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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6275

January 14, 2026

### VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

The Honorable Kristi Noem  
Secretary  
Department of Homeland Security

Ha Nguyen McNeill  
Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Administrator  
Transportation Security Administration

Dear Secretary Noem and Ms. McNeill:

As you are aware, public reporting has emerged regarding deplorable fraud schemes in Minnesota that deliberately targeted federal programs designed to assist children with autism,<sup>1</sup> the elderly,<sup>2</sup> and small businesses.<sup>3</sup> Testimony before Congress on January 7, 2026, has also alleged that the Walz administration retaliated against whistleblowers who tried to expose this fraud on behalf of the American people.<sup>4</sup> If true, such retaliation cannot go unpunished.

Any attempt to steal taxpayer money is utterly unacceptable; however, these crimes are especially heinous when they target programs which support Americans struggling to care for their children or elderly relatives.

On December 28, 2025, Director Patel announced that the FBI had deployed strategic personnel and resources to Minnesota.<sup>5</sup> On January 7, 2026, Attorney General Bondi announced that the Department of Justice had sent additional prosecutors to Minnesota.<sup>6</sup>

Allegations of fraud in federal programs have extended far beyond Minnesota and have raised serious questions that this criminal activity has operated on a national scale.<sup>7</sup> On January 6, 2026, the Trump HHS reportedly froze \$10 billion in federal funding for programs in Minnesota, New York, California, Illinois, and Colorado.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Justice, Press Release, *First Defendant Charged in Autism Fraud Scheme*, (Sept. 24, 2025) <https://www.justice.gov/usao-mn/pr/first-defendant-charged-autism-fraud-scheme-0>.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Justice, Press Release, *Defendants Charged in First Wave of Housing Stabilization Fraud Cases*, (Sep. 18, 2025) <https://www.justice.gov/usao-mn/pr/defendants-charged-first-wave-housing-stabilization-fraud-cases>.

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Mark Miller, FOX NEWS, *Lawmakers probe SBA loans linked to Minnesota's \$9B fraud scandal: 'Reckless decision making'*, (Dec. 23, 2025) <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/lawmakers-probe-sba-loans-linked-to-minnesotas-9b-fraud-scandal-reckless-decision-making>.

<sup>4</sup> Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Hearing, *Oversight of Fraud and Misuse of Federal Funds in Minnesota: Part I*, (Jan. 7, 2026) <https://oversight.house.gov/hearing/oversight-of-fraud-and-misuse-of-federal-funds-in-minnesota-part-i/>.

<sup>5</sup> @FBI DirectorKash, X, (Dec. 28, 2025), <https://x.com/FBIDirectorKash/status/2005305530651189719>.

<sup>6</sup> Sarah N. Lynch & Jennifer Jacobs, CBS NEWS, *Justice Dept. to surge prosecutors to Minnesota amid fraud allegations*, (Jan. 7, 2026) <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/justice-dept-surge-prosecutors-minnesota-amid-fraud-allegations/>.

<sup>7</sup> See e.g., Department of Justice, Press Release, *Two Massachusetts Men Charged with Large-Scale SNAP Benefits Trafficking*, (Dec. 17, 2025) <https://www.justice.gov/usao-ma/pr/two-massachusetts-men-charged-large-scale-snap-benefits-trafficking>; Department of Justice, Press Release, *Mississippi Businessman Pleads Guilty to \$19M Health Care Fraud Conspiracy*, (Nov. 20, 2025) <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/mississippi-businessman-pleads-guilty-19m-health-care-fraud-conspiracy>.

<sup>8</sup> Minh Kim, THE NEW YORK TIMES, *Health Dept. Freezes \$10 Billion in Funding to 5 Democratic States*, (Jan. 6, 2026) <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/06/us/politics/child-care-funding-cuts-trump.html>.

On January 8, the Trump administration announced the creation of a new division within the Department of Justice for national fraud enforcement, including the appointment of a new Assistant Attorney General responsible for prosecuting these crimes.<sup>9</sup>

According to reports, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) officials recently stated that the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) had “flagged nearly \$700 million in cash detected in passengers’ luggage leaving the Minneapolis airport the last two years.”<sup>10</sup> The DHS officials further stated that “the cash movements out of Minnesota’s largest airport began a decade ago – around the time Democrat Gov. Tim Walz took office – and has grown substantially in recent years.”<sup>11</sup>

Reports have further stated that while the large volume of cash was “legally declared according to U.S. Customs rules,” TSA agents routinely flagged the cash movements, “but there was little curiosity during the Biden administration” to conduct further investigations.<sup>12</sup> However, under the Trump DHS, Homeland Security Investigations is reportedly looking into the matter “as part of a broader probe into a multibillion dollar fraud scheme” in Minnesota.<sup>13</sup>

These are important steps to take. I encourage you to facilitate whistleblowers because in widespread fraud schemes like these, whistleblowers will be your greatest assets and allies. Should they come forward, you must protect them.

I have dedicated my career to exposing waste, fraud and abuse within government programs. I appreciate your efforts to root out waste, fraud and abuse. To better understand your agency’s efforts to safeguard the American taxpayer and to ensure the integrity of federal programs, provide answers to the following no later than January 28, 2026:

1. What policies, procedures, and practices do TSA officers use in determining whether an amount of cash is suspicious and potentially criminal? Is there a threshold amount? Are there additional law enforcement agencies notified depending on the circumstances? Please explain.
2. Does the TSA collect and analyze data on the frequency of substantial cash declarations at specific airports such as the Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport (MSP)? If so, please provide all records related to all discoveries of large cash volumes at MSP for the calendar years 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> The White House, *Fact Sheet: President Donald J. Trump Establishes New Department of Justice Division for National Fraud Enforcement*, (Jan. 8, 2026) <https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2026/01/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-establishes-new-department-of-justice-division-for-national-fraud-enforcement/>.

<sup>10</sup> John Solomon, JUST THE NEWS, *Feds probe hundreds of millions in suspected Somali cash in luggage leaving Minneapolis airport*, (Jan. 6, 2026) <https://justthenews.com/government/security/wedfeds-probing-hundreds-millions-suspected-somali-cash-luggage-leaving>.

<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

<sup>13</sup> *Id.*

<sup>14</sup> “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), calendar entries, inter-office communications, meeting minutes, phone/voice mail or recordings/records of verbal communications, and drafts (whether they resulted in final documents).

3. Is the total volume of cash flagged at the MSP for the calendar years of 2021-2025 larger than the typical cash outflows tracked at other major U.S. airports (e.g., Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta (ATL), Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW), Chicago O'Hare (ORD), and Los Angeles (LAX))? If it is larger, by how much?
4. Will you commit to aiding Congress in its constitutional duty to conduct oversight by providing records relating to your fraud investigations and findings? The public has a right to know how TSA is rooting out waste, fraud, and abuse.

Thank you for your prompt review and response. If you have any questions, please contact Ross Berg or Ethan Barnes with my Committee staff at (202) 224-5225.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley  
Chairman  
Committee on the Judiciary