

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 13, 2024

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
301 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20528

Patrick J. Lechleitner
Deputy Director and Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Director
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
500 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20536

Dear Secretary Mayorkas and Acting Director Lechleitner:

I recently inspected the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) El Paso Service Processing Center in El Paso, Texas, which is staffed by the contractor Global Precision Systems, a subsidiary of Bering Strait's Native Corporation.

The facility has been the target of numerous complaints, including allegations of serious abuse and mistreatment of the individuals housed there. As of February 2024, the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) had received approximately 113 separate allegations concerning potential civil rights and civil liberties violations at El Paso since the beginning of Fiscal Year 2023.¹ These allegations involved, among other things, inadequate medical care, and staff abuse/mistreatment, including Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) allegations.² In addition, CRCL received allegations about “the medical care of hunger strikers, lack of . . . language access; discriminatory treatment based on sexual orientation; and, the retaliatory use of the disciplinary system in response to noncitizens raising grievances about facility conditions.”³ Based on the “serious nature and/or frequency of the allegations,” CRCL announced in February 2024 that it was conducting a multidisciplinary onsite investigation at El Paso.⁴

¹ Memo from DHS Office of CRCL, Multidisciplinary Onsite Investigation of El Paso Service Processing Center, (February 8, 2024), https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/2024-05/24_0208_crcl-retention-memo-ice-onsite-el-paso-spc_508.pdf.

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*

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Based on my recent inspection and public reporting about issues facing this facility, I request a response to the following questions no later than July 8, 2024.

Complaints Against Facility and Staff

1. During my inspection, I observed at least one guard with no observable identification tags or insignia wearing a balaclava and wraparound sunglasses that obscured his face. When I inquired about the guard's facial coverings, ICE representatives cited the need to protect guards from dusty conditions. At the time of my inspection, there were no dust storms or other conditions indicating a need for non-medical grade face coverings.
 - a. What is ICE's policy on staff, including security and detention officers, wearing full facial coverings?
 - b. Does ICE require that staff, including security and detention officers, wear name badges or otherwise make themselves identifiable?
2. Please describe the process by which detainees can file complaints against facility staff, including an explanation of how such grievances are brought if a staff member is not identifiable. Please include an explanation of CBP's process for investigating complaints against staff members who are not identified by name.
3. Please provide my office a copy of any reports and accompanying materials following the completion of the CRCL investigation discussed above.

El Paso Service Processing Center Complaints

1. Please provide a complete list of every complaint filed by a detainee against staff at this facility since 2018, including: (a) the details of each complaint, such as the nature and date of the allegations, (b) steps taken to investigate each complaint; (c) whether and how each complaint was resolved, and (d) what disciplinary actions, if any, were taken in response to each complaint.
2. What is ICE's policy to protect detainees who file complaints against staff from retaliation?

Contraband

1. Please provide a full accounting of all contraband seized or identified since 2018.

El Paso Service Processing Center Camera System

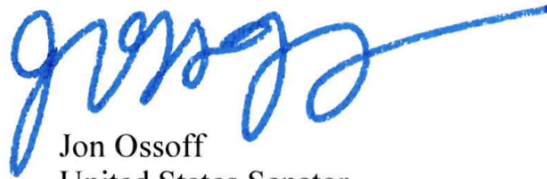
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1. Please provide a detailed assessment of the facility security camera system, including: (a) the make, model, and number of cameras employed throughout the facility, (b) a complete description of the cameras' memory and data storage capacity, (c) how much of the facility is covered by security cameras, and (d) a diagram and description of all of the facility's blind spots that lack security camera coverage.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Should you have any questions, please contact my Chief Counsel Sara Schaumburg at sara_schaumburg@ossoff.senate.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon Ossoff", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jon Ossoff
United States Senator