

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 25, 2025

The Honorable Gene L. Dodaro
Comptroller General of the United States
United States Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

In January 2025, President Trump signed an Executive Order requiring the Secretary of Homeland Security to detain, to the fullest extent of the law, individuals apprehended for violations of immigration law until their removal from the United States.¹ It further directed the Secretary of Homeland Security to allocate all legally available resources or establish contracts to construct, operate, control, or use facilities to detain individuals for removal purposes. In July 2025, Congress appropriated \$45 billion for detention capacity to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)—the lead agency within the Department of Homeland Security responsible for providing safe, secure, and humane confinement for detained foreign nationals in the United States.

In response, ICE has begun contracting for additional detention facility space, including awards for temporary soft-sided facilities. This includes a \$1.2 billion contract for a large up to 5,000 detention facility on the Fort Bliss Army base called “Camp East Montana.”² This contract was awarded to “Acquisition Logistics LLC, a small business that has no listed experience running a correction facility and had never won a federal contract worth more than \$16 million.”³ According to documents reviewed by the Washington Post, ICE plans to more than double its detention capacity by the end of this year, to 107,000.⁴ This past fiscal year, Congress allocated funds for 41,500 immigration detention beds and currently ICE is detaining around 60,000

¹ Exec. Order No. 14159, 90 Fed. Reg. 8443 (Jan. 20, 2025) (“Protecting the American People Against Invasion”).

² Michael Biesecker and Joshua Goodman, *Mystery Surrounds \$1.2 Billion Army Contract to Build Huge Detention Tent Camp in Texas Desert*, PBS (Aug. 28, 2025).

³ *Id.*

⁴ Douglas MacMilian, N. Kirkpatrick, and Lydia Sidhom, *ICE Documents Reveal Plan to Double Immigrant Detention Space This Year*, WASHINGTON POST (Aug. 15, 2025),

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/immigration/2025/08/15/ice-documents-reveal-plan-double-immigrant-detention-space-this-year/>.

individuals in detention.⁵ ICE has also reportedly given a \$2.25 million no bid contract to a Republican donor with a history of fraud.⁶

GAO and the DHS Office of Inspector General have previously identified challenges with ICE's detention facility contracts and agreements. For example, in January 2021, GAO found that ICE had a process for obtaining new detention space, but did not follow it for most of its recent acquisitions.⁷ Specifically, ICE did not document its need for space, conduct outreach to local officials, or provide the basis for its decisions, as required by ICE's guidance. The report also found that ICE's contract oversight structure did not provide sufficient independence. In February 2018, the DHS Office of Inspector General found that ICE did not follow federal procurement guidelines when contracting for detention services, including improperly modifying agreements.⁸ Then in January 2019, the DHS Office of Inspector General found that ICE did not adequately hold detention facility contractors accountable for meeting performance standards.⁹

Given the increase in ICE detention facilities and concerns previously identified by GAO and the DHS Office of Inspector General, we request that GAO assess the following:

1. How ICE has acquired contract detention facilities in coordination with other federal agencies since January 2025, including examining any potential conflicts of interest between government officials and those who were awarded contracts.
2. The extent to which the terms of ICE's detention contracts have changed over time, if at all.
3. Challenges, if any, ICE or other agencies have encountered soliciting and awarding contracts for detention facilities since January 2025.
4. The steps ICE or other agencies are taking to provide oversight of contractor performance on selected detention facility contract awards since January 2025, and challenges, if any, overseeing contractor performance.
5. Other issues GAO deems appropriate.

⁵ Camilo Montoya-Galvez, *ICE Holding a Record 59,000 Immigrant Detainees, Nearly Half with No Criminal Record*, *Internal Data Show*, CBS NEWS (June 24, 2025), <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ice-record-59000-immigrant-detainees-half-no-criminal-record/>

⁶ Jason Paladino, *ICE Gives No-Bid SUV Contract to Republican Donor with History of Fraud*, ZATEO (Aug. 27, 2025), <https://zeteo.com/p/ice-no-bid-contract-republican-donor-fraud-history>.

⁷ GAO, *Immigration Detention: Actions Needed to Improve Planning, Documentation, and Oversight of Detention Facility Contracts*, [GAO-21-149](#) (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 13, 2021).

⁸ DHS OIG 18-53, *Immigration and Customs Enforcement Did Not Follow Federal Procurement Guidelines When Contracting for Detention Services* (Feb. 21, 2018).

⁹ DHS OIG 19-18, *ICE Does Not Fully Use Contracting Tools to Hold Detention Facility Contractors Accountable for Failing to Meet Performance Standards* (Jan. 29, 2019).

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Pramila Jayapal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Pramila" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Jayapal".

PRAMILA JAYAPAL

Ranking Member

Subcommittee on Immigration Integrity, Security, and Enforcement

House Committee on the Judiciary