

CHRIS PAPPAS  
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COMMITTEE ON  
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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives

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February 13, 2026

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chair  
House Appropriations Committee  
H-307 Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
1036 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mark Amodei  
Chair  
House Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
104 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Henry Cuellar  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
1410 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Cole, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chair Amodei, and Ranking Member Cuellar:

As you continue negotiations regarding funding for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), I urge you to include language to preserve state and local autonomy regarding Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) efforts to establish immigrant processing and detention facilities.

In December 2025, the Washington Post reported that ICE was planning to establish new processing and detention facilities — including in the Town of Merrimack, New Hampshire, which I represent — without appropriate consultation with affected state and local governments. Following that reporting, congressional, state, and local officials submitted multiple requests to ICE seeking additional information, all of which went unanswered.

On January 23, 2026, the Merrimack Town Council sent a formal letter of opposition to the proposed facility to DHS Secretary Kristi Noem, citing significant concerns regarding increased strain on law enforcement and emergency services, as well as negative impacts on the local economy. To date, ICE has not meaningfully engaged with local officials regarding these concerns. On February 11, 2026, ICE Deputy Director Charles Wall confirmed to me that ICE is planning for, and has begun taking concrete steps toward, the establishment of a processing facility in Merrimack.

The decision to proceed with these ICE facilities at great cost to the taxpayer and with seemingly no input from local officials or the community is at odds with New Hampshire's longstanding commitment to limited government and local control. As the representative for Merrimack, I strongly urge you to include language in any funding bill for the Department of Homeland Security that protects the ability of states and localities to make decisions about what is best for their citizens and prevents DHS from forcing on a community a detention facility that the community does not want.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my office if you would like additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Pappas". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Chris Pappas  
Member of Congress