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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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June 16, 2026

Mr. Tim Cook
CEO
Apple
One Apple Park Way
Cupertino, CA 95014

Dear Mr. Cook:

Why is Apple helping the Trump Department of Justice (DOJ) violate the First Amendment by blocking access to lawful apps that the American people use to record, report, and monitor the actions of our own government's officers and employees?

As you know, over the past year, President Trump's anti-immigration crackdown has unleashed violence and death on the streets of communities all over our country, endangering the public and officers alike.¹ Americans exercising their First Amendment rights to document Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) actions have been beaten up, shot, and killed by our own government. Earlier this year, two Americans in Minneapolis—Renée Good and Alex Pretti—who were lawfully observing and recording ICE and CBP operations were accosted, assaulted, and gunned down by Department of Homeland Security (DHS) agents. After they were killed, DHS and Trump Administration officials tried to deflect responsibility and smear the victims, falsely labeling them “domestic terrorists” and falsely claiming that Ms. Good² and Mr. Pretti³ were attacking law enforcement before they were killed. Eyewitness accounts and video footage captured on cell phone cameras exposed the Administration's blatant lies and propaganda, setting the record straight about these unjustified killings⁴ and causing the Trump Administration to stop repeating its lies about its own victims shot dead in the streets of Minneapolis.

¹ See, e.g., *US: Excessive Force Against LA Protestors*, HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH (Aug. 18, 2025), <https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/08/18/us-excessive-force-against-la-protesters>; Jon Schuppe & Erik Ortiz, *Trump's DHS Has Shot 12 People During Immigration Enforcement Operations Since September: Here's What to Know.*, NBC NEWS (Jan. 25, 2026), <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/ice-shootings-list-border-patrol-trump-immigration-operations-rcna254202>.

² Richard Luscombe, *Trump Administration Unleashes Torrent of Untruths After Woman Shot Dead by ICE*, THE GUARDIAN (Jan. 9, 2026), <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/jan/09/white-house-minneapolis-ice-killing>.

³ Ximena Bustillo, *Internal Review Contradicts White House Narrative of Pretti's Death*, NPR (Jan. 28, 2026), <https://www.npr.org/2026/01/27/g-s1-107608/alex-pretti-death-internal-review-immigration>.

⁴ Mark Scheffler, *Videos and Accounts Undermine DHS's Explanation of Minneapolis ICE Shooting*, N.Y. TIMES

In response to the Administration’s violent and lawless crackdown on immigrant communities and American citizens standing up for their rights, members of the public have relied on apps to report and share information about ICE and CBP activity in their communities. The developers of these apps are individuals who were alarmed by the Administration’s actions and put their programming skills to use to empower their communities to look out for one another. One of these apps, ICEBlock, alerts users to ICE and CBP activity in their proximity, like “WAZE but for ICE sightings.”⁵ The app allows users to place a marker on a map to indicate where agents were observed and can include optional details such as officers’ vehicles or attire.⁶ The developer’s intention was to enable individuals to avoid confrontations with ICE,⁷ which he feared would further “expos[e] immigrants and citizens alike to violence and rampant violations of their civil liberties.”⁸

Apps like ICEBlock are perfectly lawful. The First Amendment guarantees the people the right to record, report, discuss, and criticize the actions of our government—including the deployment of federal agents in our own communities. The courts have long recognized that “access to information regarding public police activity is particularly important because it leads to citizen discourse on public issues....”⁹ Yet, the Administration and DOJ have relentlessly attacked the developers and users of these tools as part of a shocking and lawless effort to cover up basic civic knowledge and the truth about ICE and CBP’s actions.¹⁰

Last June, CNN published a profile on the creator of one of these ICE reporting apps, Joshua Aaron, who created ICEBlock.¹¹ Following this article’s release, members of the Trump Administration, from White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt to White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller to Acting Director of ICE Todd Lyons accused CNN of “promoting” the app and “inciting violence” against ICE officers.¹² Then-DHS Secretary Kristi Noem called the app an “obstruction of justice” and threatened “if you obstruct or assault our law

(Jan. 26, 2026), <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/26/insider/minneapolis-ice-shooting-videos-investigation.html>; Amanda Watford, *Footage, Documents at Odds with DHS Accounts of Immigration Enforcement Incidents*, STATELINE (Jan. 23, 2026), <https://stateline.org/2026/01/23/footage-documents-at-odds-with-dhs-accounts-of-immigration-enforcement-incidents/>.

⁵ ICEBlock, <https://www.iceblock.app/> (last visited Jan. 29, 2026).

⁶ Clare Duffy, *‘I Wanted to Do Something to Fight Back’: This iPhone App Alerts Users to Nearby ICE Sightings*, CNN (June 30, 2025), <https://www.cnn.com/2025/06/30/tech/iceblock-app-trump-immigration-crackdown>.

⁷ Callum Sutherland, *ICEBlock, an iPhone App Intended to Alert Users of Nearby ICE Sightings, Comes Under Fire*, TIME (June 30, 2025), www.iceblock.app/media/timemagazine-06-30-2025.pdf.

⁸ Compl. para. 4, *Joshua Aaron and All U Chart, Inc. v. Bondi, et al.*, No. 1:25-cv-04250-DLF (D.D.C. Dec. 8, 2025), <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/72003579/1/aaron-v-bondi/>.

⁹ *Fields v. City of Philadelphia*, 862 F.3d 353 (3d Cir. 2017).

¹⁰ Nick Beake & Joshua Cheetham, *Can the US Government Ban Apps That Track ICE Agents?*, BBC NEWS (Oct. 3, 2025), <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c2lxwxnnx2zo>.

¹¹ Clare Duffy, *‘I wanted to Do Something to Fight Back’: This iPhone App Alerts Users to Nearby ICE Sightings*, CNN (June 30, 2025), <https://www.cnn.com/2025/06/30/tech/iceblock-app-trump-immigration-crackdown>.

¹² Theo Burman, *Kristi Noem Responds to ICEBlock App: Obstruction of Justice*, NEWSWEEK (July 1, 2025), <https://www.newsweek.com/kirsti-noem-iceblock-deportation-immigration-app-2092878>.

enforcement, we will hunt you down and you will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.”¹³

This broad attention to ICEBlock led to a surge in its popularity, and the app hit the top of the Apple App Store the day after the CNN article appeared and dropped only to third place the day after.¹⁴ As a result of this publicity and the subsequent backlash from the Trump Administration and its allies, the ICEBlock app founder received death threats, even as downloads of his app continued. In July, Mr. Aaron’s wife, who served at the DOJ’s Office of the U.S. Trustee for over a decade as a forensic accountant, was contacted by her employer about her connection to the app.¹⁵ Not long after, she was fired from the DOJ.¹⁶

In early October 2025, then-Attorney General Pam Bondi publicly called for Apple to remove ICEBlock from the App Store.¹⁷ You complied the very same day and sent Mr. Aaron an email notifying him that further downloads of ICEBlock would be blocked, due to a violation of Apple’s developer guidelines.¹⁸ A day later, your company confirmed the removal of other “similar apps” from the App Store, including ICE Immigration Alerts, Fari Alerts, DeICER, Eyes Up and Red Dot.¹⁹ Trump Administration officials complained about these apps,²⁰ and your company, alas, then buckled under to government pressure and responded by translating those complaints into action.

All these apps had been available for months before your takedown, with ICEBlock alone topping 1 million users. They had each passed your internal approval process, including subsequent versions released by the developers.²¹ During the app review process, the Apple reviewers raised concerns about the information the users might provide or leak when they use the app,²² and many of the apps were initially asked to change aspects of their design to better protect the privacy of their users and be compliant with your app review guidelines.²³ All but one

¹³ Kristi Noem, @Sec_Noem, X (June 30, 2025, 1:01 PM ET), https://x.com/Sec_Noem/status/1939731099581874457.

¹⁴ Emma Roth, *ICE-Tracking Apps Stops App Store*, THE VERGE (July 2, 2025), <https://www.theverge.com/news/696584/iceblock-tracking-app-white-house-criticism>.

¹⁵ Will Neal, *Bondi Takes Revenge on Family of Man Who Created Anti-ICE App*, DAILY BEAST (July 21, 2025), <https://www.thedailybeast.com/donald-trumps-justice-department-just-fired-anti-ice-app-founders-wife-after-maga-uproar/>.

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ Wyatt Grantham-Philips, Matt O’Brien, & Kelvin Chan, *Apple and Google Block Apps That Crowdsource ICE Sightings. Some Warn of Chilling Effects*, ASSOC. PRESS (Oct. 3, 2025), <https://apnews.com/article/apple-ice-iphone-app-immigration-fb6a404d3e977516d66d470585071bcc>.

¹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹ On file with the Committee.

²⁰ Ashley Carnahan, *Attorney General Pam Bondi Warns ICEBlock App Developer to ‘Watch Out,’ Says DOJ Is ‘Looking at Him,’* FOX NEWS (July 1, 2025), <https://www.foxnews.com/media/attorney-general-pam-bondi-warns-iceblock-app-developer-watch-out-says-doj-looking-him>.

²¹ On file with the Committee.

²² *Id.*

²³ *Id.*

of these apps actively moderated content.²⁴ None of them collected user data, and all but one app have continued to appeal their removal, to no avail.²⁵

These apps closely resemble tools your company owns, hosts, and has retained, some in spite of law enforcement pressure. Crowdsourcing law enforcement locations has long been a feature of popular GPS routing apps like Apple Maps, Google Maps and Waze. Apps like Waze even have tools that people have used to report ICE agent activity, such as reporting there is an “icy road” ahead.²⁶

Yet when the Administration raised concerns about the ICE-tracking apps, you removed them before there was even a formal removal request. Developers were told the removals were due to “objectionable content,” specifically a violation of section 1.1.1 of your App Review Guidelines,²⁷ which defines such content as including “defamatory, discriminatory, or mean-spirited content, including references or commentary about religion, race, sexual orientation, gender, national/ethnic origin, or other targeted groups, particularly if the app is likely to humiliate, intimidate, or harm a targeted individual or group.”²⁸ It is very hard to see how this language is relevant to your actions. Publicly, you stated that the apps were removed after law enforcement made you aware of “safety risks” associated with them.²⁹ However, both of these unconvincing justifications stand in direct contradiction to your continued hosting of other apps with functionally identical features.

What drove this decision was not functionality, not safety, and not your anti-discrimination guidelines. It was governmental pressure, plain and simple. While the DOJ has repeatedly raised agent safety as a justification for removing tracking apps, governmental claims regarding the actual risk to agent safety are hyperbolic and lacking in direct evidence.³⁰ Indeed, your platform knows this firsthand as none of the apps you removed had prompted users to report safety or security concerns related to ICE or CBP operators.³¹ The selective removal of the ICE-transparency apps is not only inconsistent with your own guidelines but a contradiction of the founding ethos of the App Store itself. Phil Schiller, a 30-veteran of Apple who leads the App Store whom you credited with having “helped make Apple the company it is today,”³² once

²⁴ *Id.*

²⁵ *Id.*

²⁶ Ruben Bolling, *Apps Like Waze Are Being Used to Covertly Warn Immigrants About ICE Activity: “Icy Roads,”* BOING BOING (Aug. 26, 2025), <https://boingboing.net/2025/08/26/apps-like-waze-are-being-used-to-covertly-warn-immigrants-about-ice-activity-icy-roads.html>.

²⁷ On file with the Committee.

²⁸ App Review Guidelines, APPLE DEVELOPER, <https://developer.apple.com/app-store/review/guidelines/> (last visited Apr. 1, 2026).

²⁹ Liv McMahon, *Apple Pulls US Immigration Official Tracking Apps*, BBC NEWS (Oct. 3, 2025), <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c708y1egztko>.

³⁰ Philip Bump, *Parsing ICE’s Mixed-Up, Hard-to-Believe Assault Claims*, WASH. POST (June 19, 2025), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2025/06/19/brad-lander-ice-assault-masking/>.

³¹ On file with the Committee.

³² *Phil Schiller*, APPLEINSIDER, <https://appleinsider.com/inside/phil-schiller> (last visited June 12, 2026).

stated the App Store was founded on the principle of “one set of rules for everybody, no special deals, no special terms, no special code, everything applies to all developers the same.”³³

This coercion and censorship campaign, which ultimately targets the users of ICE-monitoring applications, seeks to silence this Administration’s critics and suppress any evidence that would expose the Administration’s lies, including its strenuous Orwellian efforts to cover up the murders of Renée Good and Alex Pretti. A federal judge recently confirmed as much, granting a preliminary injunction against the DOJ and DHS after finding that developers of ICE-tracking apps are likely to succeed in their claim that the government violated the First Amendment by coercing companies into removing protected speech.³⁴ The hypocrisy of the current Administration’s actions is astounding. Their own allies decried the prior Administration’s outreach to tech companies over COVID misinformation as “censorship by proxy,”³⁵ releasing a 17,000-page congressional report condemning precisely this conduct³⁶—yet this Administration now openly brags about demanding that companies such as yours remove and block lawful speech. Your company was under no legal obligation to remove these apps.

The First Amendment protects the public’s right to warn of nearby law enforcement activity, and no court order compelled your hand. In fact, the government would violate the First Amendment if it were to coerce a private party into suppressing such information, a practice sometimes known as “jawboning.” As the Supreme Court first held 60 years ago and unanimously reaffirmed recently, “[g]overnment officials cannot attempt to coerce private parties to punish or suppress views that the government disfavors.”³⁷ Instead, your company chose to act in deference to the coercive demands of an authoritarian administration that has made it a habit of using legal and regulatory pressure, both formal and informal, to shake down, intimidate, coerce and punish perceived enemies.

Your removal of these apps adversely affected over a hundred thousand then-current users of these apps and prevented millions more from accessing and using these transparency tools. Further, the chilling effects of your actions cannot be calculated as we have no way of knowing how many people were considering creating their own tools or downloading the app in the future, especially as DHS enforcement efforts have only grown in officer number and presence across the country. To be candid, your company’s eager compliance with this coercive pressure is surprising, incompatible with past practice and the self-proclaimed values of your company, dangerously subservient to an authoritarian administration, and part of a growing and

³³ Stephen Nellis, *App Store Chief Says Apple Aimed to Level Playing Field for Developers*, REUTERS (July 28, 2020), <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-tech-congress-apple-idUSKCN24T1WY/>.

³⁴ Mackenzi Klemann, *Federal judge grants injunction for ice tracker sites*, INDIANA CAPITAL CHRON. (Apr. 21, 2026), <https://www.ipm.org/news/2026-04-21/federal-judge-grants-injunction-for-ice-tracker-sites/>.

³⁵ Press Release, *Judiciary Committee Raises Questions About Potential Censorship on Threads*, H. COMM. ON THE JUDICIARY (July 17, 2023), <https://judiciary.house.gov/media/press-releases/judiciary-committee-raises-questions-about-potential-censorship-threads/>.

³⁶ Brooke Singman, *House Weaponization Panel Releases 17,000-page Report Exposing ‘Two-Tiered System of Government’*, FOX NEWS (Dec. 20, 2024), <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/house-weaponization-panel-releases-17000-page-report-exposing-two-tiered-system-government/>.

³⁷ *Nat’l Rifle Ass’n of Am. v. Vullo*, 602 U.S. 175, 180 (2024).

disturbing pattern within the tech industry. There is no safety for you or any other American business or citizen in appealing authoritarian strongarm tactics.

This capitulation and appeasement need not continue.

Pursuant to the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on the Judiciary has jurisdiction to conduct oversight of matters concerning civil liberties. To that end, the Committee must understand how and to what extent the Trump Administration directed or coerced technology companies to remove applications that enable Americans to exercise their First and Fourth Amendment rights, as well as the extent to which those companies complied with or facilitated such efforts. In light of these important concerns, please provide the following information and documents as soon as possible, but no later than 5:00 p.m. on June 30, 2026:

1. All documents and communications from January 20, 2025, to the present between any employees of the White House, Department of Homeland Security, or DOJ and Apple, Inc. or any corporate subsidiary (including its App Store) that mention or otherwise concern ICEBlock, DeICER, Fari Alerts, ICE Immigration Alerts, Red Dot, Eyes Up or any other applications, services or webpages that function to crowdsource sightings or otherwise publicly disclose ICE or CBP activities.
2. All documents, user complaints, communications or other materials referring or relating to the approval, updates to, or otherwise concern ICEBlock, DeICER, Fari Alerts, ICE Immigration Alerts, Red Dot, Eyes Up or any other applications that function to crowdsource sightings or otherwise publicly disclose ICE activities.
3. All documents relating to Apple's statements to the concerned developers which indicate that you removed ICE-tracking apps from the App Store due to 'objectionable content,'³⁸ including all documents reflecting whether, and under what circumstances, the targeted monitoring of law enforcement personnel is classified as objectionable content for purposes of this standard.
4. With respect to the removal of any ICE-tracking applications from the Apple App Store, please provide documents, communications, or logs that detail:
 - a. Whether advance notice of removal was provided to affected developers, and if so, the form such notice took.
 - b. Whether such notice included a statement of the alleged policy violations at issue, and if so, which developer policies were cited.
 - c. Whether affected developers were afforded a right to appeal, and if so, the form and process of such appeal.

³⁸ On file with the Committee.

Mr. Tim Cook
Page 7

- d. Whether the notice, removal, and appeal process followed in connection with these removals was consistent with Apple's standard procedures for application removal and appeal.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Very truly yours,



Jamie Raskin
Ranking Member

cc: The Honorable Jim Jordan, Chairman