

ROGER F. WICKER
MISSISSIPPI

ARMED SERVICES
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION
COMMISSION ON SECURITY
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

SUITE 425
RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
(202) 224-6253
www.wicker.senate.gov

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 3, 2026

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Secretary of Homeland Security
707 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Noem:

It has come to my attention that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is in the final stages of acquiring a warehouse facility in Byhalia, Mississippi, and intends to convert it into an ICE detention center. While I support the enforcement of immigration law, I write to express my opposition to this acquisition and the proposed detention center.

This site is currently positioned for economic development purposes. It represents an opportunity for job creation, private investment, and long-term economic growth in Marshall County. The county is already experiencing meaningful growth and increased interest from employers seeking to locate or expand in North Mississippi. Preserving limited, development-ready industrial sites is essential to sustaining this growth. Converting this industrial asset into an ICE detention center forecloses economic growth opportunities and replaces them with a use that does not generate comparable economic returns or community benefits.

The proposed conversion also raises serious feasibility concerns. Detention facilities impose substantial and specialized infrastructure demands—including transportation access, water, sewer and energy costs, staffing, medical care, and emergency services. From my understanding, the ICE detention facility would have a capacity exceeding 8,500 beds. Existing medical and human services infrastructure in Byhalia is insufficient to support such a large detainee population. Establishing a detention center at this site would place significant strain on local resources.

Additionally, many of my constituents have voiced concerns regarding the public safety, medical capacity, and economic impacts this center would impose on their communities. Proceeding with this acquisition without adequately addressing these issues disregards community input.

I strongly urge ICE to reconsider this acquisition and the development of a detention center in Byhalia, Mississippi. I look forward to your prompt response and request that you keep me informed of this acquisition and any future ICE contracting proposals affecting the state of Mississippi. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,


Roger F. Wicker
United States Senator

cc: Mr. Todd M. Lyons
Acting Director, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement