

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 12, 2025

The Honorable Doug Collins
Secretary
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20420

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20528

Secretary Collins and Secretary Noem:

We are deeply concerned about the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) plan to create a database of all non-United States citizens employed by or affiliated with VA, as reported by The Guardian on December 3, 2025.¹ The potential of VA data being used by DHS to advance the mass detention and deportation agenda of the Trump Administration will seed fear in noncitizens who perform duties in service to our nation's veterans. This database is yet another obvious attempt by the Trump Administration to stifle political dissent and suppress free speech through baseless threats to immigrants.

VA's approach comes at a time when nationwide healthcare provider shortages are limiting access to care for all Americans, including veterans.² Further, VA's approach also risks serious diplomatic consequences for countries where veterans reside and receive VA care and benefits. Worst of all, the proposed data collection could lead to the unlawful imprisonment or deportation of veterans who served our country and continued their service at VA, but were denied U.S. citizenship following their military service.

In response to questions from The Guardian regarding whether VA would share the data with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), VA's press secretary Peter Kasperowicz stated, "VA will share any adverse findings with the appropriate agencies to ensure anyone who is not authorized to be in the U.S. is **dealt with accordingly**."³ Kasperowicz's answer shows how little

1 Olivares, Jose, The Guardian, "Leaked memo reveals U.S. veterans affairs officials vetting non-citizen workers." December 3, 2025. Accessed at: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/dec/03/us-veterans-affairs-database-immigration>

2 Olivares, Jose, The Guardian, "Leaked memo reveals U.S. veterans affairs officials vetting non-citizen workers." December 3, 2025. Accessed at: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/dec/03/us-veterans-affairs-database-immigration>

3 Olivares, Jose, The Guardian, "Leaked memo reveals U.S. veterans affairs officials vetting non-citizen workers." December 3, 2025. Accessed at: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/dec/03/us-veterans-affairs-database-immigration>

respect and understanding the Trump Administration's officials have for the foreign-born individuals serving our veterans.

Scientific talent is global, and VA should be competing for it rather than dismissing it or endangering it. In 2023, 24.7% of active physicians in the U.S. were international medical graduates.⁴ Foreign-born individuals fill critical roles at VA as employees, contractors, and volunteers, including in research, healthcare, and benefits delivery. VA's clinical training programs are integral to ensuring veterans receive timely, high-quality care. They are programs crucial to ensuring the next generation of healthcare professionals, including physicians, surgeons, nurses, and social workers, have the skills to meet veterans' unique medical needs. Trainees of VA's programs often go on to have dual appointments at VA and civilian healthcare systems, serving communities otherwise underserved.

Research breakthroughs from non-U.S. citizens improve healthcare outcomes not only for veterans, but for the world. Some of the most important advances in veterans' health - from PTSD treatments to precision oncology - are driven by immigrant scientists and clinicians working within or alongside VA's research ecosystem. Born in Poland, Dr. Andrew Schally collaborated with and worked at the Houston and New Orleans VA hospitals before becoming a U.S. citizen.⁵ His research and discoveries concerning the peptide hormone production of the brain garnered Dr. Schally a Nobel Prize in Medicine. The impacts of his contributions to science and medicine are still felt today.

Many VA contractors rely on foreign-born talent to perform vital functions that the VA itself is not equipped to provide. For example, technology companies responsible for maintaining VA's vast IT infrastructure routinely employ H-1B visa and green card holders to work on projects for the agency. Scrutinizing work permits for contractors will add another layer of burden and increased compliance costs. We are concerned the database will have a chilling effect on contractors and their interest in working with VA.

VA's draconian approach to a noncitizen database could have damaging effects on the VA's estimated 80,000 veterans residing or receiving care overseas.⁶ The Department's actions threaten to leave veterans without access to earned healthcare and benefits. For instance, will VA collect data on overseas contractors providing compensation and pension examinations? Additionally, will VA collect data on those who provide care in the Foreign Medical Program or to veterans at VA facilities abroad? The broad, undefined nature of the phrase "*or affiliated with VA*" used throughout the memorandum cited in The Guardian leads us to worry that the data collection could sweep far beyond the walls of VA and our own borders. As a result, we have a number of serious concerns regarding how the data collection will impact our diplomatic relations with countries where veterans reside and where the VA has a presence.

⁴ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of the Inspector General. *OIG Determination of Veterans Health Administration's Severe Occupational Staffing Shortages Fiscal Year 2025* (VAOIG-25-01135-196) (August 12, 2025).

⁵ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. "Dr. Andrew Schally: Nobel Prize Laureate." Accessed at: <https://department.va.gov/history/featured-stories/andrew-schally-nobel-prize/>

⁶ *Id.*

As Members of Congress, we request answers, documents, and data in response to the following questions. All responsive answers, documents, and data must be complete and unredacted, and the files shall contain no printing restrictions.

1. Please provide a full, unredacted copy of the memo referenced in The Guardian, including any and all attachments.⁷
2. Please provide documentation sufficient to show the Department's rationale and purpose for collecting the data, including any memoranda, advisory opinions, applicable legal, regulatory, and policy precedents.
3. Please provide documentation sufficient to show the Department's rationale and purpose for collecting data on only non-U.S. citizens, including any memoranda, advisory opinions, applicable legal, regulatory, and policy precedents.
4. Please provide a full, unredacted list of veterans who have been arrested, detained, or deported since January 2025, including detailed information regarding the location where they are being held or to which they were deported. What steps have been taken to ensure coordination between VA and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to protect noncitizen veterans from removal? Will the Administration commit to facilitating the return of deported veterans who meet certain service or discharge requirements?
5. Please provide a detailed explanation of how VA and DHS will manage data related to individuals identified in the data collection who are veterans and are not U.S. citizens. Please provide copies of all communications, data, records, documents, reports, memoranda, correspondence, audio recordings, call logs, activity logs, audit trails, audit logs, notes from meetings, written agreements or other communication or any portion of any such communication, created, edited, modified, saved, or received by any former or current employee or contractor of VA regarding all matters related to collection, analysis, transmission, and use of data collected on individuals employed by or affiliated with VA who are non-U.S. citizens and are veterans.
6. How is the Department defining “affiliated with VA”, as noted in the memorandum referenced in the Guardian article?⁸ Please provide documentation sufficient to show the Department’s rationale and purpose for the inclusion of those considered under the “affiliated with VA” definition, including any memoranda, advisory opinions, applicable legal, regulatory, and policy precedents, as well as a list of those positions and/or roles affiliated with VA which are captured in the definition.

⁷ AAMC. “U.S. Physician Workforce Dashboard: 2024 Key Findings and Definitions.” Accessed at: <https://www.aamc.org/data-reports/data/2024-key-findings-and-definitions>

⁸ U.S. Government Accountability Office. *Veterans Healthcare: Actions Needed to Improve the Foreign Medical Program* (GAO 25-107149) (February 2025). Accessed at: https://files.gao.gov/reports/GAO-25-107149/index.html?_gl=1*gg1sp5*_ga*NDY5Nzc1NTcxLjE3NjE3NzAzMzE.*_ga_V393SNS3SR*cze3NjQ4ODI0ODIkbzQkZzAkdDE3NjQ4ODI0ODUKajU3JGwwJGgw

7. Will VA collect data on individuals employed by or affiliated with VA who maintain dual citizenship with the U.S. and another country? Please provide documentation sufficient to show the Department's rationale and purpose for collecting the data, including any memoranda, advisory opinions, applicable legal, regulatory, and policy precedents.
8. Will VA collect data on individuals employed by or affiliated with VA who serve in roles outside the U.S.? Please provide documentation sufficient to show the Department's rationale and purpose for collecting the data, including any memoranda, advisory opinions, applicable legal, regulatory, and policy precedents. Please provide a detailed description of how VA will engage with other countries to collect and share the data. Please provide copies of all communications, data, records, documents, reports, memoranda, correspondence, audio recordings, call logs, activity logs, audit trails, audit logs, notes from meetings, written agreements or other communication or any portion of any such communication, created, edited, modified, saved, or received by any former or current employee or contractor of VA regarding all matters related to collection, analysis, transmission, and use of data collected on individuals employed by or affiliated with VA who are non-U.S. citizens residing in countries outside of the U.S.
9. Which other agencies, if any, does DHS plan to coordinate with as it collects the data required in the memo obtained by The Guardian? Please provide a list of all agencies, offices, individuals, information systems, and any other non-VA entities that will have access to the data collected on non-U.S. citizens employed by or affiliated with VA, and a detailed description of how each agency, office, individual, or information system will access and utilize the data collected.
10. Please provide copies of all communications, data, records, documents, reports, memoranda, correspondence, audio recordings, call logs, activity logs, audit trails, audit logs, notes from meetings, written agreements or other communication or any portion of any such communication, created, edited, modified, saved, or received by any former or current employee or contractor of VA regarding all matters with DHS and ICE regarding non-U.S. citizens employed by or affiliated with VA.
11. Please provide a detailed description and copies of all communications, data, records, documents, reports, memoranda, correspondence, audio recordings, call logs, activity logs, audit trails, audit logs, notes from meetings, written agreements, or other communication or any portion of any such communication, created, edited, modified, saved, or received by any former or current employee or contractor of VA regarding any and all proposals and plans to remove from duty any non-U.S. citizen who is employed by or affiliated with VA and any and all assessments of how delivery of veteran care and benefits may be affected by such removals.
12. Please provide documentation sufficient to show the Department's assessment and projection of the VA manpower and personnel resources that will be allocated and utilized for collecting the data, including any memoranda, advisory opinions, applicable legal, regulatory, and policy precedents.

As it stands, we do not trust that the Trump Administration wouldn't abuse a database of noncitizens, even if they have legal authorization to work and reside in the country. For the past year, the Trump Administration has shown a complete disregard for individuals' immigration statuses, including those of veterans; haphazardly and illegally detaining Dreamers, immigrants with valid work permits, visas, and even U.S. citizens. We are concerned the database of all non-U.S. citizens employed by or affiliated with VA will lead to more illegal detentions and deportations of individuals who dedicate themselves to improving veterans' lives.

We request you respond to our questions no later than December 24, 2025. Additionally, we request that you provide a briefing to Committee staff no later than December 19, 2025. Should you have any questions about the request, you may contact Ms. Ally Cimino (Ally.Cimino@mail.house.gov) with the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. Thank you for your review and response to our concerns.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Richard Blumenthal
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on
Veterans Affairs



Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress



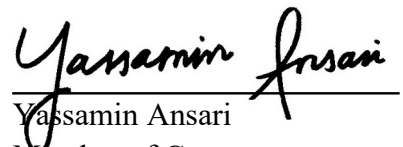
Mark Takano
Ranking Member
House Committee on
Veterans' Affairs



Greg Casar
Member of Congress



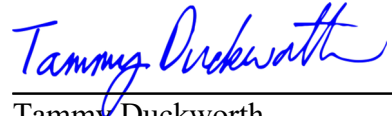
Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress



Yassamin Ansari
Member of Congress



Robert Garcia
Member of Congress



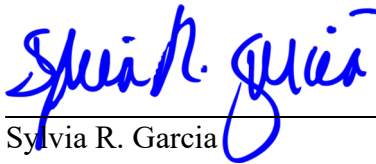
Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Herbert C. Conaway, Jr.
Member of Congress



Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress



Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



Maxine Dexter
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
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Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Shri Thanedar
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Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



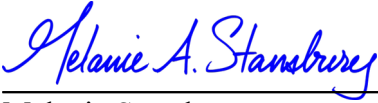
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Chris Deluzio
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Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



Melanie Stansbury
Member of Congress



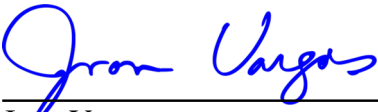
Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



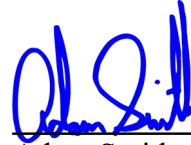
Becca Balint
Member of Congress



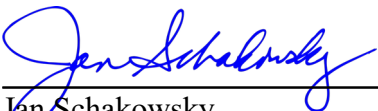
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Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



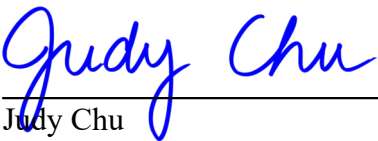
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Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Member of Congress



Summer L. Lee
Member of Congress



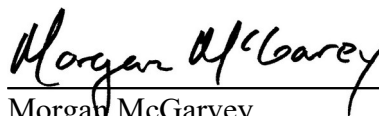
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Eleanor Holmes Norton
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Morgan McGarvey
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Raja Krishnamoorthi
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Jamie Raskin
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Troy A. Carter, Sr.
Member of Congress



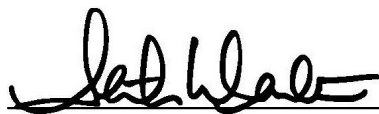
Andre Carson
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Joaquin Castro
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Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress



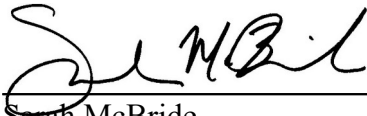
Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



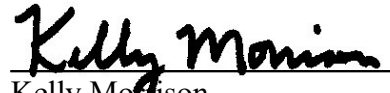
Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



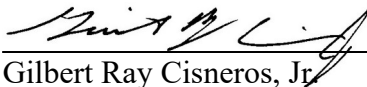
Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



Sarah McBride
Member of Congress



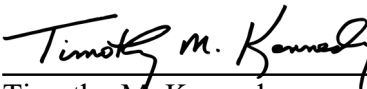
Kelly Morrison
Member of Congress



Gilbert Ray Cisneros, Jr.
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Timothy M. Kennedy
Member of Congress



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



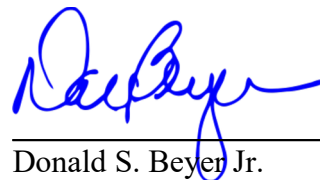
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Al Green
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Lateefah Simon
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Member of Congress