

# Probe into ICE abuse exposes crimes authorized by Congress

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On August 5, Democratic Senator Jon Ossoff of Georgia released new findings from his office's ongoing investigation into human rights abuses in U.S. immigration detention. The report identified at least 510 credible reports of abuse since January 20, 2025, occurring across 25 US states, Puerto Rico, federal buildings, military installations, and deportation flights.

These incidents involve facilities operated by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Bureau of Prisons (BOP), the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and private contractors.

Among the most serious documented cases are 41 instances of physical or sexual abuse, 14 of mistreatment of pregnant women, and 18 involving abuse or medical neglect of children, including US citizens. The findings provide further evidence that the Trump administration is carrying out a coordinated campaign of repression and intimidation against immigrants, including asylum seekers and children.

At the same time, while confirming only a fraction of the abuse taking place within the US immigration system, the report functions as a damage-control operation aimed at preserving the legitimacy of the agencies and institutions responsible.

Ossoff, one of ten Senate Democrats who voted in January to advance the Laken Riley Act—and later among twelve who ensured its final passage—bears direct political responsibility for the very infrastructure of detention and state violence he now claims to be investigating. The legislation mandates indefinite detention of immigrants accused of minor crimes.

## Abuse as standard practice

The report documents widespread physical abuse and degrading treatment of detainees across US immigration detention facilities. At the El Paso Service Processing Center in Texas, a detainee was slammed to the ground, handcuffed, and dragged outside for a minor infraction.

At Adelanto ICE Processing Center in California, 911 calls were made regarding sexual assaults or threats, while four emergency calls at the South Texas ICE Processing Center this year involved sexual abuse. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) staff allegedly forced seven detainees into stress positions as punishment.

Under a 2025 DHS–BOP agreement, one detainee placed in a federal prison dormitory was assaulted by another inmate. At the Federal Detention Center in Miami, detainees were confined without food, water, or toilets; after protesting, they were attacked with flash-bang grenades and pellet fire, zip-tied, and denied medical care.

These incidents are standard practices across a network of detention facilities spanning the US and abroad, including Guantánamo Bay and Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti. Texas (29), Georgia (13), and California

(12) account for the most cases, underscoring the systemic nature of abuse throughout the detention system.

## Medical neglect and mistreatment of women and children

The report documents 14 credible incidents of abuse of pregnant women in ICE custody, including denial of urgent care leading to miscarriage, sleeping on floors, and long-delayed or canceled medical appointments.

Eighteen credible reports detail the mistreatment of children. In one case, a US citizen child with a severe medical condition was hospitalized three times in CBP custody; after she began vomiting blood, a guard responded, “Just give the girl a cracker.”

A 10-year-old recovering from brain surgery was denied follow-up care, resulting in brain swelling and impaired motor functions. A four-year-old with metastatic cancer was detained and deported without medical evaluation.

These cases corroborate longstanding findings by human rights groups, journalists and whistleblowers that US immigration detention operates as a barbaric, criminal system, routinely violating the most basic legal and humanitarian norms.

## Obstruction of oversight

The report notes that DHS has obstructed congressional oversight by restricting detainee interviews and staff site visits. Despite this, inspections were conducted at detention centers in Georgia and Texas, a federal prison in Atlanta and a shelter for unaccompanied minors in San Antonio.

Ossoff's office sent oversight letters to DHS, the Department of Justice and the Department of Defense requesting information on abuses, family detention policies and Guantánamo conditions. The investigation remains ongoing and incomplete. That such basic accountability measures require months of Senate investigation underscores the secrecy and impunity with which DHS, ICE, and CBP operate.

More fundamentally, the report raises the political question of Congress's role—including Democrats—in authorizing, funding and expanding the mass detention system that produces these abuses, rendering “oversight” a mechanism for managing, rather than dismantling, the apparatus.

## The case of Chaofeng Ge

One case not included in the Ossoff report, but which provides a grim indication of the conditions in detention, is that of Chaofeng Ge, a 32-year-old Chinese national who died at the Moshannon Valley Processing Center in Pennsylvania on August 5.

Ge had been in ICE custody for only five days before he was allegedly found hanging in a shower stall by staff employed at the GEO Group–operated facility, which reopened in 2021 under the Biden administration.

During the 2024 election campaign, for-profit private prison companies such as the GEO Group and CoreCivic were major financial backers of Donald Trump, contributing nearly \$3 million to his re-election effort and inauguration fund, according to a recent analysis by Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW) analysis of Federal Election Commission documents.

Ge had been imprisoned since January but was transferred to ICE custody in the last week. He was facing charges of credit card fraud and was awaiting a hearing before the Department of Justice’s Executive Office for Immigration Review. ICE claimed that Ge had undergone the standard medical and mental health screenings and that his death, while under investigation, was not the result of “foul play.”

Ge is at least the second person that has died in the facility in the last two years. In December 2023, 37-year-old Frankline Okpua was found “unresponsive” in a cell at the for-profit detention center according to an ICE notice.

While Ge’s name is unlikely to appear in any Senate floor speech or oversight hearing, his death illustrates the actual human cost of Trump’s policies supported by Ossoff and his colleagues in both parties.

## “Speedway Slammer”

Following the construction of the Florida Everglades concentration camp last month, the Trump administration is inaugurating a new immigration detention facility in Indiana, dubbed the “Speedway Slammer.”

Located at the Miami Correctional Center near Indianapolis, the proposed installation will add 1,000 beds through a partnership under the 287(g) program, funded by the recent reconciliation package known as the “One Big Beautiful Bill.”

This strategy is part of a broader push to expand ICE detention capacity by 100,000 beds. Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem and Indiana Governor Mike Braun praised the partnership, positioning it as a tool to “remove the worst of the worst.”

In reality, the majority of the human beings forced to suffer in immigration hellholes, 71.1 percent as of July 2025, have not been convicted of any crime. This includes Luis Manuel Rivas Velásquez, a 38-year-old social media influencer and car enthusiast who nearly died at the “Alligator Alcatraz” concentration camp earlier this week after being denied medical care at the prison camp.

## Ossoff’s political record

Senator Jon Ossoff has played an active role in the bipartisan attack on immigrants. On the day of Trump’s inauguration, he joined a small group

of Senate Democrats in voting for the Laken Riley Act, which mandates detention without bail for immigrants merely accused—not convicted—of certain offenses. Two days later, 46 House Democrats voted in favor.

The law also gives state attorneys general unprecedented authority to override federal immigration policy, including imposing nationality-based visa bans. The law represents a sweeping attack on due process and a dangerous expansion of state power that undermines constitutional protections for all.

The bill passed easily with bipartisan support, reflecting the convergence of both parties on authoritarian measures. In Georgia, where 22-year-old nursing student Laken Riley was killed, Ossoff’s vote served to appease right-wing constituencies and strengthen his vacillating political standing.

Ossoff’s investigation into detention conditions serves not to dismantle the system, but to manage public anger and preserve the illusion of reform.

For decades, the Democratic Party has supported every major expansion of ICE, border militarization, and surveillance. The militarization of the US–Mexico border began under the Clinton administration and escalated under “Deporter-in-Chief” Barack Obama and his then–vice president, Joe Biden.

As president, Biden continued Trump’s use of Title 42 to block asylum seekers and immigrants from entering the United States, even as his administration dismantled COVID-19 protections. During her election campaign, Kamala Harris positioned herself as a more “effective” border enforcer than the erratic Trump, even promising to continue construction of his border wall.

The abuse of immigrants in US detention facilities is the outcome of a conscious and bipartisan policy aimed at criminalizing migration, instilling fear in the working class and reinforcing the mechanisms of state repression.

Senator Ossoff’s investigation, while shedding light on a fraction of these abuses, seeks to obscure the political responsibility of the Democratic Party and the capitalist state as a whole. The defense of immigrants and the struggle against fascism cannot be entrusted to either of the two parties of Wall Street, but must be taken up independently by the working class, united internationally in a struggle against the capitalist system.



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