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# United States Senate

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

April 30, 2026

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Mullin:

I urge the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to reconsider its plans to convert two warehouse facilities in Schuylkill County and Berks County, Pennsylvania into Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) processing and detention centers. I have written to DHS about this issue previously, and I am encouraged to hear that the department is currently reviewing the purchase of these warehouse facilities across the country made by previous agency leadership. While I strongly support enforcement of federal immigration laws, I oppose the conversion of these warehouses into ICE facilities. These conversions will place undue burdens on existing infrastructure in these communities, and significantly damage local tax bases.

As you may know, in January 2026, DHS proposed converting a warehouse facility in Tremont Township, in Schuylkill County, into a 7,500-bed detention center. In Upper Bern Township, in Berks County, DHS is in the process of converting an additional warehouse into a 1,500-bed processing center. DHS purchased these facilities without consulting local and state officials or providing an explanation for why DHS and ICE selected these communities for large-scale detention operations. My constituents and I are deeply frustrated that DHS and ICE made the decision to purchase these facilities without any local input yet expect these communities to shoulder the infrastructure, public safety, sanitation, and economic burdens imposed on them.

Detention facilities impose unique and substantial demands on the infrastructure of the community and neighboring communities. For example, large-scale detention facilities require:

- Adequate access to water and sewage systems or the ability to expand existing systems;
- Increased demand on local electrical grids;
- Coordination with local law enforcement and emergency services capacity; and
- Proximity to appropriate medical facilities.

Neither Tremont Township nor Upper Bern Township currently have the capacity to meet these demands. Tremont Township officials are particularly concerned that the proposed 7,500-bed detention facility would quadruple the existing burden on their public infrastructure, especially on their water and sewer system. In addition to not consulting with these communities prior to the purchase, DHS and ICE have not provided any information on how they plan to address these

demands on local infrastructure. It is wildly irresponsible to place these burdens on these communities, and it is outrageous to expect them to work with DHS without being consulted.

Additionally, the acquisition of these facilities represents a combined loss of over \$1.6 million in local tax revenue per year for Schuylkill and Berks counties. This loss of vital tax dollars compounds concerns over the ability of these municipalities to meet the infrastructure needs of these facilities and would place undue strain upon the budgets of local governments and school districts in the region.

Based on these significant concerns, it appears that DHS and ICE did not perform any due diligence before spending more than \$200 million in taxpayer dollars for warehouses that cannot be adequately converted into ICE processing and detention facilities.

To better understand DHS's goals and decision-making process, I request that DHS and ICE provide the following before moving forward with either project:

1. All relevant pre-purchase documentation for these facilities, including any documents related to site evaluation and economic impact modeling;
2. A detailed impact assessment addressing infrastructure, public safety, public health, economic development, and fiscal concerns for these communities;
3. A commitment that federal funds will cover all necessary infrastructure upgrades and ongoing costs associated with these facilities; and
4. A commitment to a period of public engagement and dialogue with these communities.

I appreciate your attention to this matter, and I hope to receive your response no later than May 14, 2026.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John Fetterman', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

John Fetterman  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Border Management,  
Federal Workforce, and Regulatory Affairs