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Updated Jun 12, 2025 - Politics & Policy

Democratic senator forcibly removed from DHS press conference



Stephen Neukam



Sen. Alex Padilla is removed from the room after interrupting a news conference with Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem. Photo: Patrick T. Fallon/AFP via Getty Images

Sen. [Alex Padilla](#) (D-Calif.) was physically removed on Thursday from a Los Angeles press conference held by Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem.

Why it matters: [In a video](#) posted to X by Fox News reporter Bill Melugin, Padilla was seen being grabbed and pushed out of the press conference while saying he had "questions for the secretary."

- "I am Senator Alex Padilla," Padilla said in the video. He was then grabbed by multiple men and shoved out of the room.
- Further [video](#) showed Padilla being handcuffed and detained in the hallway outside the room.

Zoom in: Padilla told reporters on Thursday he "began to ask a question" and "was immediately forcibly removed from the room, forced to the ground, and I was handcuffed."

- Noem told Fox News that Padilla "burst into the room and started launching towards the podium interrupting me and elevating his voice and was stopped, did not identify himself and was removed from the room."
- Noem said she and Padilla exchanged phone numbers during a short meeting after the incident.

Between the lines: In a post on X, the Department of Homeland Security's official account [wrote](#) that "Padilla was told repeatedly to back away and did not comply with officers' repeated commands. Secret Service thought he was an attacker and officers acted appropriately."

- In the videos posted by reporters present, Padilla announced his name and title before he was pushed from the room.

Zoom out: Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) blasted the "manhandling of a United States senator," said he was "sickened" by the incident and demanded "immediate answers as to what the hell went on."

- "This is outrageous, dictatorial, and shameful. Trump and his shock troops are out of control," California Gov. Gavin Newsom [posted](#) on Thursday.
- Sen. Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) called on Noem to resign, along with an investigation into what happened.
- "Every senator who works in this Capitol should be offended by this and outraged by this," Schiff told reporters outside of the Capitol.

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Avery Lotz

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Padilla says FBI agent, Guard member escorted him to Noem's briefing before removal



California Sen. Alex Padilla is pushed out of the room as Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem holds a news conference in Los Angeles on June 12. Photo: David Crane/MediaNews Group/Los Angeles Daily News via Getty Images

Sen. [Alex Padilla](#) (D-Calif.) said Sunday that a member of the National Guard and an FBI agent escorted him into Homeland Security Secretary [Kristi Noem's](#) press conference last week before he was forcibly removed.

The big picture: Administration officials and allies claim Padilla interrupted the briefing to [manufacture a scene](#). Democrats, whose fears of arrest at the hands of the administration [have soared](#), say the senior senator from California was doing his job by questioning the secretary.

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Republicans are all over the place on Alex Padilla's forcible removal

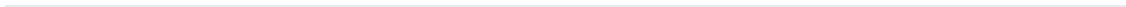


Sen. Alex Padilla (D-Calif.) speaks to reporters after he was forcibly removed after interrupting a news conference being held by Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem. Photo: Patrick T. Fallon/AFP via Getty Images

Some [Republican lawmakers](#) reeled in shock Thursday after Department of Homeland Security officers aggressively removed and handcuffed Sen. [Alex Padilla](#) (D-Calif.) — others blamed the senator.

What they're saying: "It's horrible," Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) [told reporters](#). "It is shocking at every level. It's not the America I know."

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Padilla episode triggers five-alarm fire for Democrats



Sen. Alex Padilla is ejected from a press conference held by Secretary of Homeland Security in Los Angeles on Wednesday. Photo: Patrick T. Fallon/AFP via Getty Images

Democrats spooked by [President Trump's](#) state-sanctioned [shows of force](#) have shifted into five-alarm fire mode, warning he's pushing American democracy to the brink.

Why it matters: They're pointing to [what happened yesterday](#) to Alex Padilla, California's senior senator, as a crossing-the-Rubicon moment.

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