

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 17, 2026

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Mullin:

I write regarding the alarming state of the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) preparations for the 2026 FIFA World Cup (World Cup), which will be held throughout North America in June and July. The event will include 78 matches played in nearly a dozen U.S. cities and is expected to draw nearly five million fans from around the globe, making it the largest sporting event in history.¹ The lead federal agency responsible for protecting Americans from threats to the homeland, DHS plays a central role in preparing for and securing the event.² Yet the Trump administration has taken numerous actions—such as systematically dismantling security agencies, delaying critical security assistance, and initiating a war with Iran—that make the Department woefully unprepared to accomplish its mission. With less than two months until the World Cup, I am deeply concerned that DHS is behind in its preparations—jeopardizing the safety of Americans and visitors.

State and local law enforcement are on the front lines of preparing for and securing the World Cup, but they cannot do it alone. Without essential federal intelligence, coordination, and capabilities, they will be unable to fully execute their mission. Yet host cities have been sounding the alarm regarding the administration's repeated delays in providing these resources.³ Until recently, then-Secretary Noem required her personal review of any contract worth over \$100,000⁴ and placed arbitrary blanket holds on security grant funding. This created monthslong

¹ U.S. Department of State, Welcoming the World: U.S. Preparations for the FIFA World Cup 26, Foreign Press Center Briefing, Dec. 3, 2025, <https://www.state.gov/briefings-foreign-press-centers/preparations-for-fifa-world-cup-2026>.

² U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Making America Safe Again: The State of DHS Under President Trump and Secretary Noem, Feb. 24, 2026; <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2026/02/24/making-america-safe-again-state-dhs-under-president-trump-and-secretary-noem>.

³ House Committee on Homeland Security, "Before the Whistle: Assessing Information Sharing and Security Collaboration Ahead of Major Events," Hearing, Feb. 24, 2026, <https://homeland.house.gov/hearing/before-the-whistle-assessing-information-sharing-and-security-collaboration-ahead-of-major-events/>.

⁴ Brianna Sacks, Maria Sacchetti, et al., "What spending probes at DHS reveal about Kristi Noem's time in office," *The Washington Post*, Apr. 7, 2026, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/immigration/2026/04/05/noem-trump-dhs-fema-contracts/>; Nicole Sganga and Camilo Montoya-Galvez, "DHS scraps Noem policy requiring secretary's review of all contracts above \$100,000," *CBS News*, Apr. 1, 2026, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/dhs-scraps-noem-policy-approval-100000-contracts/>; and Jacob Wendler, "DHS reverses Noem's controversial contract approval policy," *Politico*, Apr. 1, 2026, <https://www.politico.com/news/2026/04/01/dhs-reverses-noems-controversial-contract-approval-policy-00854915>.

delays in delivering nearly \$2 billion in federal security grants that should have been provided months ago.⁵ If state and local officials do not trust that federal employees will coordinate in lockstep and operate as partners, they will be unable to protect their communities—increasing threat risk and compromising Americans’ safety in the process.

This self-imposed chaos extends to the Trump administration’s management of federal departments and agencies. President Trump has systematically dismantled DHS agencies responsible for preparing for and securing the World Cup. For example, the Trump administration has cut one-third of the staff at the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency⁶—the agency tasked with protecting critical infrastructure such as transportation systems and energy grids from foreign cyberattacks. This is particularly concerning because a successful attack on such infrastructure could have devastating life-or-death consequences. In addition, the administration has significantly reduced the employee count at the DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis,⁷ which shares key information that state and local law enforcement authorities use to disrupt potential terrorist attacks. Moreover, the Office of Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction, the federal office tasked with protecting the U.S. against threats like chemical and biological weapons, has seen its employee count reduced by half.⁸ These actions weaken the very agencies responsible for securing events like the World Cup, leave states and localities on the hook, and create avoidable national security vulnerabilities that put Americans in harm’s way.

Compounding these harms, President Trump recently started a war with Iran, the world’s leading state sponsor of terrorism—which experts agree has significantly elevated the risk of terrorist attacks.⁹ This risk is not just hypothetical; since the war began, security threats have affected airports in Kansas City and the Washington, D.C. region; in New York City, two men were charged with terrorism-related crimes at an anti-Muslim rally; and a man expressing pro-Iran views online killed four people at a bar in Austin, Texas.¹⁰ The logistical complexity and high-profile nature of the World Cup make it even more vulnerable to similar attacks. Given these risks, plunging the U.S. into war with Iran while delaying security assistance and dismantling the federal agencies that protect Americans from retaliatory terrorist attacks further endangers communities.

⁵ Ted Hesson and Kristina Cooke, “Security concerns grow around World Cup in US after stalled funding,” *Thomson Reuters*, Mar. 20, 2026, <https://www.reuters.com/world/security-concerns-grow-around-world-cup-us-after-stalled-funding-2026-03-20/>.

⁶ Eric Geller, “Acting CISA chief defends workforce cuts, declares agency ‘back on mission,’” *Cybersecurity Dive*, Jan. 21, 2026, <https://www.cybersecuritydive.com/news/cisa-acting-director-house-hearing/810175/>.

⁷ Nicole Sganga, “DHS to cut 75% of staff in its intelligence office amid heightened threat environment,” *CBS News*, Jul. 3, 2025, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/dhs-intelligence-arm-to-cut-staff-by-nearly-75/>.

⁸ Sophia Cai, Irie Sentner, et al., “WMD office halved in Trump’s first year,” *Politico*, Jan. 5, 2026, <https://www.politico.com/newsletters/west-wing-playbook-remaking-government/2026/01/05/wmd-office-halved-in-trumps-first-year-00711340>.

⁹ Alex Silverman, “World Cup security hinges on coordination amid polarization,” *Sports Business Journal*, Apr. 3, 2026, <https://www.sportsbusinessjournal.com/Articles/2026/04/03/world-cup-security-hinges-on-coordination-amid-polarization/>.

¹⁰ Ted Hesson, Jonathan Allen, et al., “Iran war puts many in US on high alert, but synagogue attack shows limits,” *Thomson Reuters*, Mar. 13, 2026, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/iran-war-puts-many-us-high-alert-synagogue-attack-shows-limits-2026-03-13/>.

Taken together, these actions are not just irresponsible—they represent a dereliction of duty with life-or-death consequences that impede coordination and make Americans and World Cup fans less safe. Given that host cities across the country have sounded the alarm regarding the federal government’s delayed coordination and security commitments,¹¹ we request that you provide the following information and documents by May 1, 2026, to prevent further operational harm:

1. Any plans to secure U.S.-based World Cup matches, including, but not limited to, coordination with, and provision of resources and key capabilities to, state and local governments;
2. Any records or internal communications reflecting delays, gaps, or changes in the provision of intelligence briefings, threat assessments, operational support, or other support to state and local governments;
3. Any contingency plans to address increased threat risk if scheduled preparation timelines are delayed;
4. Any threat, risk, or operational assessments informing World Cup security plans, including, but not limited to, such assessments addressing any real or expected shifts in the threat environment following the initiation of the war with Iran;
5. All formal taskings or communications related to preparations for the World Cup;
6. All formal taskings or communications related to decisions pertaining to homeland security grant programs for use by states and localities to prepare for the World Cup; and
7. Any internal assessments or analyses conducted to gauge the impacts on World Cup security preparations of withholding homeland security assistance from states and localities and laying off or diverting key agency staff.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ruben Gallego". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "R" and "G".

Ruben Gallego
United States Senator

¹¹ House Committee on Homeland Security, “Before the Whistle: Assessing Information Sharing and Security Collaboration Ahead of Major Events.”