

Committee on Energy and Commerce

**Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of**

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations Ranking Member Yvette Clarke

Hearing on “Common Schemes, Real Harm: Examining Fraud in Medicare and Medicaid”

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If you want to get serious about fraud, the administration needs to first stop terrorizing our communities. Red line after red line has been crossed by this administration.

First, Renee Good was shot and killed by a federal agent while out protecting her neighbors. Instead of investigating her killing, Stephen Miller, Secretary Noem, and Vice President Vance claimed that she was carrying out “domestic terrorism.”

Then, Alex Pretti, who worked as a VA ICU nurse was shot multiple times and killed by two federal agents while he was protecting a woman that officers had shoved to the ground. Secretary Noem called him a “domestic terrorist” and Stephen Miller claimed he was an “assassin.”

This past week, journalists Don Lemon and Georgia Fort were arrested just for reporting on a protest at a church. Several protestors were also arrested, and the White House, not content with merely arresting these individuals even released an altered photo of one of them to make it appear as if she was crying.

An individual in ICE custody sustained eight skull fractures that ICE officers said were caused by his running into a wall. But medical officials said that the patient’s injuries could not have been caused by running into a wall.

ICE said that another man who died in ICE custody was attempting suicide and staff was trying to save him. But we later learned from his autopsy that he was actually suffocated when he was held down by guards in a detention facility.

It is lie after lie after lie from this administration and it is only getting worse.

Our children are not safe. A five year old boy was used by federal agents as bait to lure out members of his family and community from their house. The other day children in Portland were tear gassed while participating in a peaceful protest.

And it’s not just happening in cities. Recent video from rural Minnesota showed masked federal agents pulling in front of the vehicle of an observer, getting out with guns drawn, and aiming them at the driver.

That's just a sampling of the horrors that we've seen. And those are only the ones that we know about because brave citizens have been out on the streets recording. I can only imagine how many more abuses are happening away from the cameras.

No one is exempt from the tyranny of this administration. And any of my colleagues who think they or their constituents are somehow immune from this administration's flailing cruelty better wake up quickly, because it could be your community next.

Now, what does all this have to do with fraud? Don't ask me, ask Attorney General Bondi, who has justified the continued presence of federal agents in Minneapolis due to the existence of fraud in that state. In a letter she sent on January 24, Attorney General Bondi tried to extort Minnesota by seeking voter data and other sensitive records in exchange for relief from federal terror. And in doing so, she referenced the letter sent by Committee Republicans investigating fraud in Minnesota. It is truly a dark day when this Committee's reputation is used to justify the oppression of American communities.

Our country was founded by people who stood up to the tyranny of a mad king across the ocean. But now, the tyranny and madness is coming from inside the house, specifically, the White House. We have seen image after image and video after video of outrageous abuses, any of which would have scandalized any other administration. But for this administration, there is clearly no bottom and a total inability to feel shame.

I can assure you that when Democrats are back in charge, we will not sit by silently while the President runs roughshod over the Constitution and the American people. And to the people of Minnesota and other communities who are living in fear, I want you to know that on my side of the aisle we hear you, we see you, and we will keep fighting for you.