

February 12, 2026

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of our 3 million members and the 50 million students they educate and support, we urge you to VOTE NO on the Fiscal Year 2026 funding bill for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Votes on this issue may be included in NEA's report card for the 119th Congress.

This legislation fails to address serious concerns about DHS conduct, including instances where federal agents have used force with little accountability, contributing to community anxiety and harming public confidence in federal law enforcement. Funding for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) without strong accountability, transparency, and protections for students, educators, and families is deeply concerning and contrary to the safety and well-being of all who live and learn in our country.

ICE and other federal agents have instilled fear in students and families by operating with apparent impunity in states like Minnesota, Maine, and Ohio, including aggressive enforcement actions on and near school grounds and in sensitive community locations such as hospitals, houses of worship, and childcare centers. These actions have traumatized students, disrupted learning, and eroded trust in public safety.

In Minneapolis, for example, federal agents fatally shot two U.S. citizens and quickly mischaracterized their deaths, raising questions about oversight and truthfulness in federal operations. Across the country, there have been reports of racial profiling, illegal searches, and confrontational enforcement that have undermined the basic premise that schools and community spaces should be safe and peaceful.

Because of these harms and the lack of sufficient guardrails around enforcement activities, NEA urges you to oppose the current DHS funding bill and call for meaningful reforms that include:

- Prohibiting immigration enforcement at sensitive locations, such as schools, bus stops, early childhood centers, hospitals, and houses of worship, where students and families should feel secure.
- Requiring judicial warrants for enforcement actions and rescinding policies that permit warrantless operations in communities.
- Ensuring full cooperation with state and local investigations into all serious incidents involving federal agents, including transparent sharing of evidence and accessibility of witnesses.
- Demanding that ICE and DHS agents withdraw from our communities.

Please stand with students, educators, and families by rejecting the DHS funding bill unless it includes clear safeguards, enforceable oversight, and meaningful protections for civil rights and

community safety. Our federal budget should reflect our nation's commitment to protecting children, strengthening public education, and ensuring that all communities are treated with dignity and fairness. NEA urges you to vote no on the DHS funding bill in its current form and continue working toward a funding deal that truly prioritizes safety, accountability, and justice.

Sincerely,



Kimberly Johnson Trinca
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association