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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

August 19, 2025

VIA EMAIL

The Honorable Rand Paul
Chairman
United States Senate
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Paul,

I write to request that you schedule an oversight hearing of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs (the Committee) to examine the Secretary of Homeland Security's residence in government housing at the expense of taxpayers and service members.

Recent reporting revealed that Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem is living for free in one of the Coast Guard's most prestigious, waterfront residences on Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling in Washington, DC.¹ As leader of the Department of Homeland Security, Secretary Noem has authority over the United States Coast Guard, raising serious questions about how she came to occupy a residence normally reserved for senior military leaders, including the Commandant of the Coast Guard.² Secretary Noem has apparently been occupying this residence, purportedly due to concerns for the Secretary's safety, for an undetermined length of time without paying rent, marking a striking departure from other cabinet secretaries.³ For example, Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth's rent is more than \$4,600 per month to live at Fort McNair, also in Washington, DC.⁴ The security of all executive cabinet members is important, but Secretary Noem's position as Secretary does not grant her the special privilege of taxpayer-funded housing.

Secretary Noem's rent-free occupation of the Coast Guard Commandant's residence is all the more troubling in light of past reports of her suspect management of taxpayer funds and

¹ Marianne LeVine, Liz Goodwin, and Dan Lamothe, "Kristi Noem is living rent-free in home used by Coast Guard Commandant," *Washington Post*, August 15, 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/08/15/kristi-noem-is-living-free-charge-coast-guard-commandants-home/>.

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

⁴ Konstantin Toropin, Steve Beynon and Rebecca Kheel, "Pentagon Offers Few Details on Hegseth's \$137,000 Housing Upgrades, But Secretary Will Pay Rent," *Military.com*, February 14, 2025, <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2025/02/14/pentagon-offers-few-details-hegseths-137000-housing-upgrades-secretary-will-pay-rent.html>.

concealment of financial information.⁵ As governor of South Dakota, Secretary Noem spent more than \$150,000 of taxpayer funds on political and personal activity, including \$7,555 for a six-day trip to Paris and \$2,200 for a trip to Houston for dental work, and failed to disclose who paid for these trips until she became Secretary.⁶ Then-Governor Noem also charged South Dakotan taxpayers \$68,000 to install a sauna, chandeliers, and rugs in the governor's mansion.⁷ Moreover, an investigation earlier this year revealed she failed to publicly disclose an \$80,000 payment made directly to a company she owns from a non-profit that promotes her and that she helped raise money for.⁸

The questionable arrangements surrounding Secretary Noem's rent-free occupancy in the Coast Guard Commandant's residence demand prompt congressional scrutiny. As the U.S. Senate Committee with primary jurisdiction over the Department of Homeland Security, I respectfully request that you schedule a hearing of the Committee in September where Secretary Noem can testify about the details of her free housing provided by the branch of the armed services over which she has direct authority.

Sincerely,



Richard Blumenthal
Ranking Member
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson
Chairman
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

The Honorable Gary Peters
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

⁵ Joshua Goodman, Jim Mustian, and Sarah Raza, "Kristi Noem refused to say who financed some of her travel. It was taxpayers who were on the hook," *Associated Press*, March 29, 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/noem-travel-taxpayers-south-dakota-homeland-security-c2655e00a16d44bba46c60a14a638f5d>.

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ Joe Sneve, "Gov. Noem spends more than \$68,000 in taxpayer money on rugs, sauna, chandeliers for state governor's mansion," *Sioux Falls Argus Leader*, November 29, 2021, <https://www.argusleader.com/story/news/2021/11/29/south-dakota-gov-kristi-noem-spent-68-k-sauna-more-receipts-show-capitol-public-records/8666319002/>.

⁸ Justin Elliott, Joshue Kaplan, and Alex Mierjeski, "Kristi Noem Secretly Took a Cut of Political Donations," *ProPublica*, June 30, 2025, <https://www.propublica.org/article/kristi-noem-political-donations-income-dark-money-dhs-ethics>.