

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

July 28, 2025

The Honorable Pete Hegseth
Secretary
U.S. Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
300 7th St SW
Washington, DC 20024

The Honorable Todd Lyons
Acting Director
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
500 12th ST SW
Washington, DC 20536

Dear Secretary Hegseth, Secretary Noem, and Acting Director Lyons:

We are writing to express serious concerns regarding the July 15, 2025 notice from Secretary Hegseth outlining the Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) intent to house undocumented immigrants at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst (JBMDL).

Given the limited information provided, we believe further transparency is necessary to ensure JBMDL's mission readiness is not compromised. Additionally, we want to ensure all individuals detained at the base are afforded humane living conditions, legal representation, and due process.

We understand the Secretary has authorized contracted support from Military Departments for the operation of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)-managed holding facilities at JBMDL, including the use of real property. JBMDL will not be reimbursed for this support except for services provided by McGuire Field. This raises serious concerns about the diversion of critical defense resources from national security priorities.

According to recent reports, JBMDL may house 1,000 to 3,000 single adult, low-threat undocumented immigrants. While U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement will oversee care, this administration's record on immigration detention demands close scrutiny. It is essential that constitutional rights are upheld and that detainees are treated with dignity and provided adequate medical care.

JBMDL is a critical power projection platform and must not be politicized as part of this administration's immigration agenda. Ongoing training and operations at the base must not be disrupted.

Despite outreach, our requests for meetings with the Deputy Secretary of Defense and Acting Administrator of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement remain unanswered. On July 25, 2025, Congressmen Norcross and Conaway visited JBMDL and learned that while no final decision has been made on the construction or activation of the proposed intermediate staging base (ISB), all operational control lies with DHS and ICE.

We now request a prompt briefing and written response to the following questions by **August 15, 2025**.

1. Timeline for Operations

- a. A July 24 email from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for House Affairs indicated that the Department of Defense does not anticipate operations beginning this fiscal year. Can DHS confirm that no undocumented immigrants will be housed at JBMDL before September 30, 2025?
- b. In the interim, what preparations are underway to ensure suitable living conditions?
- c. How long will JBMDL be used for this immigration operation?

2. Facility Construction and Base Operations

- a. According to officials at JBMDL, construction of an ISB has not begun, however, we still lack clarity regarding a proposed location for such a facility. How will the facility be built to avoid disrupting daily base operations?

3. Reimbursement and Funding

- a. The DoD has historically fulfilled requests for assistance involving the use of JBMDL on a reimbursable basis. Why is the DoD not requiring the DHS to reimburse all associated operational expenses?
- b. Which DoD accounts will fund non-reimbursable costs?
- c. What specific costs, aside from those associated with McGuire Field, will DHS reimburse, if any?

4. Detainee Qualifications and Care

- a. Who determines which individuals qualify for detention at JBMDL?

- b. Will all detainees be guaranteed humane conditions, legal counsel, due process, and medical services?
- c. Where will medical care be provided?
- d. What safeguards will ensure U.S. citizens are not detained?
- e. How long will detainees be held at JBMDL before being processed out of the base?
- f. How will detainees be processed out of the base?

5. Coordination with Local Authorities

- a. How will DHS coordinate with local authorities to maintain public safety in surrounding communities?

We appreciate your attention to these concerns and look forward to a detailed response.

Sincerely,



Herbert C. Conaway, Jr.
Member of Congress



Donald Norcross
Member of Congress



Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



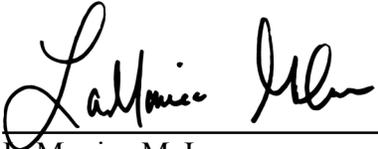
Frank Pallone, Jr.
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