

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 23, 2025

Secretary Kristi Noem
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20528

Secretary Peter Hegseth
U.S. Department of Defense
1000 Defense Blvd
Washington, VA 20301

Dear Secretaries Noem and Hegseth,

We write to express our outrage at the ongoing and recently proposed expansion of detention of immigrants at Guantánamo Bay. For over two decades, Guantánamo Bay has been synonymous with injustice, torture, and Islamophobia. President Trump’s decision to hold thousands of immigrants—many of whom are asylum seekers and refugees—in a facility notorious for human rights abuses is morally abhorrent and unlawful. As long as the detention facilities at Guantánamo remain open, lawless presidents will seek to use them. We call for an immediate halt to the use of Guantánamo for migrant detention and for the permanent closure of the base’s two detention facilities.

Since February, the Trump administration has already cruelly detained around 500 immigrants in dismal conditions in both Guantánamo’s infamous military detention facility and its Migrant Operations Center (MOC). While lesser known than the military site, the MOC detention facility at Guantánamo has likewise served as a site of appalling abuse and mistreatment of detainees.¹ Since the start of the Trump administration’s use of these facilities, immigrant detainees have suffered significant abuses at these sites. According to a February 2025 report, immigrants detained at Camp 6, one of Guantánamo’s military detention facilities, were subjected to inhumane treatment, including prolonged isolation, denial of legal counsel, and degrading conditions.² Confined to windowless cells, they were subjected to invasive strip searches and had minimal outdoor access. There are currently believed to be around 70 immigrant detainees at Guantánamo, subjected to dehumanizing conditions, such as “insufficient food, weekly changes of clothes and rodent infestation.”³ This is unacceptable.

Now, new reporting indicates that the Trump administration is planning to expand these abuses and unconstitutionally detain at least 9,000 more immigrants at Guantánamo.⁴ We cannot allow this cruelty to happen. Continuing to use this infamous detention facility—let alone for vulnerable migrants—reinforces its existence as a global symbol of injustice. Seeking refuge is

¹ “Offshoring Human Rights: Detention of Refugees at Guantánamo Bay,” International Refugee Assistance Project, September 2024, <https://refugeerights.org/news-resources/offshoring-human-rights-detention-of-refugees-at-guantanamo-bay>.

² Silvia Foster-Frau and Ana Vanessa Herrero, “Invasive frisks, suicide attempts: Three migrants describe Guantánamo detention,” *Washington Post*, February 25, 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/immigration/2025/02/25/guantanamo-trump-migrants-deportations-venezuela/>.

³ Nahal Toosi and Myah Ward, “Trump team plans to send thousands of migrants to Guantanamo starting as soon as this week,” *Politico*, June 10, 2025, <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/06/10/trump-plans-migrants-guantanamo-bay-00396673>.

⁴ Ibid.

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not a crime, and immigrants should never be treated inhumanely. By mirroring the George W. Bush administration's dishonest rhetoric in labeling detainees at Guantánamo as "high threat" and "worst of the worst," the Trump administration is leveraging the United States' reputation as torturers to scare and vilify immigrants.⁵

Detention of immigrants at Guantánamo, specifically in Camp 6 of the military detention facility, lacks transparency and legal authority. The United States has never before sent anyone from the United States to Guantánamo, and the Trump administration has not provided any legitimate or persuasive authority under which immigrants have been taken to and detained at Guantánamo.

These detention facilities at Guantánamo should have been closed years ago. It is unacceptable that not only are they still operational, but they are being repurposed for yet another generation of unjust detention. As long as the United States maintains a detention facility at Guantánamo, future administrations will continue to use it to try and deprive non-citizens of meaningful access to the courts and the full protections of U.S. and international law.

We call on the administration to immediately halt the use of Guantánamo for migrant detention, close the detention facilities for good, and ensure that all detained individuals are treated with dignity, due process, and the protections guaranteed under both U.S. and international law.

Sincerely,



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



Greg Casar
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress




Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

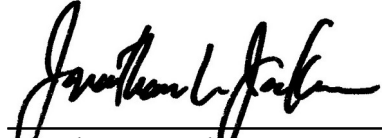
⁵ Silvia Foster-Frau, Ana Vanessa Herrero and María Luisa Paúl, "Relatives and records cast doubt on Guantánamo migrants being 'worst of the worst,'" *Washington Post*, February 16, 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/immigration/2025/02/16/trump-guantanamo-migrants-deportations-venezuela/>.

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