

Resolution to Defend Alexandria's Residents and Public Safety Against Illegal ICE/CBP Activities in Our Community

Co-Sponsors – Crisa Young, Mark Levine & David Paladin-Fernandez

The Alexandria Democratic Committee stands unequivocally for the safety, dignity, constitutional rights, and equal protection of every person who lives in or visits our city.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) have undertaken an unprecedented expansion of federal immigration enforcement, accompanied by increasingly aggressive actions that have raised grave concerns about constitutional rights, due process, excessive force, public safety, and the rule of law. Recent reports of individuals claiming to represent ICE or CBP engaging in questionable and potentially unlawful activities in Alexandria and throughout Northern Virginia make clear that our community must be proactively prepared to respond when federal authority is abused.

Our immigrant neighbors, their families, and their friends are living with pervasive fear of unlawful detention, deportation, violence, and abuse. That fear is itself a public-safety threat. Community advocates report that because residents fear immigration enforcement, they do not report crimes, call 911, cooperate with investigations, send their children to school, obtain groceries and other necessities, or seek help when they are in danger. Alexandrians also fear federal authorities preventing them from exercising their First Amendment rights to film and document illegal actions occurring in public spaces.

Alexandrians know a two-tier system of justice in which ordinary residents are held accountable for unlawful conduct while federal agents are permitted to evade accountability by invoking their authority is unacceptable. No badge places anyone above the law. Federal officers who obey the law should be treated lawfully and professionally. Federal officers who break the law should be investigated and held accountable under the same principle that applies to everyone else.

Our state and local representatives have taken important steps to strengthen resident protections. We commend Virginia laws that require our law enforcement to intervene against other law enforcement officers' excessive use of force, that limit unnecessary cooperation with ICE and CBP, and that prohibit federal agents from concealing their identities while exercising federal authority. We also supported legislation passed by the General Assembly to protect sensitive locations such as schools, hospitals, courthouses, and polling places. Although the Governor vetoed this last bill, we support its reintroduction and passage in the next legislative session.

We specifically commend the Mayor and City Council for their commitment to providing the maximum protection permitted by Virginia and federal law to Alexandria residents facing unlawful conduct by federal agents.

We commend our local elected officials for recognizing that Alexandria's responsibility to protect its residents does not disappear when the alleged perpetrator claims to represent a federal agency. We also rely upon the Alexandria Police Department (APD) to uphold this commitment to protect residents to the fullest extent allowable under the law, while maintaining constitutional boundaries in interactions with federal agencies.

This commitment is essential to both public safety and public trust. We urge the City Council and City Manager to ensure these commitments be formalized and publicly communicated into clear and consistent policies and directives, accompanied by appropriate officer training so that every resident and every APD officer understands what protections are available and

how they are to be consistently carried out. We understand this process is happening now. We support finishing the process as soon as possible. We want every APD officer to have the detailed guidance and complete legal support necessary to carry these policies out. As noted above, affected Alexandrians fear that interactions with the APD will trigger immigration enforcement.

As noted above, affected Alexandrians fear that interaction with the APD will trigger immigration enforcement. In order to reclaim the trust of all Alexandrians, we support future efforts by the APD to:

1. **Enforce the law impartially.** Serious crimes committed in Alexandria must be investigated and prosecuted regardless of the perpetrator's position, uniform, badge, or federal affiliation—including crimes committed by ICE or CBP officers and other illegal actions they take beyond the scope of their authority.
2. **Investigate suspected criminal conduct.** Disturbances, assaults, and other criminal offenses committed by unidentified individuals purporting to be federal law enforcement should be investigated in accordance with the same standards that apply to any other suspected criminal conduct.
3. **Intervene when required by law.** APD officers must comply with Virginia's duty-to-intervene requirements when necessary to prevent unlawful violence or excessive use of force, including when that conduct is committed by federal agents.
4. **Protect people in immediate danger.** When residents call 911 because ICE, CBP, or individuals claiming to be federal agents are engaging in criminal conduct or threatening unlawful violence, APD must respond appropriately and protect our residents to the fullest extent permitted by law.
5. **Verify identity and legal authority.** APD officers should seek positive identification from individuals claiming to be ICE or CBP and, where safe and practicable, request the legal basis for their actions, including any judicial or administrative warrant or other claimed authority.
6. **Document federal enforcement activity.** APD officers should use body-worn cameras in accordance with APD policy and applicable law when interacting with ICE or CBP. Requests for identification or legal authority—and refusals to provide them—should be documented so that evidence of potentially unlawful conduct is preserved and, where legally permissible, made available to affected residents and their attorneys.
7. **Give residents clear guidance.** APD should establish and publicly communicate clear protocols for responding to 911 calls involving ICE or CBP and for informing residents of their rights and available protections.

To the extent the APD is already taking these actions, we commend them for doing so.

The experiences and tragedies of people across the country—including **Kilmar Abrego Garcia, Lorenzo Araujo, Juan Duran, Renee Good, Johan Guerrero, Carolina Molina, and Alex Pretti**—underscore the human cost of unchecked government power and the consequences of failing to intervene when unlawful conduct threatens human life and dignity. We are committed to doing our best to prevent such abuses from occurring in Alexandria.

Given our proximity to the nation's capital and the extraordinary concentration of federal law-enforcement activity in our region, Alexandria cannot afford to be complacent. We must be prepared, we must know our rights, and our local institutions must be prepared to defend them.

Protecting immigrant residents does not undermine public safety. It strengthens public safety. Communities are safer when all residents trust their police, report crimes, cooperate with investigations, and know that calling 911 will bring protection rather than additional danger.

The Alexandria Democratic Committee therefore:

- **Commends** the Mayor, the City Council, and our other state and local representatives for their commitments and actions to protect Alexandria residents from unlawful federal interference enforcement;
- **Supports** the City's commitment to provide the maximum protection permitted by Virginia and federal law to residents facing unlawful conduct by federal agents;
- **Urges** the City Council and City Manager to ensure that these commitments are translated into clear, transparent, and consistently implemented APD policies, trainings, and procedures;
- **Supports** impartial enforcement of the law, including investigation and prosecution of serious crimes committed by federal officers acting outside their authority;
- **Supports** APD compliance with Virginia's duty-to-intervene requirements to appropriately protect residents from unlawful violence or excessive force;
- **Calls upon** the Attorney General of Virginia to issue clear guidance on this law so that city attorneys may represent any officer prosecuted by federal authorities for preventing a violent ICE officer from unlawfully harming members of our community;
- **Urges** continued efforts by the General Assembly to strengthen Virginia's protections in sensitive places; and
- **Commits** to supporting and collaborating with those organizations already involved in efforts to defend our residents from the threat of ICE; and recommits to our advocacy for the safety, dignity, constitutional rights, and lawful protections of all Alexandria's residents and visitors.

Alexandria will not be intimidated. No one is above the law. Federal authority is not a license to commit crimes. And no resident of Alexandria should ever have to choose between calling for help and protecting themselves from the people who are supposed to uphold the law.

We will enforce the law. We will defend our neighbors. We will protect our community.