

RAND PAUL, KENTUCKY, CHAIRMAN
RON JOHNSON, WISCONSIN
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA
RICK SCOTT, FLORIDA
JOSH HAWLEY, MISSOURI
BERNIE MORENO, OHIO
JONI ERNST, IOWA
ASHLEY MOODY, FLORIDA
GARY C. PETERS, MICHIGAN
MARGARET WOOD HASSAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, CONNECTICUT
JOHN FETTERMAN, PENNSYLVANIA
ANDY KIM, NEW JERSEY
RUBEN GALLEGOS, ARIZONA
ELISSA SLOTKIN, MICHIGAN

United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

October 23, 2025

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

Dear Inspector General Cuffari,

I write to request that you investigate the potential misuse of taxpayer dollars by Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Kristi Noem following reports that DHS has contracted to purchase two private jets for the personal use of Sec. Noem, costing up to \$200 million.¹ If true, these actions further call into question Sec. Noem's judgment and leadership, and add to the alarming record of waste and corruption by the Trump Administration within DHS.

Press reports reveal that DHS has signed a contract to purchase two Gulfstream private jets for Sec. Noem and other top DHS officials, with cost estimates ranging between \$172 million and \$200 million.² Gulfstream describes the jets as "the pinnacle of business aviation excellence," with the largest interior cabin of any jet the company makes, up to five living areas, and an "all-new ultragalley and a grand suite with shower."³ The reported \$200 million price tag far surpasses the U.S. Coast Guard's previous estimate of \$50 million to replace one Gulfstream jet.⁴ In May, Sec. Noem testified before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee that DHS requested the \$50 million to replace one Coast Guard jet that was

¹ Catie Edmondson, *Coast Guard Buys Two Private Jets for Noem, Costing \$172 Million*, The New York Times (Oct. 18, 2025) (www.nytimes.com/2025/10/18/us/politics/kristi-noem-dhs-gulfstream.html); Marianne LeVine and Gerrit De Vynck, *DHS to spend \$200 million on private jets for Noem, other officials*, The Washington Post (Oct. 18, 2025) (www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/10/18/noem-jets-dhs-purchase/).

² Catie Edmondson, *Coast Guard Buys Two Private Jets for Noem, Costing \$172 Million*, The New York Times (Oct. 18, 2025) (www.nytimes.com/2025/10/18/us/politics/kristi-noem-dhs-gulfstream.html); Marianne LeVine and Gerrit De Vynck, *DHS to spend \$200 million on private jets for Noem, other officials*, The Washington Post (Oct. 18, 2025) (www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/10/18/noem-jets-dhs-purchase/).

³ Gulfstream, *Industry Flagship* (www.gulfstream.com/en/aircraft/gulfstream-g700/) (accessed Oct. 21, 2025).

⁴ Catie Edmondson, *Coast Guard Buys Two Private Jets for Noem, Costing \$172 Million*, The New York Times (Oct. 18, 2025) (www.nytimes.com/2025/10/18/us/politics/kristi-noem-dhs-gulfstream.html); Marianne LeVine and Gerrit De Vynck, *DHS to spend \$200 million on private jets for Noem, other officials*, The Washington Post (Oct. 18, 2025) (www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/10/18/noem-jets-dhs-purchase/).

“beyond its usable hours”; Sec. Noem made no mention of the need for a second jet, nor of the cost ballooning to \$200 million.⁵

Trump Administration officials’ misuse of taxpayer funds for personal luxury is not new, but the current Trump Administration has been unapologetic in its corruption, waste, and self-dealing. In 2017 during the first Trump Administration, press reports revealed that then-Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Tom Price was flying on private jets, costing taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars more than commercial travel.⁶ I wrote to the HHS Office of Inspector General (OIG) at the time to request that they investigate,⁷ and in response the OIG issued a report that found that Sec. Price’s flights violated federal regulations and wasted at least \$341,000 in federal funds.⁸ Sec. Price resigned in the wake of that scandal, but the Trump Administration now stands behind Sec. Noem’s spending of \$200 million on two private jets.

These reports of wasteful spending are particularly concerning as they come after Sec. Noem implemented a requirement that she personally approve all DHS contracts over \$100,000.⁹ While DHS claimed the purpose of that policy is to eliminate wasteful spending, it reportedly caused a backlog of hundreds of “mission critical” contracts, such as for the response to the Texas floods this past summer, airport screenings, inspections of homes damaged by natural disasters, and a Coast Guard training center.¹⁰ This also follows reports that Sec. Noem was “living for free in a military home typically reserved for the U.S. Coast Guard’s top admiral.”¹¹

This pattern demonstrates how unrestrained the Trump Administration is in its corruption and waste of taxpayer dollars. Instead of working to root out actual waste, the Trump Administration is cancelling vital services while spending \$200 million in taxpayer dollars for private jets for Administration officials.

⁵ Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, *Hearing on The Department of Homeland Security’s Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2026*, 119th Cong. (May 20, 2025) (S. Hrg. 119-101).

⁶ Dan Diamond and Rachana Pradhan, *Price’s private-jet travel breaks precedent*, Politico (Sept. 19, 2017) (www.politico.com/story/2017/09/19/tom-price-chartered-planes-flights-242908).

⁷ See Letter from Sen. Gary Peters, *et al.*, to Hon. Daniel R. Levinson, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Sept. 20, 2017).

⁸ Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General, *The Office of the Secretary of Health and Human Services Did Not Comply with Federal Regulations for Chartered Aircraft and Other Government Travel Related to Former Secretary Price* (A-12-17-00002) (Jul. 2018).

⁹ Maxine Joselow, Alexandra Berzon, and Eli Murray, *Noem’s Spending Rule Causes Delays at Homeland Security Dept.*, The New York Times (Aug. 21, 2025) (www.nytimes.com/2025/08/21/us/kristi-noem-spending-contracts-homeland-security-department.html).

¹⁰ Maxine Joselow, Alexandra Berzon, and Eli Murray, *Noem’s Spending Rule Causes Delays at Homeland Security Dept.*, The New York Times (Aug. 21, 2025) (www.nytimes.com/2025/08/21/us/kristi-noem-spending-contracts-homeland-security-department.html).

¹¹ Marianne LeVine, Liz Goodwin, and Dan Lamothe, *Kristi Noem is living rent-free in home used by Coast Guard commandant*, The Washington Post (Aug. 15, 2025) (www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/08/15/kristi-noem-is-living-free-charge-coast-guard-commandants-home/).

I therefore request that you conduct a review and determine:

1. The total cost of the two jets to the federal government.
2. DHS's justification for contracting with Gulfstream to purchase the two jets, including justification for why the estimated purchase amount increased from \$50 million to \$200 million.
 - a. What type of contracting vehicle did DHS use to purchase the jets? Was that use appropriate?
 - b. What is DHS's planned use of the jets, including which officials will primarily use them?
3. The extent to which all applicable federal laws, regulations, and travel policies were followed in the contracting and purchase of the jets.
4. The extent to which the contracting and purchase of the jets complied with DHS contracting requirements.
 - a. Were the appropriate cost estimates, justifications, and approvals performed?
 - b. Did Sec. Noem personally review and approve the contracting and purchase of the jets, in accordance with the Secretary's policy to personally review and approve all contracts worth over \$100,000?
5. Whether Sec. Noem reimbursed or committed to reimbursing DHS for her personal (unofficial) use of the private jets, and if so, how much.
6. Whether any DHS personnel raised concerns about the purchase of these two private jets, and if so, how those concerns were addressed.

Sincerely,



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee
on Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs