

REMEMBER WHEN BRAD LANDER CAUGHT KRISTI NOEM STEALING \$80 MILLION?

It's perhaps a timely moment to recall that Brad Lander has tangled with Kristi Noem before.

Back when DOGE and DHS clawed back \$80 million awarded to New York City to house migrants, Lander was the guy who called them out – and insisted on suing.

New York City Comptroller and mayoral candidate Brad Lander said the abrupt decision was an illegal diversion by the Elon Musk-led Department of Government Efficiency of money used to house asylum-seekers admitted to the U.S. under President Joe Biden.

"President Trump and his crony Elon Musk illegally executed a revocation of \$80 million in congressionally-appropriated FEMA funding from New York City's bank accounts," Lander said in a statement. "This highway robbery of our funds directly out of our bank account is a betrayal of everyone who calls New York City home."

Lander's statement came after the Trump administration claimed the city had received disaster relief funds to house migrants in luxury hotels. Musk posted that his DOGE "discovered" the funding on Monday, calling it "a gross insubordination to the President's executive order."

The funds were administered by FEMA, a subagency of the Department of Homeland Security. A 2024 report from Lander's office found that the city paid an average rate of \$156 a night for hotel

rooms booked through an agreement with the Hotel Association of New York City.

The seizure of funds could result in cuts to city services.

"We can't recover money we already spent on shelter and services for asylum seekers, so it would require cutting \$80 million of some other city expenses," Lander said.

This happened the very week that Eric Adams was cozying up to Tom Homan – which Dale Ho judged was evidence of a quid pro quo.

Lander took a shot at Mayor Eric Adams for not standing up to Trump, saying that "If instead Mayor Adams continues to be President Trump's pawn, my Office will request to work in partnership with the New York City Law Department to pursue aggressive legal action."

Adams said Wednesday that he is in talks with the White House about recovering the money, and that he's requested an emergency meeting with FEMA to resolve the matter. "The Corporation Counsel is already exploring various litigation options," he added, in a statement on X.

Adams is scheduled to meet Thursday with Trump border czar Tom Homan, who demanded cooperation from the Democrat during a radio interview Tuesday, saying, "Either he comes to the table or we go around him."

Adams didn't insist on getting the money back. On the contrary, Trump's Administration has continued to steal from New York City.

In fact, the day before Kristi Noem's goons detained Brad Lander on his third visit accompanying migrants, New York's lawyers amended their complaint about the theft – to update the Acting FEMA Administrator, to

capitalize the words, "Money Grab" (to distinguish it from several other newly alleged harms), to describe the further arbitrary attempts to justify stealing the funds, first by terminating the program six weeks after DOGE took the money, then by launching an onerous investigation.

20. Then, with the purported compliance review apparently uncompleted, FEMA announced on April 1, 2025, that it was terminating SSP entirely. FEMA stated that it was terminating the City's SSP award for the entirely different reason that the grants "no longer effectuate [] the program goals or agency priorities" (quoting 2 C.F.R. § 200.340(a)(2) (2020)). But the regulation FEMA cited does not permit a federal agency to cancel a grant program funded by Congressional appropriation simply because it has changed its mind and now opposes the program.

21. Not only that. While FEMA's termination letter provides for a closeout process at the end of which FEMA will determine whether any additional SSP grant funds are owed the City, all SSP funds that were awarded the City and that would have remained available to make any such payment were apparently zeroed out on USASpending.gov more than six weeks earlier.

22. Collectively, these events make plain that Defendants determined to overturn the Congressional appropriation, deny the City SSP funds, and re-take any funds they could find a way to lay their hands on.

The amendment also catches FEMA making false representations to Rhode Island Judge John McConnell and in this lawsuit.

125, Despite Defendants' representations

– to the District Court in Rhode Island on February 11 and, as set forth more fully below, a week later in the Remedy for Noncompliance Letter – that the SSP funds were merely being “paused” or “temporarily” withheld pending a further review, Defendants had elsewhere already recorded the funds as no longer available at all.

The amended suit also describes that – as Trump did with Harvard – FEMA has also launched an onerous investigation into the city, and asks questions similar to the ones demanded of Harvard.

221. Joseph N. Mazzara, Acting General Counsel for defendant DHS, sent City OMB a letter dated June 4, 2025 announcing a “Notice of Investigation and Demand for Records: Shelter and Services Program Grant Awards” (“Notice of Investigation”). Under the guise of investigating the City’s expenditure of SSP funds, the Notice of Investigation sets forth a series of document demands and “interrogatories” that reach far beyond the scope of anything related to the City’s expenditures of federal SSP funds

[snip]

222. The scope of the demand far exceeds anything related to the administration of SSP. For example, the demand seeks, without apparent limitation or connection to immigrants served under SSP:

- *“All documents related to Your compliance with 8 U.S.C. g 1324.”*
- *“All documents related to any instructions, guidance, suggestions,*

or recommendations for aliens to consider” in completing immigration or other government forms or interacting with any federal or state government officials.”

- *“All documents related to Your cooperation with law enforcement (including immigration officials) concerning aliens whom You have encountered’”*
- *“All documents related to instructions, guidance, or recommendations, made available to aliens, regarding how to interact with law enforcement.”*
- *A list of all “categories of information You have collected about any aliens.”*

223. Despite the exceedingly broad scope of the demands, the Notice of Investigation provides just 30 days within which OMB “must produce” the records and information sought.

Admittedly, the lawyers are the ones now driving this fight, not Lander.

But the fight is about money Lander caught

Kristi Noem stealing.

Lander's detention thus bears a third similarity with that of Ras Baraka: both men had sued DHS, both arrests constituted – per Emil Bove's representations to Dale Ho – election interference, and in both cases, Noem's goons premeditated the arrest.

This is beginning to look like a pattern.