

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

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<https://oversight.house.gov>

June 23, 2025

The Honorable Kristi Noem  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
2707 Martin Luther King Jr Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20032

Dear Secretary Noem:

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is continuing to investigate the systematic abuse and politicization of the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) Quiet Skies program. The Quiet Skies program was purportedly intended to identify and monitor travelers who may pose a security risk but are not on government watchlists, using behavioral indicators and travel patterns to flag individuals for enhanced screening by Federal Air Marshals (FAM).<sup>1</sup> The Committee commends the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Trump Administration for its recent decision to terminate this program.<sup>2</sup> This necessary action addresses longstanding concerns regarding the program's ineffectiveness and politicization under the Biden Administration. To assist the Committee in its oversight efforts, we are requesting documents and information regarding the Quiet Skies program.

The Committee previously conducted oversight of the Quiet Skies program, initiated through an August 23, 2024, request to then-TSA Administrator David Pekoske.<sup>3</sup> The Biden Administration obstructed the Committee's legitimate oversight and failed to provide all of the documents requested by the Committee. Due to the change in administration and the program's recent termination, the Committee is seeking additional responsive documents and information related to the Quiet Skies program and its implementation.

Recent evidence uncovered by DHS confirms the Committee's concerns about the systematic politicization of aviation security protocols. The program's \$200 million annual cost

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<sup>1</sup> "US airport security's 'Quiet Skies' programme tracks passengers," BBC (July 30, 2018), *available at* <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-45011347>.

<sup>2</sup> "Secretary Noem Ends Politicized TSA Watchlist Program That Has Failed to Prevent a Single Terrorist Attack in its Existence; Calls for Congressional Investigation," U.S. DEP'T OF HOMELAND SEC. (June 5, 2025), <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/06/05/secretary-noem-ends-politicized-tsa-watchlist-program-has-failed-prevent-single>.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Oversight and Accountability, Letter from Chairman James Comer to Administrator David P. Pekoske, Transportation Security Administration (Aug. 23, 2024), *available at* <https://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Letter-to-TSA-re-FAMS-whistleblower-retaliation-08232024.pdf>.

proved unjustifiable given its failure to prevent a single terrorist incident, while simultaneously serving as a mechanism for preferential treatment based on political affiliations rather than legitimate security considerations.<sup>4</sup>

Additionally, documents provided to the Committee and public reporting show troubling patterns of selective enforcement. High-profile individuals, including spouses of Democratic officials, received exemptions despite documented security concerns, while figures who opposed policies of the Biden Administration faced enhanced scrutiny and surveillance.<sup>5</sup> The case involving Senator Jeanne Shaheen's husband—who received unprecedented exemptions following direct political intervention despite multiple travels with suspected terrorists—exemplifies these problematic practices.<sup>6</sup>

The maintenance of secret exclusion lists comprising foreign dignitaries, athletes, and select journalists, created an unequal system that undermined both security effectiveness and constitutional principles of equal treatment.<sup>7</sup> Such practices represent a fundamental departure from proper administrative procedures and merit thorough congressional examination.

To assist the Committee in its investigation of TSA's conduct regarding the Quiet Skies program under the Biden Administration, we reiterate the Committee's requests outlined in the August 23, 2024, letter and request the following documents and information, covering the time period from January 1, 2021 through Quiet Skies' termination date unless otherwise designated, as soon as possible but no later than July 7, 2025:

1. All communications, memoranda, and correspondence regarding exemptions or special treatment granted under the Quiet Skies program;
2. Complete updated lists of individuals granted exemptions, waivers, or special processing procedures, including justifications and approval authorities;
3. Records of all meetings, calls, or interactions undertaken by Administrator Pekoske on the Quiet Skies program;
4. Documentation of criteria used to determine inclusion on or removal from watchlists and screening protocols; and
5. All communications with DHS officials and White House personnel regarding Quiet Skies program operations or individual cases.

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<sup>4</sup> *Supra*, n. 2.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> "DHS Unearths TSA Corruption: Sitting US Senator's Husband Received Blanket Exemption from National Security Review After Traveling with Known or Suspected Terrorist," U.S. DEP'T OF HOMELAND SEC. (June 4, 2025), *available at* <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/06/04/dhs-unearths-tsa-corruption-sitting-us-senators-husband-received-blanket-exemption>.

<sup>7</sup> *Supra*, n. 2.

The Honorable Kristi Noem

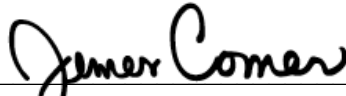
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In addition to the requested documents and information, please make arrangements to provide a staff-level briefing in an appropriate setting, including a classified setting if necessary, regarding DHS's recent findings concerning the political abuse of the Quiet Skies program.

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the principal oversight committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X. To arrange for delivery of documents, schedule the briefing, or to ask any related follow up questions, please contact the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Majority staff at (202) 225-5074. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James Comer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. Below the signature is a horizontal line.

James Comer

Chairman

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

cc: The Honorable Stephen Lynch  
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform