Establishment of an ICE Detention Center Within the City Limits (Feb. 23, 2026) (www.romulusgov.com/DocumentCenter/View/3869/26-044-Resolution-Opposing-ICE-Detention-Center-PDF).

⁵Letter from Mayor Robert A. McCraight, City of Romulus, to Secretary Kristi Noem, Department of Homeland Security, and Acting Director Todd Lyons, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (Feb. 16, 2026) (www.romulusgov.com/DocumentCenter/View/3878/260225_Letter-to-Sec-Noem-re-Romulus-Facility-PDF).

⁶Letter from Sens. Gary C. Peters and Elissa Slotkin to Secretary Kristi Noem, Department of Homeland Security (Feb. 25, 2026) (www.romulusgov.com/DocumentCenter/View/3878/260225_Letter-to-Sec-Noem-re-Romulus-Facility-PDF).

⁷Letter from Mayor Robert A. McCraight, City of Romulus, to Secretary Kristi Noem, Department of Homeland Security, and Acting Director Todd Lyons, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (Feb. 16, 2026) (www.romulusgov.com/DocumentCenter/View/3878/260225_Letter-to-Sec-Noem-re-Romulus-Facility-PDF).

Additionally, the site sits directly adjacent to 118 acres of protected wetlands subject to a conservation easement held by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) under Part 303 of Michigan’s Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act.⁹ This is not a symbolic proximity concern. The easement is a recorded property interest held by the State of Michigan and cannot be overridden by DHS’s acquisition of the neighboring parcel. The warehouse site is hydrologically connected to the protected wetland via the McClaughrey Drain and surrounding floodplains—meaning any sedimentation, construction runoff, or sewage overflow from the site flows directly into land the State is legally obligated to protect.

The easement parcel is also an identified habitat for four state-protected species, including the Northern long-eared bat, which is listed as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act.¹⁰ Michigan administers Part 303 under federally-delegated Clean Water Act Section 404 authority—meaning compliance with Michigan’s wetland permitting program is not a matter of state law alone, but of federal law that Congress explicitly designed to bind federal agencies. To date, DHS has not applied for permits required for construction in a floodplain, nor has it contacted EGLE as the easement holder.

In response to initial press inquiries, an ICE spokesperson stated that new detention “sites will undergo community impact studies and rigorous due diligence process to make sure there is no hardship on local utilities or infrastructure prior to purchase.”¹¹ No local officials were consulted about any such study or due diligence, raising questions about whether the analysis was completed before the purchase of the facility and, if it did occur, the accuracy of the work.

Given these dynamics, it is clear DHS must not move forward with the planned Romulus detention facility. The Michigan Attorney General and the City of Romulus have filed suit in the Eastern District of Michigan, raising these concerns—concerns your department has ignored.¹²

Further, Senators Peters and Slotkin wrote to your predecessor on February 25, 2026, raising these concerns and requesting information by March 11, 2026.¹³ That deadline passed without a response. We join in their concerns and renew their requests.

Accordingly, we request the following information no later than 30 days from the date of this letter:

1. What is the scope and timeline of your review of contracts signed by DHS, and will the Romulus acquisition be specifically evaluated? In conducting that review, does DHS consider pending litigation, unresolved environmental compliance questions, and the absence of local stakeholder consultation as relevant factors?
2. Has DHS or ICE communicated with EGLE regarding the state-held conservation easement on the wetland parcel directly adjacent to the Romulus site? If so, provide all such communications.

⁸ State of Michigan and City of Romulus v. U.S. Dep’t of Homeland Security, No. 2:26-cv-10968-JJCG-EAS (E.D. Mich., filed Mar. 24, 2026), ECF No. 1 (Complaint) at PageID.12–13.

⁹ State of Michigan and City of Romulus v. U.S. Dep’t of Homeland Security, No. 2:26-cv-10968-JJCG-EAS (E.D. Mich., filed Mar. 24, 2026), ECF No. 1 (Complaint) at PageID.14 (identifying 118-acre easement held by EGLE under Part 303 of Michigan’s Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Mich. Comp. Laws § 324.30301 et seq.).

¹⁰ Id. (identifying Northern long-eared bat, Indiana bat, grasshopper sparrow, and other species protected under Mich. Comp. Laws § 324.36501 et seq. whose habitats may be disturbed by the proposed facility); see also 16 U.S.C. § 1531 et seq. (Endangered Species Act) (listing Northern long-eared bat as endangered); Letter from Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel to Todd Lyons, Acting Director, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (Feb. 27, 2026).

¹¹ Metro Detroit lawmakers concerned over planned ICE detention center in Romulus, Fox 2 Detroit (Feb. 16, 2026) (www.fox2detroit.com/news/metro-detroit-lawmakers-concerned-over-planned-ice-detention-centerromulus).

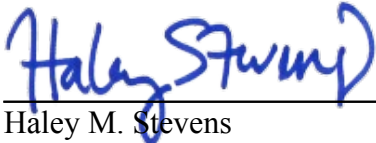
¹² Press Release, Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel, AG Nessel Files Lawsuit Challenging Plan to Convert Romulus Warehouse into ICE Detention Center (Mar. 24, 2026) (www.michigan.gov/ag/news/press-releases/2026/03/24/ag-nessel-files-lawsuit-challenging-plan-to-convert-romulus-warehouse-into-ice-detention-center).

¹³ Letter from Sens. Gary C. Peters and Elissa Slotkin to Secretary Kristi Noem, Department of Homeland Security (Feb. 25, 2026) (www.romulusgov.com/DocumentCenter/View/3878/260225_Letter-to-Sec-Noem-re-Romulus-Facility-PDF).

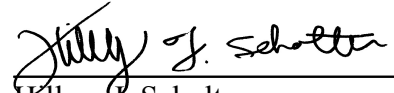
3. What determination, if any, did DHS make regarding whether the floodplain location triggered review obligations under Executive Order 11988 as amended? Did DHS seek a floodplain development permit from the Army Corps of Engineers prior to or following acquisition?
4. Was the Romulus acquisition reviewed and approved through the standard DHS real property acquisition process, including review by the Office of the Under Secretary for Management? If not, what process was followed and who authorized the departure from standard procedure?
5. Did DHS obtain an independent appraisal of the \$34.67 million purchase price? Please provide the appraisal and any communications with the seller during the acquisition process.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Haley M. Stevens
Member of Congress



Hillary J. Scholten
Member of Congress



Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Kristen McDonald Rivet
Member of Congress