



STATE OF FLORIDA

ASHLEY MOODY
ATTORNEY GENERAL

August 14, 2024

VIA U.S. MAIL

Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas
Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

I write with grave concerns regarding a recent report that the Biden-Harris Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has released at least 99 aliens on the terrorist watchlist into the interior of the United States.¹

Following the horrific attacks on our country on September 11, 2001, the 9/11 Commission made a number of findings and recommendations regarding how to prevent such a tragedy from ever happening again.² Among those findings are (1) that “immigration . . . was not seen as a national security matter”³ and (2) that law enforcement and national security agencies had a “weak system for processing and using” available information and a “resistance to sharing information.”⁴ It appears that, under your failed leadership, DHS has not taken those lessons to heart.

I have already taken you to court and proven that you “have effectively turned the Southwest Border into a meaningless line in the sand and little more than a speedbump for aliens flooding into the country.”⁵ But I would hope that even a radical open border activist like you would agree that *terrorists* should not be allowed to roam freely in our country. In fact, when I previously wrote

¹ https://judiciary.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/republicans-judiciary.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/FILE_6538.pdf.

² <https://www.9-11commission.gov/report/911Report.pdf>.

³ https://judiciary.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/republicans-judiciary.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/FILE_6538.pdf at 1 (quoting the 9/11 Commission Report).

⁴ <https://www.9-11commission.gov/report/911Report.pdf> at 416–17.

⁵ *Florida v. United States*, 660 F. Supp. 3d 1239, 1249 (N.D. Fla. 2023).

to you regarding the extraordinary number of aliens on the terrorist watchlist whom DHS has apprehended,⁶ it was my assumption that DHS detained and removed those aliens and that the unknown “gotaways” were the principal national security concern. That is, however, not the case. As a recently released congressional report explains, “DHS has released into American communities at least 99” aliens on the terrorist watchlist.⁷

To the extent DHS is not *intentionally* releasing known terrorists into the interior, this new report at a minimum raises serious questions regarding DHS’s vetting and information sharing policies. For example, of the at least 99 aliens on the terrorist watchlist whom DHS released, at least 27 were ordered released by an immigration judge.⁸ If immigration judges are ordering these aliens released, it is likely because DHS does not have an adequate process to inform these judges that the aliens appearing before them are on a terrorist watchlist.

Making matters worse, I have consulted with law enforcement in Florida, and it is my understanding that DHS has provided the State no information or intelligence regarding terrorists who may be present in our State. As you know, Florida is a uniquely attractive destination for illegal immigrants.⁹ It is thus likely that many of the 99 terrorists DHS released have traveled to our State. Florida is also a common destination for conferences, conventions, and other widely attended events, making our State an attractive target for terrorists. As such, if DHS is not going to do its job and protect Floridians from national security threats, I would hope that it would at least share information with the State of Florida so our leaders know who these terrorists are and can protect our citizens from harm.

Because of the failures described in this letter, I have submitted the attached Freedom of Information Act request seeking to obtain more information regarding DHS’s failure to protect Floridians from terrorism. I expect your full cooperation.

Sincerely,



Ashley Moody
Florida Attorney General

⁶ https://www.myfloridalegal.com/sites/default/files/2023-11/ag-and-fdle-letter-to-mayorkas_final.pdf.

⁷ https://judiciary.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/republicans-judiciary.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/FILE_6538.pdf.

⁸ https://judiciary.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/republicans-judiciary.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/FILE_6538.pdf at 3.

⁹ <https://flvoicenews.com/migrants-in-bidens-parole-and-release-program-landing-in-florida-report/>.