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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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May 17, 2024

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2702 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave, SE
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas,

I write with serious concerns regarding the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) apparent withholding of vital information on known or suspected terrorists (KSTs) crossing the southwest border. Given the record-breaking number of KSTs encountered by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), providing detailed information on this matter should be a top priority for our border and national security.¹

On May 16, 2024, Fox News reporter Bill Melugin reported CBP declined to fulfill his Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request seeking the nationalities of foreign nationals arrested by Border Patrol whose names appeared on the Terrorist Screening Dataset (TSDS).² CBP claimed fulfilling the FOIA request could threaten the privacy of these individuals, despite Mr. Melugin requesting nothing more than the nationality of the individuals. There is no reason to reject providing this critical information to the public.

Similarly, on November 2, 2023, I sent you a letter requesting a briefing on the number of KSTs arrested along the southern border since January 2021, including their countries of origin, their terrorist group affiliations, any documented criminal or terrorist activity they may have engaged in, their whereabouts since CBP officials encountered them, and the estimated number of KSTs who were able to evade capture.³ I have yet to receive a briefing on the requested information in past six months.

I reiterate my request for a briefing on KSTs as soon as possible and urge you to immediately – and publicly – release the important information requested by Mr. Melugin.

Sincerely,



Chip Roy
Member of Congress

¹ <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/cbp-enforcement-statistics>.

² <https://x.com/BillMelugin/status/1791142779579740164>.

³ https://roy.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/roy.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/briefing-on-ksts-letter_final.pdf.