

# Climate Power: Fund FEMA, not ICE: DHS is endangering Wisconsinites by using federal funds to terrorize communities instead of protecting them

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**Madison, WI** — Secretary Kristi Noem and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) have failed in their duty to help communities across the country recover from extreme weather disasters. Instead, Noem has misused her authority, redirecting over [\\$600 million](#) in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds from our national disaster response capabilities to states to build migrant detention centers.

**Climate Power President Lori Lodes and Climate Power En Acción Executive Director Antonieta Cádiz Vargas issued the following statement:** “Secretary Kristi Noem has enabled ICE to unlawfully terrorize our communities, kidnap children, and murder individuals on the streets. While Noem funnels resources to ICE, already the [highest-funded law enforcement agency](#), she has gutted FEMA and undermined our nation’s disaster response. Families are afraid to go to the grocery store and send their children to school, while devastated communities wait for aid that may not come. We must fund the agencies that protect people, not the ones that turn our cities into battlefields and separate families.”

Since day one at the helm of DHS, Noem has worked to gut the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), leading to delayed and denied resources to communities from Asheville to LA and Milwaukee as they recover from extreme

weather events:

- In October 2025, FEMA [rejected](#) Wisconsin's request for funds to help repair infrastructure damaged by recent widespread flooding. The flooding had caused more than [\\$26 million](#) in damage.
- As of January 2026, Noem's requirement for her personal approval on all FEMA expenses exceeding \$100,000 had [created](#) a \$17 billion bottleneck, causing months-long delays in delivering federal disaster funds to states.
- Under Noem, FEMA's \$1 billion Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities program was [canceled](#), threatening hundreds of resiliency projects in communities nationwide.
- In 2025, DHS [drafted](#) plans to cut FEMA's workforce by more than 50%, resulting in the loss of more than 11,500 jobs.

Noem's cuts to FEMA have left communities more vulnerable to winter storms, extreme cold, hurricanes, floods, wildfires, and other emergencies that are becoming more frequent and more severe while allowing ICE to terrorize American cities. The Trump administration is endangering lives by prioritizing ICE funding over assistance for the millions of Americans affected by extreme weather.