

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 7, 2025

The Honorable Joseph Cuffari
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane SW
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Inspector General Cuffari:

I write to follow up on my previous letter requesting that the U.S. Departments of Homeland Security (DHS) and Justice (DOJ) Offices of Inspectors General (OIGs) establish and deploy a joint DHS OIG and DOJ OIG Investigative Task Force to conduct independent investigation of officer involved use of force incidents related to Operation Midway Blitz.

While I appreciate the seriousness with which DHS OIG and DOJ OIG are reviewing my request, I want to reiterate my sense of urgency in the importance of acting swiftly to ensure DHS OIG and DOJ OIG criminal investigators and other personnel are on the ground in Chicago and surrounding communities to provide objective reviews of deeply troubling use of force incidents and hold government officials accountable for any violations of the Constitution, Federal law, Federal regulation or agency policy.

Since I submitted my initial request, a Federal District Court has determined that DHS use of force under Operation Midway Blitz “shocks the conscience” and violated a prior Federal court order. Particularly alarming is that during court proceedings, the commander of Operation Midway Blitz, Border Patrol official Gregory Bovino, admitted that he lied about being hit with a rock when he tried to dishonestly defend his illegal use of a chemical agent, tear gas, against Americans exercising a core constitutional right. Simply put, DHS is operating like an agency that believes it is unaccountable to the public and above the law.

In addition, despite me and others calling on DHS to prevent officer involved use of force incidents near school properties, on November 5, 2025, armed ICE agents targeted a teacher in the Roscoe Village area of Chicago. These agents chased the teacher into the daycare center where she works—reportedly pursuant to a legal work authorization—and violently dragged her out of the facility. Not only did ICE lack a judicial warrant to apprehend this individual, but ICE agents allegedly ignored the teacher’s attempts to explain that she had a pending asylum case and provide documentation proving she was legally authorized to work in the United States. Since this shocking incident, multiple outraged constituents have contacted my office to share the harrowing and traumatic experience of toddlers and young children witnessing ICE agents violently assaulting a beloved daycare teacher.

Arresting teachers and hardworking neighbors with no criminal record is a grotesque abuse of Federal power that fails to make our communities safe.

The people of Illinois, and the United States, deserve a Federal Government that keeps them safe and takes accountability for any unconstitutional or unlawful violations committed by officers in the line of duty. Instead, time and time again, incident after incident, DHS spokesperson Tricia McLaughlin responds to legitimate public questions with false narratives that are nearly always subsequently contradicted by camera footage of the incidents in question.

DHS's disturbing pattern and practice of releasing dishonest and misleading statements that contradict facts on the ground calls into the question the veracity of any DHS incident accounts where camera footage is unavailable. Accordingly, as DHS OIG coordinates with DOJ OIG on my request to deploy a Joint Investigative Task Force to bring desperately needed oversight, transparency and accountability to Operation Midway Blitz, I also ask that DHS OIG take prudent action and immediately issue a preservation order requiring that DHS cease and disclose any destruction or alteration of records, documents or data relevant to the anticipated investigation into the alarming use of force incidents in Chicago and surrounding communities.

The integrity and accuracy of any DHS OIG independent investigation depends on preserving key evidence. DHS's shocking dishonesty in describing Operation Midway Blitz events—which includes making false claims and failing to provide credible evidence during Federal court proceedings—justifies DHS OIG's expeditious action to protect documentary evidence from illegal and improper destruction or alteration.

Thank you again for your consideration of my prior request for the establishment and deployment of a DHS OIG-DOJ OIG Joint Investigative Task Force to conduct independent investigations of Operation Midway Blitz use of force incidents, and thank you in advance for your consideration of my related ask that DHS OIG immediately issue a preservation order in anticipation of future use of force incident investigations.

Sincerely,



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator