

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

October 15, 2025

Todd M. Lyons
Acting Director
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
500 12th St., SW
Washington, DC 20024

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

Dear Secretary Noem and Acting Director Lyons,

We write to express our grave concern regarding Ismael Ayala-Uribe, the 39-year-old who died while in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody on September 22, 2025. A resident of Westminster, California, Mr. Ismael Ayala-Uribe had lived in the United States since he was four years old.¹ This was the only country he ever knew and called home. He worked hard to take care of his family and was an inspiration to his niece and nephew.

On August 22, 2025, Mr. Ayala-Uribe was transferred to the Adelanto ICE Processing Center. Approximately two weeks after he arrived at this facility, Mr. Ayala-Uribe began complaining that he felt ill. He developed a cough and fever and eventually began to shake and complain of pain in his buttocks. According to Adelanto's own staff, Mr. Ayala-Uribe's condition was potentially life-threatening. As his health deteriorated, Mr. Ayala-Uribe was eventually taken by wheelchair to the detention facility's medical center. However, less than two hours later, Mr. Ayala-Uribe was cleared by medical staff and he returned to his dormitory. It was not until three days later that he was finally transported to the hospital and scheduled for surgery to remove an abscess on his buttock. Mr. Ayala-Uribe died mere hours after he arrived at the hospital, waiting for this potentially life-saving procedure.²

An investigation into Mr. Ayala-Uribe's death is ongoing, and we expect ICE to publish the findings of their investigation, as required by law. However, the facts currently available indicate inexcusable failures in basic care—a person in federal custody repeatedly pleading for help from the people responsible for his wellbeing, only to be denied the treatment he needed until it was far too late.³

This tragedy is not an isolated incident. The Adelanto ICE Processing Center has a long and well-documented history of providing inadequate medical care resulting in deaths that ICE

¹ *A former DACA Recipient Died in ICE Custody. Did Officials Ignore His Pleas for Help?*, Los Angeles Times (Sept. 24, 2025) (online at <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2025-09-23/former-daca-recipient-dies-in-ice-custody-after-being-hospitalized>).

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

itself has deemed preventable.⁴ This pattern has been consistently corroborated by federal and state oversight agencies, nonprofit organizations, and news outlets who have provided alarming accounts of the Adelanto ICE Processing Center's consistent failure to meet basic standards of care.⁵ Since the start of President Trump's second term in January 2025, at least 15 individuals have died in federal immigration custody, a significant increase from previous years, including from President Trump's first term.⁶

Your agencies are responsible for upholding constitutionally mandated standards of care that exist to protect the wellbeing of those in federal immigration custody. We demand that you take immediate, concrete steps to address the systemic failures that led to Mr. Ayala-Uribe's death and the growing number of deaths occurring under your leadership.

We request answers to the following questions by October 24, 2025:

1. On what date and time did Mr. Ayala-Uribe first report feeling ill or request medical attention?
2. What medical evaluations, tests, or treatments were conducted following his initial complaint?
3. If his condition was worsening, why was he only provided Tylenol and an unspecified injection?
4. Did other detainees perform CPR on Mr. Ayala-Uribe prior to being transferred to the detention medical center? If so, what caused Mr. Ayala Uribe to require CPR and why were no properly trained staff present to perform CPR on Mr. Ayala Uribe?
5. What prompted his transfer to the detention medical center, and which medical staff were involved in assessing him there?
6. On what basis did medical staff decide to clear him to return to his dormitory less than two hours later?
7. What criteria did staff use to determine that his condition was potentially life-threatening?

⁴ *Id.*

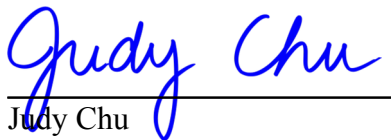
⁵ *Id.*; U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General, *Management Alert—Issues Requiring Action at the Adelanto ICE Processing Center in Adelanto, California* (Sept. 27, 2018) (online at <https://www.oig.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/Mga/2018/oig-18-86-sep18.pdf>); U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, *Detainee Death Review—Jose Manuel Azurdia-Hernandez* (2016) (online at www.documentcloud.org/documents/4598395-Ddr-Azurdia/); U.S. Department of Homeland Security Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, *CRCL Adelanto Onsite Investigation* (2016) (online at www.documentcloud.org/documents/23873555-17-adelanto-detention-facility/); California Department of Justice, *Review of Immigration Detention in California* (Jan. 2021) (online at <https://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/publications/immigration-detention-2021.pdf>); Human Rights Watch, *Code Red: The Fatal Consequences of Dangerously Substandard Medical Care in Immigration Detention* (June 20, 2018) (online at <https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/06/20/code-red/fatal-consequences-dangerously-substandard-medical-care-immigration>).

⁶ *ICE Detainees Death Toll Reaches 16 Amid Concerns over “Horrendous” Conditions*, The Guardian (Sept. 26, 2025) (online at <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/sep/26/ice-detention-death-toll-trump>).

8. What factors delayed his transfer to the hospital for three additional days after being deemed in life-threatening condition?
9. During those three days, did Mr. Ayala-Uribe seek or receive any additional medical evaluation, monitoring, or treatment?
10. What is the official cause and manner of Mr. Ayala-Uribe's death as determined by the medical examiner?
11. Please provide the names and titles of the supervisory officials responsible for Mr. Ayala-Uribe's care at the Adelanto ICE Processing Center.
12. Please provide all records concerning Mr. Ayala-Uribe's detention in ICE custody, medical care at Victor Valley Global Medical Center, and death.
13. Has ICE's Office of Professional Responsibility or any external agency initiated disciplinary action or review related to this incident?
14. How many complaints of inadequate medical care have been reported at the Adelanto ICE Processing Center since January 2025? What steps has ICE taken to address detainees' reports of improper medical care?
15. What immediate corrective measures are DHS and ICE implementing to prevent future medical neglect at Adelanto?
16. How are your agencies addressing the sharp rise in deaths in federal immigration custody since January 2025?
17. Please provide a status update on ICE's internal investigation into Mr. Ayala-Uribe's death, including the timeline for publication of findings.

We look forward to your timely response to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



Judy Chu
Member of Congress



Derek T. Tran
Member of Congress



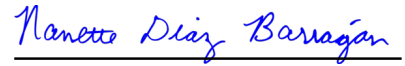
Robert Garcia
Member of Congress



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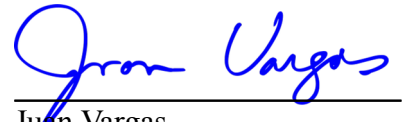
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Member of Congress



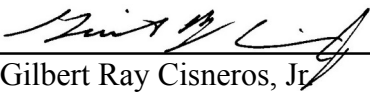
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Dave Min
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MARK TAKANO
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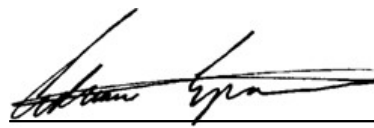
Julia Brownley
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Sydney Kamlager Dove
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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
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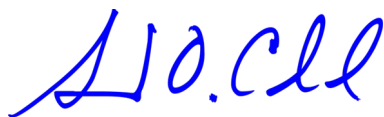
Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



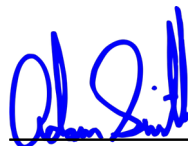
Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



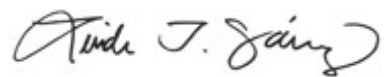
Yvette D. Clarke
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Salud Carbajal
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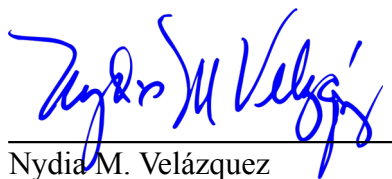
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Norma J. Torres
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