



JB Pritzker, Governor

Ms. Kristi Noem
Former Secretary
U. S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
2707 Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE, Washington, DC 20528

Dear Ms. Noem,

In my capacity as Chair of the Illinois Accountability Commission, I invite you to testify before the Commission regarding the federal enforcement operation known as “Operation Midway Blitz,” which began in Illinois on September 9, 2025. Given your central role in the leadership and oversight of the operation, the Commission respectfully requests your appearance at our next public hearings either in person in Chicago or virtually on April 27 or April 28 between 12-2PM CT to provide testimony and answer questions about the policies, directives, and decision-making processes that shaped Operation Midway Blitz.

The Illinois Accountability Commission was established to examine the conduct of federal authorities during this operation, document its impact on Illinois residents and communities, and document and preserve testimony and other information that can inform accountability and future policy safeguards. Guided by this charge, the Commission is working to establish a clear and comprehensive public record of the decisions that led to this operation and its impact on Illinois residents.

Reports from residents, legal advocates, journalists, and elected officials describe communities across Illinois as being subject to aggressive federal enforcement tactics during Operation Midway Blitz. These reports include the fatal shooting of Silverio Villegas-González in Franklin Park, the shooting of Marimar Martinez, the repeated deployment of tear gas in residential neighborhoods, the detention of U.S. citizens, and large-scale military-style raids in peaceful civilian communities. These incidents raise urgent questions about the planning, authorization, and oversight of federal enforcement activity in Illinois.

The people of the State of Illinois deserve to know how this operation was planned, authorized, and carried out—and to identify who was responsible for the decisions that led to its implementation in our state. The Commission’s work seeks to determine who authorized these actions, what safeguards were in place to protect Illinois residents, and what accountability mechanisms exist when federal operations harm communities.

The people of Illinois deserve a full and transparent accounting of the events surrounding this operation and the decisions that shaped it. We hope you will cooperate with the Commission’s effort to establish a clear record and ensure meaningful accountability. Please reply to this request at DHR.ILAC@Illinois.gov by Friday, April 10 to indicate whether you accept this invitation to participate in one of the hearings scheduled this month, or if you would prefer the Commission to arrange an alternative date and time that better accommodates your schedule.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rubén Castillo". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rubén Castillo