

Some Republicans Call for Noem to Resign

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Some Republican lawmakers have joined a growing chorus of Democrats calling for Kristi Noem to step down as Homeland Security Secretary, in the wake of the Jan. 24 killing of Alex Pretti in Minnesota at the hands of federal immigration enforcement agents.

“What she’s done in Minnesota should be disqualifying,” Sen. Thom Tillis (R, N.C.) told reporters Tuesday. “She should be out of a job. I mean, really, it’s just amateurish.”

Tillis, who has publicly broken ranks with President Donald Trump before and is retiring, added that Noem has made Trump “look bad,” shifting attention away from his policies and onto her “incompetence.” He also castigated Greg Bovino, the senior commander from Customs and Border Protection (CBP) who oversaw mass immigration raids across the country, including in Minneapolis: “He needs to go back to California, get his retirement papers, and go.”

In a separate interview, Tillis indicated that his disappointment with Noem extends beyond the violence in Minnesota. “She’s not even handling the other part of her job,” the Senator said, pointing to how Noem once said that the Federal Emergency Management Agency should be eliminated.

“If I were in her position, I can’t think of any point of pride over the last year,” the North Carolina Senator said. “She’s got to make her own decision, or the President does. But she has taken this Administration into the ground on an issue that we should own. We should own the issue of border security and immigration—but they have destroyed that for Republicans.”

Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R, Alaska) also criticized Noem’s handling of the situation in Minneapolis, including how the DHS head accused Pretti of perpetrating “domestic terrorism,” a claim that was contradicted by footage of Pretti’s death. Murkowski told reporters Tuesday that Noem “has taken a direction that has not been helpful to the situation.” When asked if Noem should resign, Murkowski said, “I voted for her. I think the President needs to look at who he has in place as the Secretary of Homeland Security. I would not support her again, and I think it probably is time for her to step down.”

Murkowski, speaking to another reporter, said that she has “lost confidence” in Noem, and that there are “other issues” surrounding her that need to be addressed. “I supported her, I’ve supported her nomination. I had great hopes for her in the department, and I’ve been disappointed.”

The two moderate senators’ comments stand out amid the GOP’s apparent reservation about rebuking Noem publicly, even though many have called for an investigation into Pretti’s fatal shooting.

When reporters asked Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R, S.D.) about his confidence in the DHS Secretary, he deflected and instead said it’s the President’s judgment call. Sen. Susan Collins (R, Maine) told Maine Public Radio that she spoke to Noem to seek pausing immigration enforcement surges in her state and in Minnesota amid public backlash.

Sen. John Curtis (R, Utah) posted on X: “I disagree with Secretary Noem’s premature DHS response, which came before all the facts were known and weakened confidence.” Curtis also called for an independent probe into Pretti’s shooting, and he said, “Those responsible—no matter their title—must be held accountable.”

Democratic leaders in Congress have already threatened Trump that if he doesn’t fire Noem, they will seek to impeach her. “We can do this the easy way or the hard way,” House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries warned in a post on X.

As of Tuesday evening, more than 160 House Democratic lawmakers have reportedly signed a resolution to impeach the embattled Secretary, and some Democratic Senators such as Elizabeth Warren (D, Mass.) have similarly called for impeachment if Noem doesn’t get fired. But the prospect of Noem’s forced removal is slim: both chambers of Congress are led by the GOP, and not only is a majority vote in the House needed to impeach, two-thirds of the Senate is required to convict.

Speculation about Noem’s future comes after the Administration appeared to change tack in how to handle immigration operations in Minneapolis, including pushing Bovino out of the city and replacing him with Trump’s “border czar” Tom Homan. *The Atlantic* also reported Monday that Noem and her close adviser Corey Lewandowski, who backed Bovino at DHS, were at risk of losing their jobs.

But Trump himself has said that Noem won’t step down from her post. The President told reporters outside the White House Tuesday: “I think she’s doing a very good job.”