

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 11, 2026

VIA EMAIL

The Honorable Todd Blanche
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20530

The Honorable Kash Patel
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Blanche and Director Patel,

We write regarding the shocking recent reporting that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) will no longer investigate violent confrontations between civilians and federal immigration agents.¹ This sudden, unprecedented change seems particularly galling in the wake of yet more seemingly unjustified killings of unarmed individuals by Department of Homeland Security (DHS) agents in Texas and Maine. We demand that you immediately rescind this policy and provide information and records regarding how the decision to implement this policy was reached.

Historically, the Department of Justice (DOJ) has swiftly launched investigations when civilians are killed in high-profile confrontations with law enforcement. This is meant to ease public tensions and ensure accountability for crimes with a federal nexus, a key function rooted in the DOJ's reputation and history of independence.² These reviews are traditionally led by the FBI, which generally works collaboratively with local officials to gather evidence and investigate the case.³

DOJ appeared to already be abandoning many of these historic practices in the investigation of the killings of Renée Good and Alex Pretti in Minnesota in January of this year. In those instances, after DHS officials immediately labeled both Ms. Good and Mr. Pretti the aggressors despite video evidence to the contrary, state and local officials were so hampered by federal law enforcement in their attempts to investigate the shootings that they had to take the unprecedented step of suing the federal government.⁴ State law enforcement only obtained

¹ Devlin Barrett & Hamed Aleaziz, *Federal Agents Were Told F.B.I. Will No Longer Investigate ICE Confrontations*, N.Y. Times (July 19, 2026), <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/19/us/politics/fbi-ice-agents-investigations-shootings.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share>.

² See, e.g., Ryan J. Reilly, Erik Ortiz, & Kelly O'Donnell, *Questions swirl around federal government's plan to investigate DHS shootings*, NBC News (Jan. 28, 2026), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/justice-department/questions-swirl-federal-governments-plan-investigate-dhs-shootings-rcna255989>.

³ *Id.*

access to some of the critical evidence regarding those killings last month, nearly six months after the events in question.⁵

Last month, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers once again shot and killed individuals under questionable circumstances, and DHS again immediately blamed those individuals for their own deaths. Lorenzo Salgado Araujo was killed on July 7 in Houston and DHS quickly asserted he had rammed an ICE vehicle and “weaponized” his white work van “in an attempt to run over an ICE law enforcement officer,” claims refuted by the three eye witnesses traveling with Mr. Araujo, the lack of damage to his vehicle, and video evidence.⁶ Joan Sebastian Guerrero was shot and killed while driving in Maine on July 13 and DHS released a statement claiming that Mr. Guerrero’s “vehicle attempted to flee the scene and, fearing for public safety, an officer discharged his weapon,” a claim which again appears to contradict the emerging evidence.⁷

Faced once more with the duty to investigate DHS agents’ wanton violence, you apparently made the extraordinary decision to issue a policy that FBI agents will no longer investigate confrontations between civilians and immigration agents.⁸ Instead, leaving DHS to investigate itself.⁹ It is hard to see any justification for this policy change other than to avoid discovering evidence that could be used to call into question the practices of DHS agents or to prosecute them when they use excessive force in violation of the law.

Enabling unfit agents to continue on the job without consequence is contrary to the public commitment of federal law enforcement. We demand that you immediately rescind this policy and answer the questions below.

⁴ See Renee Hickman et al., *In Six Violent Encounters, Evidence Contradicts Trump Immigration Officials' Narratives*, Reuters (Jan. 28, 2026), <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/evidence-contradicts-trump-immigration-officials-accounts-violent-encounters-2026-01-27/>; Sarah Lynch & Jonah Kaplan, *Minnesota officials sue federal government over Renee Good, Alex Pretti investigations* (March 24, 2026), <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/minnesota-state-county-sue-government-renee-good-alex-pretti-investigations/>.

⁵ Coral Murphy Marcos, *Prosecutors obtain long-withheld evidence on fatal shootings of Renee Good and Alex Pretti*, Guardian (July 13, 2026), <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/jul/13/renee-good-alex-pretti-minnesota-evidence>.

⁶ See ‘His Blood is on Trump’s Hands’: Man Killed by ICE in Texas Mourned at Vigil, The Guardian (July 12, 2026), <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/jul/12/lorenzo-salgado-araujo-texas-killed-ice-vigil>; Arelia Hernandez, *Migrants Who Saw Man Killed by ICE in Houston Say He Did Not Ram Officers*, Wash. Post (July 10, 2026), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/immigration/2026/07/10/migrants-who-saw-man-killed-by-ice-houston-say-he-did-not-ram-officers/>; NBC News, *New Surveillance Video Raises Questions in Deadly ICE Shooting* (July 10, 2026), <https://www.nbcnews.com/nightly-news/video/new-surveillance-video-raises-questions-in-deadly-ice-shooting-266521669879>.

⁷ See Jacey Fortin et al., *ICE Agent Kills Person in Vehicle in Maine, State Officials Say*, N.Y. Times (July 13, 2026), <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/13/us/biddeford-maine-ice-shooting.html>; Alison Durkee, *Man Shot By ICE in Maine Was Not Operation’s Target, Senator Says*, Forbes (July 13, 2026), <https://www.forbes.com/sites/alisondurkee/2026/07/13/man-shot-by-ice-in-maine-was-not-operations-target-senator-says/>; *DHS Says ICE Officer who Fatally Shot Driver in Maine Was 'Fearing for Public Safety'*, PBS (July 14, 2026), <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/dhs-says-ice-officer-who-fatally-shot-driver-in-maine-was-fearing-for-public-safety>.

⁸ Barrett & Aleaziz, *supra* note 1.

⁹ *Id.*

Please provide detailed responses to the following requests by August 25, 2026:

1. When was the decision reached that the FBI would no longer investigate confrontations between civilians and immigration agents?
2. Who was involved or consulted with in making this policy change?
 - a. Were individuals outside of the Department of Justice consulted regarding this policy change? Please identify them.
 - b. Were senior officials within the Federal Bureau of Investigation consulted regarding this policy change? Please identify them.
3. Was this policy change reviewed by, or did the Department receive advice from, the White House Counsel's Office?
4. What was the reasoning for the policy change?

Please also provide the following records¹⁰ by August 25, 2026:

1. Any and all written notice or guidance provided to FBI managers and agents regarding this policy change; and
2. Any and all communications¹¹ regarding this policy change, including communications between the Executive Office of the President, DHS, and the FBI.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

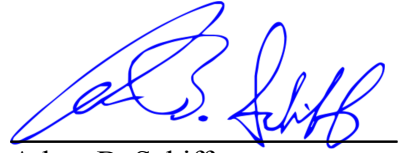
Sincerely,

¹⁰ For purposes of this request, "records" include any written, recorded, or graphic material of any kind, including letters, memoranda, reports, notes, electronic data (emails, email attachments, and any other electronically-created or stored information), direct messages, chats, calendar entries, inter-office communications, meeting minutes, phone/voice mail or recordings/records of verbal communications, and drafts (whether or not they resulted in final documents).

¹¹ For purposes of this request, "communications" include any records, as defined above, transmitted in any way between two or more individuals or entities.



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator