

MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO, CHAIRMAN

CHUCK GRASSLEY, IOWA  
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS  
JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA  
TIM SCOTT, SOUTH CAROLINA  
BILL CASSIDY, LOUISIANA  
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA  
STEVE DAINES, MONTANA  
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA  
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING  
RON JOHNSON, WISCONSIN  
THOM TILLIS, NORTH CAROLINA  
MARSHA BLACKBURN, TENNESSEE  
ROGER MARSHALL, KANSAS

RON WYDEN, OREGON  
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON  
MICHAEL F. BENNET, COLORADO  
MARK R. WARNER, VIRGINIA  
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND  
MAGGIE HASSAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, NEVADA  
ELIZABETH WARREN, MASSACHUSETTS  
BERNARD SANDERS, VERMONT  
TINA SMITH, MINNESOTA  
BEN RAY LUJÁN, NEW MEXICO  
RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, GEORGIA  
PETER WELCH, VERMONT

# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

GREGG RICHARD, STAFF DIRECTOR  
JOSHUA SHEINKMAN, DEMOCRATIC STAFF DIRECTOR

April 14, 2026

The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Kennedy,

In the absence of a Senate-confirmed General Counsel, we write to you in response to reports that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) plans to unlawfully share the federal government's most comprehensive database of Americans' personal information with immigration enforcement officials at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Disclosing this information would be unlawful, and it would expose vulnerable children and families, including victims of domestic violence, to significant harm. We wrote to you last year about the dangers of this same data being shared with the now-defunct Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), and we are once again alarmed that the Trump administration would weaponize confidential child support data to support deportation quotas or political objectives.

As you know, the Federal Parent Locator Service (FPLS) was created by Congress to locate working adults who owe child support even as they change jobs or move from one state to another. One component of FPLS, the National Directory of New Hires, contains the name, address, Social Security number, employer, and salary or wage information of every employed person in the United States regardless of whether they have children; it also includes these same personal and financial details for any individuals listed in state unemployment systems. The other—and far more sensitive—side of FPLS is the Federal Case Registry, which lists the Social Security number and personal identification information for every child who is the subject of a state child support case. The Federal Case Registry also identifies children who have been reported victims of domestic violence, and it provides names and addresses of their family members. Needless to say, it would be dangerous to share this information more broadly; any alleged abusers who work in government or law enforcement would gain access to private case information about their victims. In the words of a former data director for the Administration for

Children and Families, FPLS ***“is the most powerful people-finder system that the U.S. government has.”*** For this reason, Congress enacted clear and mandatory penalties for misuse of the data: each instance of unauthorized access or disclosure must result in an administrative penalty up to and including dismissal from employment.<sup>1</sup>

It has been publicly reported that within the last month, DHS has requested access to both components of the FPLS: employment information from the National Directory of New Hires, and a catalog of child support cases from the Federal Case Registry. According to this reporting, the Office of the General Counsel has been tasked with assessing whether federal law allows HHS to provide DHS with information from the Federal Case Registry. But because HHS currently lacks a Senate-confirmed General Counsel, this determination may ultimately rest with you.

Federal law is clear: HHS cannot legally share FPLS data with DHS for purposes of immigration enforcement.<sup>2</sup> The authorizing statute states that FPLS data cannot be “used or disclosed” except as the statute “expressly provide[s].”<sup>3</sup> The statute plainly limits the purposes for which FPLS data may be used: establishing parentage, establishing or enforcing child support obligations, and enforcing laws related to custody, visitation, or unlawful taking and restraint of a child.<sup>4</sup> The statute further makes no mention of immigration or homeland security, and it expressly prohibits disclosures of information that “*would contravene...the confidentiality of census data.*”<sup>5</sup>

Former senior HHS officials, leaders of state child support agencies, and child welfare advocates have expressed alarm that if you allow the FPLS database to be shared with DHS and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, many employers may stop reporting their new hires to the government.<sup>6</sup> One in five U.S. children rely on child support payments, and if the workers who owe these payments become harder to track down, vulnerable children will suffer.

While a DHS spokesperson said that the Department is not “currently” seeking access to FPLS,<sup>7</sup> multiple sources have said otherwise, and we have repeatedly seen this administration inappropriately, and even illegally, share sensitive data involving children or their homes and families.<sup>8</sup> It is clear that the Trump administration seeks to endow DHS with maximal power to hunt down, intimidate, and detain our constituents. But the law places constraints on your ability

---

<sup>1</sup> 42 U.S.C. § 653 (l)(2)

<sup>2</sup> 42 U.S.C. § 653

<sup>3</sup> 42 U.S.C. § 653 (l)(1) (emphasis added).

<sup>4</sup> 42 U.S.C. § 653 (a)

<sup>5</sup> 42 U.S.C. § 653 (b)(2)

<sup>6</sup> Eli Hager, *DHS Seeks Access to Massive Employment, Salary and Family Database Legally Restricted to Use in Child Support Cases*, ProPublica, Mar. 11, 2026, <https://www.propublica.org/article/dhs-trump-child-support-federal-parent-locator-service-immigration>

<sup>7</sup> Priscilla Alvarez, *Homeland Security pushes for access to restricted federal database on child support, employment information for millions*, CNN, Mar. 12, 2026, <https://www.cnn.com/2026/03/11/politics/homeland-security-child-support-database-immigration>

to do so. The FPLS database exists to protect vulnerable children by ensuring that adults provide the economic support they need. Further emboldened with addresses and employment information, we can be certain that DHS would willingly rip these child support payments away from children by detaining and deporting the parents who provide them. The fact that DHS also seeks to exploit and further disseminate Federal Case Registry information about juvenile victims of domestic violence should shock the conscience.

The Office of the General Counsel is in a position to offer authoritative legal guidance on this issue and to affirm that HHS has no legal authority to share FPLS information with DHS and its subcomponents. Because the Office lacks a Senate-confirmed leader after the recent departure of Mike Stuart, this important legal determination now rests with you.

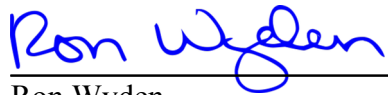
We therefore ask that you respond in writing by April 30 and provide responses to the following inquiries:

1. Does HHS take the position that it may lawfully share information from the Federal Case Registry with DHS?
2. What—if any—information from the FPLS does HHS believe it can lawfully share with DHS?
3. Please share any legal memoranda or similar work product prepared by the Office of the General Counsel that address questions (1) and (2).

Sincerely,

---

<sup>8</sup> See e.g., Jeff Stein, *Judge: IRS broke law 'approximately 42,695 times' in giving DHS data*, Washington Post, Feb. 26, 2026, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2026/02/26/irs-data-federal-judge-dhs-illegal/> (a federal court found that the IRS has unlawfully shared 42,695 taxpayer addresses with DHS and that this disclosure was illegal because IRS failed to enforce the threshold requirement that requesting agencies must provide a name and address to specifically identify each individual for whom the agency seeks to obtain confidential tax records).



---

Ron Wyden  
United States Senator  
Ranking Member, Committee  
on Finance



---

Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator