

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4320

February 26, 2026

Secretary Kristi Noem
Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20528

Director Freeman F. Martin
Texas Department of Public Safety
5808 North Lamar Blvd
Austin, Texas 78773

CC: Acting ICE Director Todd Lyons and Acting HSI Executive Associate Director John Condon

Dear Secretary Noem and Director Martin,

I am alarmed by the lack of transparency in the shooting of Ruben Ray Martinez on March 25, 2025, the first publicly known instance of an ICE agent fatally shooting a U.S. citizen during the second Trump Administration. For nearly a year, your agencies appeared to have participated in a cover up. Mr. Martinez's life was tragically cut short, and his family deserves a full and complete understanding of the events leading up to his death. Mr. Martinez should not have died, and your agencies must be fully transparent about the circumstances surrounding his death.

The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) and the Department of Homeland Security withheld basic information, concealed the fact that an ICE agent shot Mr. Martinez, and advanced a narrative that is disputed by an eyewitness. Joshua Orta, Mr. Martinez' friend and passenger of the vehicle at the time of his death described Mr. Martinez as driving cautiously through a traffic accident when local, state, and federal officers approached their car. Mr. Orta stated that officers ordered them to leave. Following orders, Mr. Martinez tried to turn around. Instead, a federal agent shot Mr. Martinez multiple times without issuing any warning or giving him a chance to comply.¹ That same day, DPS publicly described the incident only as an officer-involved shooting.² DHS later alleged that Mr. Martinez struck an agent with his vehicle and that the agent fired in self-defense, an account that directly conflicts with Mr. Orta's sworn statement. Taken together, the concealment and the contradictory accounts raise serious questions about the

¹ Billal Rahman and Dan Gooding. "Ruben Ray Martinez Update: Passenger in ICE Shooting Dies in Car Crash." Newsweek, 23 Feb. 2026, <https://www.newsweek.com/ruben-ray-martinez-update-passenger-in-ice-shooting-dies-in-car-crash-11567767>

² Andrea Lopez. "23-Year-Old Man Killed in Officer-Involved Shooting on South Padre Island." FoxRGV, 20 Mar. 2025, <https://foxrgv.tv/23-year-old-man-killed-in-officer-involved-shooting-on-south-padre-island/>

credibility of the narrative provided by DHS and underscore the need for independent, transparent oversight.

Because of the nearly yearlong delay in disclosing basic information, the public has little reason to trust your agencies to conduct a fully objective investigation. Pursuant to Congress' broad investigative authority and responsibility to conduct comprehensive oversight, I demand the following:

1. Immediate release of all body camera and dash camera footage from any federal and state officers present at the scene;
2. All recorded radio, text, or phone communication between officers immediately before and after the shooting;
3. All information pertaining to the investigation conducted by the Texas Department of Public Safety and the Department of Homeland Security;
4. All communication between the Texas Department of Public Safety and the Department of Homeland Security, including the Texas Rangers and ICE.

The Martinez family and the public must know why this cover up was allowed to fester for nearly a year. We must know the truth without further delay.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "JOAQUIN CASTRO". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Joaquin Castro

Member of Congress