

United States Senate

February 19, 2026

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 you today to request that your office open an investigation into whether statements made by senior Trump Administration officials regarding the deaths of Renee Good and Alex Pretti biased, impeded, or otherwise improperly affected DHS investigations into the killings of Ms. Good and Mr. Pretti.

On January 7, 2026, Renee Good was shot and killed by an officer of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Roughly two hours later, the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) X account posted the following statement: "Today, ICE officers in Minneapolis were conducting targeted operations when rioters began blocking ICE officers and one of these violent rioters weaponized her vehicle, attempting to run over our law enforcement officers in an attempt to kill them—an act of domestic terrorism."¹ Roughly one hour later, Stephen Miller, Deputy White House Chief of Staff for Policy and Homeland Security Advisor, retweeted a video of Ms. Good's killing along with the words "domestic terrorism" via his X account.² That same day, roughly eight hours after Ms. Good was killed, Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem held a press conference where she described the actions of Ms. Good immediately prior to the shooting, stating in part "this appears as an attempt to kill or to cause bodily harm to agents. An act of domestic terrorism."³ Four days later Secretary Noem posted the following statement on her Secretary of DHS official X account: "You don't get to change the facts because you don't like them. What happened in Minneapolis was an act of domestic terrorism. Acts of domestic terrorism like this should be condemned by every politician and elected official. It shouldn't be hard or remotely controversial."⁴

On January 24, 2026, Alex Pretti was shot and killed by a Border Patrol Agent and a Customs and Border Protection Officer. A little over three hours later, Deputy Chief of Staff and Homeland Security Advisor Miller re-posted a statement on X from a Member of Congress that

¹ U.S. Department of Homeland Security (@DHSgov), X (Jan. 7, 2026, 12:45 PM), <https://x.com/DHSgov/status/2008958123092979817?lang=en>.

² Stephen Miller (@StephenM), X (Jan. 7, 2026, 1:35 PM), <https://x.com/StephenM/status/2008970644541854028>.

³ U.S. Department of Homeland Security (@DHSgov), X (Jan. 7, 2026, 7:23 PM), <https://x.com/DHSgov/status/2009058387418562922> (see embedded video at 1:13).

⁴ Secretary Kristi Noem (@Sec_Noem), X (Jan. 11, 2026, 9:41 AM), https://x.com/Sec_Noem/status/2010361457553051651.

discussed Mr. Pretti's killing, accompanied by the following statement (in part) from Mr. Miller: "A domestic terrorist tried to assassinate federal law enforcement and this is your response?"⁵ Slightly more than four hours later, Secretary Noem, while speaking at a press conference about the killing of Mr. Pretti stated, "this individual who came with weapons and ammunition to stop a law enforcement operation of federal law enforcement officers committed an act of domestic terrorism. That's the facts."⁶

Following the shootings of Ms. Good and Mr. Pretti, the United States Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs held an oversight hearing. On February 12, 2026, while testifying before the Committee, Todd Lyons, the Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Director for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, was asked whether Secretary Noem and Deputy Chief of Staff Miller's comments impeded or biased the investigations into whether Renee Good and Alex Pretti were domestic terrorists. During the course of this questioning, Mr. Lyons stated that "any comments that are made publicly, privately, texts, email uh, or Instagram posts, whatever, is gonna, is gonna put a bias on the information."

Mr. Lyons's comments bring to light an issue that merits immediate investigation. The head of ICE, a subordinate agency to the Department of Homeland Security, gave sworn testimony that clearly illustrates that the statements made by Secretary Noem and Mr. Miller, the two top Homeland Security personnel within our government, biased or impeded the investigations related to Ms. Good and Mr. Pretti. Mr. Lyons also confirmed that, to his knowledge, Renee Good and Alex Pretti were not domestic terrorists – further highlighting just how improper and detrimental to the independent rule of law Ms. Noem and Mr. Miller's comments were.

In light of Secretary Noem and Deputy Chief of Staff Miller's public statements calling Ms. Good and Mr. Pretti domestic terrorists, and the fact that the leader of ICE subsequently testified to Congress that comments like these inject bias into investigations, I call on you to conduct an inquiry into the impact these statements may have had on federal investigations related to the shootings of Renee Good and Alex Pretti.

Your inquiry should, at a minimum, seek to address the following issues:

1. How public statements about Renee Good and Alex Pretti made by Secretary Noem may have impacted the ability of government investigators, including government investigators within the Department of Homeland Security, to conduct an objective, independent investigation into the deaths of Renee Good and Alex Pretti.
2. What, if any, Department of Homeland Security policies or regulations may have been violated by Secretary Noem's statements.
3. What, if any, improper influence may have been exerted on investigators within the Department of Homeland Security by senior leaders of the Department, to include Secretary Noem, with regard to investigations related to the deaths of Renee Good and Alex Pretti.

⁵ Stephen Miller (@StephenM), X (Jan. 24, 2026, 1:22 PM), <https://x.com/StephenM/status/2015127971485413805>.

⁶ C-SPAN, *Homeland Security Secretary Noem Holds News Conference on Fatal Shooting by Federal Agent in Minneapolis* (Jan. 24, 2026), <https://www.c-span.org/program/news-conference/homeland-security-secretary-noem-holds-news-conference-on-fatal-shooting-by-federal-agent-in-minneapolis/672250> (see embedded video at 16:46).

4. What, if any, improper influence may have been exerted on investigators outside of the Department of Homeland Security by Department of Homeland Security leadership, including Secretary Noem, with regard to investigations related to the deaths of Renee Good and Alex Pretti.
5. Any potential adverse actions or punishments that Department of Homeland Security investigators or employees who are/were associated with any investigations related to the deaths of Renee Good and Alex Pretti may have been subjected to in relation to:
 - a. Any statements or opinions these investigators or employees may have expressed regarding Ms. Good and Mr. Pretti that differed from public statements by senior Trump administration officials, to include Secretary Noem and Deputy Chief of Staff Miller.
 - b. Any courses of investigation these investigators or employees may have proposed or pursued regarding the deaths of Ms. Good and Mr. Pretti.
6. Any recommendations to address potential issues identified.

I look forward to your prompt response to my request.

Sincerely,



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator