

STATEMENT OF MARIMAR MARTINEZ

My name is Marimar Martinez. I am here not only as a survivor of this Administration's actions, but as an advocate for those who do not have a voice, those that are pleading for justice, living in fear, and those who are asking for meaningful change and accountability.

I come from a beautiful family full of Immigrants and I am proud of my roots. I am born and raised in Chicago Illinois where I learned the values of resilience, community, respect, love & hope. Those lessons have shaped me since childhood and continued to guide me throughout my adult life. On October 4, 2025, those values were tested when my life was nearly taken by my own Government. This testimony is my attempt to give voice to an experience that words struggle to hold, but silence cannot justify.

On Saturday October 4, 2025, I woke up tired but committed to doing the fall cleaning I promised myself I would do that day. After two hours I had successfully filled an entire bag of good quality clothes and shoes I wanted to donate to my local Church. After a quick shower and cup of coffee, I put the bag of clothes in the back of my car and headed towards the Church. As I was getting close to the Church I noticed an SUV that appeared to be similar to the Border Patrol vehicles that had been invading our primarily Hispanic neighborhood in the previous weeks. I got a quiet but firm sense that something was not right.

As I passed the vehicle I noticed an "Uber" light in the front windshield, no front plate as required in Illinois, and an out of state license plate in back. I then noticed a uniformed Border Patrol agent in the vehicle. As a 30 year old U.S. citizen with no criminal history I naively believed that I had nothing to worry about, but I was concerned for my friends and neighbors based on the well-publicized incidents involving Border Patrol agents in our community over the past few weeks arresting anyone with brown skin for no legitimate law enforcement reason.

For the next 15 to 20 minutes I followed these Border Patrol agents through my neighborhood honking my horn and shouting "La Migra" to warn my neighbors about the presence of these agents who had been terrorizing our community over the past few weeks. As I did this my neighbors standing on their porches and sidewalks joined in this spontaneous life alert system and began setting off their car alarms to warn other neighbors.

As the Border Patrol vehicle turned onto Kedzie Avenue I continued to beep my horn and warn the community. As we approached the intersection of 39th and Kedzie, my vehicle was 2 to 3 feet to the left of the Border Patrol vehicle. He started to swerve into my lane as we were driving. I made eye contact with the driver of the Border Patrol vehicle and watched as he turned the steering wheel once again to his left and sideswiped my vehicle. I immediately froze, slammed on my brakes, and stopped my car. The Border Patrol vehicle stopped just 1 to 2 car lengths ahead of me.

It seemed like time stopped. I knew from watching the news coverage of other Border Patrol encounters in Chicago that I was in danger. I watched the video of Border Patrol agents killing Silverio Villegas Gonzalez just three weeks prior. I knew I had to get to safety before I was dragged from my car and likely beaten or killed. I drove forward and went around the Border Patrol agent who jumped out of his car and pointed his gun at me. I moved to the far-left lane, striking the curb on the far left side of Kedzie. The next thing I knew I felt a burning sensation in my arms and legs and thought I had been shot by pepper balls which I had also seen these agents fire at people in our community.

As I continued to drive past the Border Patrol agent I could hear my back passenger window shatter and I felt bullets continue to pierce my body. As I attempted to drive to a safe location, I began to feel lightheaded. I looked down and noticed blood gushing out of my arms and legs and I realized I had been shot multiple times. As I became lightheaded, I became worried I would pass out and endanger other drivers on the road.

I managed to drive a mile from where the incident happened and I pulled into the parking lot of a mechanic shop and called 911. I told the 911 operator that Border Patrol agents had just shot me and I needed help. I recall some of the workers from the shop sitting me down in a chair, as I was waiting for help but I was losing this battle, I saw my life flash before me and slowly began to think this was the end for me before losing consciousness. The next thing I remember is the EMTs putting me on stretcher and taking me to the hospital.

At the hospital I remember seeing multiple agents standing around watching me be treated for my wounds. My arms, legs and chest were all wrapped in bandages. I had 7 bullet holes in my body. I remember the agents rushing the nurses to finish up so they could take me with them.

I still felt dizzy, I was not able to fully process what had happened to me, after being at the hospital for less than 3 hours I was discharged from the hospital into the custody of the FBI. As we left the hospital I was escorted out through the back in a

wheel chair. I observed dozens of Border Patrol agents waiting outside the hospital. One of these agents came up to me with his cell phone and took my photograph. It was the same agent who had previously kept coming in and out my room and I had to repeatedly tell him to leave. I told him I did not consent to his photographing me with his cellphone, but he did not care. It still haunts me that this agent has my photo on his phone. Was this the agent who shot me? Was this a trophy photograph for him?

I was next taken to the FBI building for further processing. Because they rushed me out of the hospital so quickly, the blood started soaking through the bandages and dripping on the floor of the FBI office. I heard the agents talking about how the jail would not accept me in my current condition. I begged the agents to take me to a different hospital to give me proper medical care. Seeing me stand in a pool of my own blood, they were concerned about my health. One of the kind FBI agents brought a bag of additional bandages and worked quickly to put more dressing over my bloody bandages. The FBI agents agreed to take me to a different hospital where my wounds were retreated and I received additional medical care before being released back into law enforcement custody the following day.

The agents took me from the second hospital to the federal detention center in downtown Chicago. I have never even had a parking ticket before and now I was sitting in a federal detention center. All of this just for being the victim in a minor traffic accident. Things were surreal.

The news in the jail that evening had my story and I was being called a “domestic terrorist”! They said I “rammed” federal agents. I was in shock. If they only knew I was just months away from paying off my car and I would never intentionally damage my vehicle much less be crazy enough to hit a law enforcement vehicle. On Friday I was teaching the young children at the Montessori school and we were singing and dancing and getting ready for spooky season preparing fall activities to do the following week and on Saturday my own Government was calling me a “domestic terrorist” and I was in a federal detention center with bullet holes all over my body.

I went to Court on Monday and met my attorney Christopher Parente. He told me the Government was trying to have me kept in jail until the trial because they claimed I was a “danger to the community.” I told him I had never been in trouble before and that the government’s claims were all wrong. I looked around the courtroom and recognized over a dozen moms and dads from the Montessori school along with my boss and most of my family who came to support me. I heard my attorney tell the judge that he had received over 50 letters from the moms and dads of the kids I taught

all describing me as a caring, loving, empathetic teacher, the exact opposite of a “domestic terrorist.” I heard the government describe me as being “armed” even though I knew my gun was always inside my snapped closed holster at the bottom of my purse where I always kept it. The prosecutor told the Judge there was no allegation I have took the gun out of my purse but that did not stop DHS from continuing to say I was “armed” during this incident. My attorney explained to the Judge that I have a valid concealed carry license and that as a young woman living in Chicago I carry a gun to protect me from danger. Thankfully the Judge quickly denied the government’s detention request and released me on bond that day.

Over the next six weeks everything was surreal. I continued to work and teach my children but knowing that I was under federal indictment and facing felony charges and potentially years in federal prison over a minor car accident where the other driver was at fault and attempted to kill me was terrifying. There were times where I did not believe this was all real and then I would touch my bullet wounds and knew it was certainly real.

While I would go to work each day to take care of my children, I knew my attorney was hard at work in exposing the lies of ICE. I knew the truth of what happened. The Agent swerved into me. The Agent shot me as I drove away from him. My attorney and his investigators found video evidence demonstrating the agents were lying and I knew that no press release or tweet could ever trump the power of the truth

Two weeks before the Government dismissed all the charges in my case, I sat in a federal courtroom and watched from 20 feet away as the Border Patrol agent who attempted to kill me testified at a hearing. Agent Charles Exum. Charles Exum. My attempted executioner was Charles Exum.

Exum was in that courtroom testifying attempting to weave a coherent story explaining why he took his vehicle that I allegedly rammed out of the secured FBI Evidence garage and drove it back to Maine where the Border Patrol onsite mechanic was ordered to “buff out” the damage to the vehicle. This was all done prior to me or my attorneys having the ability to examine the vehicle. Because he did this, no expert witness would ever be able to prove that it was Exum who swerved into my vehicle.

Watching Charles Exum testify made me sick to my stomach. I grew up revering law enforcement. Prior to this incident I had great respect for local and federal law enforcement. I knew every day they put their lives on the line to keep me safe, to keep the kids at my school safe, and I thought to keep everyone in our community safe. But seeing what ICE was doing in our community at this time changed my view of law enforcement. This administration has misled the American people by claiming it

would focus on the “worst of the worst” while their actions show otherwise. Evidence from these operations including statements made under oath, reveals a pattern of misleading the public. The Government told the people they were targeting the “worst of the worst” but their actions demonstrated otherwise. They are not targeting the worst of the worst, they are targeting individuals who fit a certain profile, who simply have a certain accent, or a non-white skin color just like mine.

This raises serious concerns about fairness, discrimination, and abuse of authority. The lack of accountability for these actions is deeply troubling. We the people are tired of this misconduct and demand transparency and accountability. Seeing Charles Exum sit in a federal courtroom and lie about what happened that day completely eroded all of my trust in law enforcement. I know just because Exum is not telling the truth that I cannot hold that against all other law enforcement but to be honest I do not know if I will ever view law enforcement the same way again

As my attorney showed the Court the disgusting text messages Exum sent to his fellow border patrol buddies literally bragging about how many times he shot me, I got sick to my stomach. Seeing how a federal law enforcement officer would talk this way about shooting me, a woman who he swerved into, was both eye opening and heartbreaking. Thankfully I survived Exum’s attempted murder of me and was able to shine a light on his lies, but what about all the others who either did not survive, or were not fortunate enough to have videos proving the agents lies? I know deep down this was God’s purpose in having me survive Exum’s 5 bullets. It was for this moment to happen, so that the world could see these text messages which were a window into the soul of the U.S. Border Patrol at this critical time in our country’s history.

Fourteen days after Exum was confronted with his own disgusting text messages, my attorney called me with the wonderful news that the government was dismissing all the charges against me. We showed up in Court later that day and some of the same parents from my Montessori school who came to support me at my arraignment were there again, this time with tears in their eyes as they heard Judge Alexakis tell me I was free to go and the charges were dismissed with prejudice.

I have learned that surviving the physical wounds was only the beginning of this long and painful journey. The real battle started after. In the weeks that followed I thought I would feel great but I still struggle. I struggle with the memories of that day. The initial swerving into me by Agent Exum. The shots ringing out and the burning sensation as the bullets ripped through my skin and body. The images of the puddles of blood dripping from my bandages listening to FBI agents argue about

whether the jail would accept me in this condition, later in federal prison staring out the small window looking out onto Clark street.

And I struggle every day with the physical pain and suffering. I cannot close my hand yet to hold a pen. I try to play with the children at times at school and I am in significant pain as I attempt to do things I was so easily able to do before October 4. I attend weekly physical therapy sessions to work on these issues and hope one day I can move in the same ways I was able to move prior to October 4.

I know that what happened to me in the matter of seconds on October 4 will unfortunately be with me for a lifetime. The physical scars will always be there. In the mornings and evenings when I get dressed I stare at my body, now permanently disfigured by the five lead bullets Exum fired into me. They will be there this summer when I head to the beach with my dog and friends. They will be there when I get down on the floor with my students and work with them on their motor skill activities. And perhaps even worse, the mental scars will always be there as a reminder of the time my own government attempted to execute me and when they failed at that to vilify me..

Renee Good, Alex Pretti, Silverio Villegas Gonzalez should all be here today. I know each of them would trade my bullet wounds and lifetime of mental distress in a heartbeat to be able to be back with their loved ones this afternoon, and we must also remember the countless others souls who lost their lives at the hand of those entrusted with authority.

I know that by being a survivor it is my duty to be here today to let you elected officials know what is happening on the streets of our country because silence is no longer an option. This needs to stop now! Why do we continue to wait for more public executions when we have already seen the evidence live on our tv and computer screens? We have heard the testimonies. We have watched the pain unfold in real time. How many more lives must be lost before meaningful action is taken?

It has now been more than 6 months since Border Patrol Agent Charles Exum tried to kill me and then lied about his actions. What discipline has he faced? What about his two partners that day who attempted to cover up his unlawful actions by claiming they were boxed in not knowing that a local business surveillance video would demonstrate for the world their lies? Republicans and Democrats can both agree that we must have truthful law enforcement in this country or the American people will lose faith in the justice system. What is the status of the investigation into Agent Charles Exum?

Seeing Greg Bovino and Kristy Noem both removed from their positions have given me some hope that there are still consequences for failed leadership at the current time. I respectfully implore your committee to continue to investigate the unlawful actions of the agents involved in my shooting and the murders of Renee Good, Alex Pretti, and Silverio Villegas Gonzalez. Seeing full and swift accountability is the only way to start to rebuild trust and faith in law enforcement at this time.

The United States is and will always be a country of immigrants, built by immigrants. We are a country of love and tolerance. This is the land of the free, the land of the opportunity and a great nation that people around the world aspire to call home. And prior to this recent war on immigrants, we were a country where law enforcement acted lawfully and appropriately with respect for all human life.

I am asking you today, pleading with you, to please help bring back the America I grew up loving and idolizing. An America that values human dignity, protects life, and lives up to the ideals our Founding Fathers proudly proclaimed.

Thank you for your time.

FUNDING LAPSE AND SECURITY GAPS: ASSESSING THE HARMFUL IMPACTS
OF THE DHS SHUTDOWN ON AMERICANS

Hearing Before the House Homeland Security Committee

Testimony of George Retes
U.S. Citizen and Iraq Combat Veteran

Wednesday, April 22, 2026

Chairman Garbarino, Ranking Member Thompson, and distinguished members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today and provide this testimony.

My name is George Retes. I'm 26 years old, a U.S. citizen, a veteran, and a father of two from Ventura, California.

Last July, I was wrongfully detained by federal agents during an immigration raid while on my way to work. I did everything right. I identified myself. I told them I was an American citizen. I told them I was a veteran. I pointed at my place of work, which was right behind the barricade they established. None of it mattered.

In that moment, my constitutional rights didn't protect me. My service didn't protect me. My citizenship didn't protect me. I want you to understand exactly what that situation looked like.

On July 10, 2025, I was driving to my job as a security guard at a licensed farm in Camarillo, California. Federal immigration agents were lined across the road that led to the farm where I worked. I clearly stated my citizenship and fully complied with officers, even though they were all yelling contradictory orders and no one was clearly in charge. Agents were yelling at me to reverse, to get out of my vehicle, to pull over to the side, to leave. Yet, despite doing everything right, I was detained and treated as if I had no rights. Agents engulfed my car with tear gas, smashed my window, pepper-sprayed my face, and dragged me out. I was choking on gas, unable to breathe, and even though I wasn't resisting, I had one agent kneeling on my back and another kneeling on my neck while my hands were already behind my back.

I was first taken to a Navy base, where the agents took my fingerprints, picture, and DNA. I was then taken to a detention center and held for three days without charges. No phone call. No lawyer. No medical care, even though my skin burned from the chemicals. I never even got to shower. Friday morning, I was put on suicide watch. Suicide watch is a yellow concrete room with a concrete bed and a tiny mattress on top; they leave the light on 24/7. I'm naked in a hospital gown, and a guard watches me. I'm like that in those conditions from Friday morning to the point I was released. I was released with zero charges and no explanation for anything that happened. I missed my daughter's third birthday while in this unjustified detention.

After my release, the harm did not stop. Instead of correcting the record, officials from DHS, specifically DHS spokesperson Tricia McLaughlin, used social media to spread false and misleading statements about me in attempt to justify my detention and undermine my credibility.

I was wrongfully detained and then publicly misrepresented by the very agency that violated my rights. That is not transparency. That is damage control at the expense of the truth.

What happened to me is not just a mistake. It is a failure of process, a failure of accountability, a failure of training, and it was a breakdown of the basic responsibility the government has to the people it serves.

We talk a lot in this country about law and order. But law and order only works when the law is applied correctly and when the people enforcing it are held accountable when they get it wrong.

Because when federal agents can violate someone's rights and face no immediate consequence, that is not law and order. That is government overreach.

If a U.S. citizen, an Army veteran, someone who complied, identified himself, and broke no law can be treated this way, detained without charges, denied basic rights, physically restrained, and then publicly smeared to justify it, then no one in this country is as safe as they believe they are.

The Constitution does not only apply when it is convenient. Civil rights do not disappear because an agency makes a mistake. And truth does not stop mattering because it is uncomfortable.

I'm not asking for sympathy. I'm asking for accountability, not just for myself, but for everyone who does not have a platform, a lawyer, or the ability to stand in front of you and tell their story. Because if this can happen to me, it can happen to anyone.

Thank you again for inviting me to testify; I welcome your questions.

Testimony of Rev. David Black

Senior Pastor & Head-of-Staff, The First Presbyterian Church of Chicago, before the Homeland Security Committee of the United States House of Representatives

22 April, 2026

Chairman Garbarino, Ranking Member Thompson, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Rev. David Black, and I am the Senior Pastor serving The First Presbyterian Church of Chicago. We are a community church, proclaiming the Gospel and serving our neighbors in partnership with artists and activists from across the City of Chicago.

I am aware that I am addressing a committee whose members mostly identify as Christian. For those who share my faith, my prayer has been that you will receive me not as a political adversary, but as your sibling and friend in Christ, accepting that we are mutually seeking to conform our lives and our labor to the love and justice of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I am testifying today on behalf of myself and countless other Americans of faith and conscience who have suffered extreme and arbitrary brutality at the hands of agents of The Department of Homeland Security. This department was created to prevent terrorist attacks within the United States, but now, agents of ICE and CBP are causing terror, violence, and death in American communities.¹

Families across America are sheltering in their homes for fear of a father, mother, or child being abducted and deported without due process. Chemical warfare has been unleashed by agents of ICE and CBP against citizens and residents of American communities who pose no threat; banned chokeholds have been deployed by agents as routine practice.² People of all ages, from toddlers to elders, have been subjected to grievous harm from tear gas and other chemical agents thrown by ICE/CBP indiscriminately in their residential neighborhoods. In the greater Chicago area where I live, many of these incidents occurred *after* a federal judge issued a

¹ Homeland Security Act of 2002, Pub. L. No. 107-296, § 101, 116 Stat. 2135 (2002).

Strickler et al., "Trump's DHS Immigration Enforcement Officers Shot 14 People From September 2025 to February 2026. Here's What to Know," NBC News, February 2026, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/ice-shootings-list-border-patrol-trump-immigration-operations-rcna254202>.

Thompson, "Caught in the Crackdown: As Arrests at Anti-ICE Protests Piled Up, Prosecutions Crumbled," ProPublica/Frontline, April 14, 2026, <https://www.propublica.org/article/caught-in-crackdown-ice-cbp-doj-trump-arrests-convictions>.

Schonder, dir., Caught in the Crackdown, Frontline/PBS and ProPublica, April 14, 2026, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/documentary/caught-in-the-crackdown/>.² Funk and Foy, "We Found More Than 40 Cases of Immigration Agents Using Banned Chokeholds and Other Moves That Can Cut Off Breathing," ProPublica, January 13, 2026, <https://www.propublica.org/article/videos-ice-dhs-immigration-agents-using-chokeholds-citizens>.

² Funk and Foy, "We Found More Than 40 Cases of Immigration Agents Using Banned Chokeholds and Other Moves That Can Cut Off Breathing," ProPublica, January 13, 2026, <https://www.propublica.org/article/videos-ice-dhs-immigration-agents-using-chokeholds-citizens>.

temporary restraining order against use of chemical weapons by ICE/CBP, showing deliberate defiance of the law.³ Countless Americans who assembled to peacefully protest and lawfully document these atrocities have been attacked by ICE and CBP agents with brutal, and sometimes deadly, force.

I am one of them.

On the evening of September 19, 2025, I joined a group of clergy and activists peacefully protesting outside the ICE Detention Facility in Broadview, IL. I went as a Christian minister, dressed in traditional clerical attire. I was motivated by the instruction Jesus gave his followers to welcome strangers and seek the release of captives (Matthew 25), and the broader biblical witness that God wills for us to treat foreigners as native-born citizens (Leviticus 19). I have been to the Broadview ICE facility repeatedly to bear witness to my faith, show solidarity with my neighbors who are being held in captivity, and to pray for the ICE agents who are persecuting them.

On that evening, I noticed masked ICE agents brandishing weapons from the roof of the facility. I felt moved to approach the building and call on them, in the traditional language of Christian faith, to recognize the spiritual consequences of their actions. With arms outstretched I quoted Jesus, urging them to repent and believe the Good News, because the Kingdom of God is near (Mark 1).

In response, the agents opened fire on me. They rapidly shot my head, face, and body at least seven times with exploding chemical bullets. These have been identified as Pepper Balls, which the manufacturer warns can cause “severe or permanent injury or death” when fired at “sensitive areas” such as the head, face, and neck.⁴ The attack knocked me to the ground and temporarily disabled me. Other protesters rushed to help me while the agents continued to fire on the huddle of bodies, rapidly pelting people at random and without cause. There is video of these events, which is available at this link: <https://spaces.hightail.com/space/6ZVrTLYnLr>.

Shortly after this, at least 20 agents emerged from the facility in full body armor and no identification, brutally attacking protesters. On the street in front of the facility, they targeted the people who were down, including me, pushing and shoving us toward a driveway across from the facility and trapping about a dozen of us in a kettling maneuver. Already struggling to

³ Investigative Project on Race and Equity, “Feds Used Chemical Agents Dozens of Times in Chicago,” November 19, 2025, <https://www.raceandequityproject.org/article/feds-used-chemical-agents-dozens-times-chicago>.

“Border Patrol’s Bovino Called to Court After Being Accused of Throwing Tear Gas Canister in Chicago,” NBC News, October 24, 2025, <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/politics-news/border-patrols-bovino-called-court-accused-throwing-tear-gas-canister-rcna239609>; “Federal Judge Imposes Strict Restrictions on Immigration Agents’ Use of Force Against Protesters, Media, Clergy,” WTTW, November 7, 2025, <https://news.wttw.com/2025/11/06/federal-judge-says-border-patrol-chief-greg-bovino-lied-about-being-hit-rock-deploying>; Chicago Headline Club v. Noem, No. 1:25-cv-12173, Temporary Restraining Order, ECF 42 & Preliminary Injunction Opinion and Order (N.D. Ill. Oct. 9, 2025 & November 20, 2025).

⁴ United Tactical Systems, LLC, PPC™ Pepperball Patrol Carbine User Manual, Part No. PEP-21007 (Lake Forest, IL: PepperBall, April 24, 2023), 4.

breathe from exposure to chemicals from the Pepper Balls, I was cornered and shoved to the ground by masked ICE/CBP agents who proceeded to drench me with an orange chemical irritant, especially aiming at my head and face. While I was attempting to escape the kettle, officers kept shoving me and spraying the back of my head. By the time I had gotten away, the agents had soaked me in liquid chemicals from my head to my toes. I was wearing a heavy denim jacket, shirt and undershirt, heavy denim jeans, and long underwear. The amount of chemical spray deployed was such that it penetrated through all these layers and covered every part of my body.

I had trouble breathing and experienced a burning sensation on my entire body. A friend took my arm and led me away from the area, where in great agony I was offered eyewashes and contact lenses were removed from my eyes. At home, after showering and following decontamination protocols, I continued to experience the burning sensation throughout the night.

These attacks on me were apparently provoked by my Christian ministry and related advocacy for immigrants, especially my proclamation of the Gospel. Other clergy, including many Christians, also have been violently punished while exercising our First Amendment guarantee of free religious expression and our right to peaceably assemble and petition for a redress of grievances.⁵

Homeland Security Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs Tricia McLaughlin later ridiculed me in a post on X, downplaying the severity of violence I and others suffered, and calling into question whether I am truly a pastor.⁶ This statement was followed by a large volume of letters, calls, and social media messages from people echoing McLaughlin's words, some calling for violence against me.

I am one of the hundreds of Americans who have been brutally and arbitrarily attacked by masked agents of ICE and CBP for protesting the actions of these agencies. President Trump's administration has characterized these protesters as "domestic terrorists" in a transparent ploy to justify increasing the use of force against them.⁷ In fact, these protests have been consistently peaceful, democratic, and rooted in faith. We have been motivated by love of our neighbors, love of God, and deep concern for the soul of our country.

⁵ U.S. Const. amend. I.

Jenkins, "How the Clergy Has Rallied Against the Trump Administration's Immigration Policies," NPR/Religion News Service, December 24, 2025. <https://www.npr.org/2025/12/24/nx-s1-5619298/how-the-clergy-has-rallied-against-the-trump-administrations-immigration-policies>.

⁶ "Top DHS Official Defends ICE Officer Who Shot Pastor with Pepper Ball," The Hill, October 9, 2025, <https://thehill.com/homenews/5547044-pastor-shot-pepper-ball-ice/>.

Religion News Service, "Judge Bars ICE from Taking Some Violent Actions Against Religious Activists, Journalists," October 9, 2025, <https://religionnews.com/2025/10/09/federal-judge-bars-ice-agents-from-taking-some-violent-actions-against-religious-activists-journalists/>.

⁷ Jonah E. Bromwich, "White House Use of 'Domestic Terrorist' Doesn't Match Legal Reality," New York Times, January 28, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/28/us/trump-minnesota-protesters-domestic-terrorists.html>.

It has become clear to many of us that repression of free speech and free exercise of religious witness are now among the main functions of ICE and CBP. Along with many concerned members of the clergy, I fear that this is only the beginning of a widespread crackdown on dissent and normalization of political violence against critics of the Trump administration. That administration, and Republican members of this committee tasked with oversight of DHS agencies, certainly have not called for transparency and accountability for this violence against Americans. To the contrary, the regime is “working overtime to hide the full scope” of the harm caused. The data on injuries shows only a fraction of the people agents have hurt, and no official count exists.⁸

It is crucial that the members of this committee understand that those who are most vulnerable and exposed to the violence of Homeland Security agents may be unable to testify publicly on their own behalf because of the risk of violent reprisals. Many of those suffering cruel and deadly violence are undocumented members of American communities following legal pathways to citizenship. We have some idea about that suffering, even if the larger picture is being obscured. Since 2002, at least 290 people have died in ICE custody, including at least 48 since Trump’s immigration enforcement crackdown commenced in 2025. I have included a list of their names as an appendix to this testimony. I ask that you humbly read each name and reflect on the child of God who came to America seeking safety, and instead of refuge, found death.

As a Christian and an American, I am horrified by the radical evil being perpetrated by my government. Moreover, I am outraged by the blasphemy of those who support brutal ICE and CBP tactics yet call themselves Christians —they make a mockery of the sacrifice of God’s love on behalf of the world. Jesus suffered torture and execution to liberate the world from the forces of spiritual evil that oppress it. Yet instead of living into Christ’s rich promise of a Kingdom of peace, freedom, and prosperity, many of those calling themselves Christian are blindly supporting institutions like ICE and CBP, even as they dominate, coerce, and terrorize American communities. The only righteous path forward is to abolish these agencies, and in contrition and true repentance, rededicate their funding to support programs that feed the hungry, sate the thirsty, welcome strangers, clothe the naked, and care for the sick — for in the words of Jesus, “just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.” (Matthew 25:31-46).

⁸ Curry Wimbish, “A Running Count of How Many People ICE Has Killed and Injured,” *The American Prospect*, January 29, 2026, updated April 14, 2026, <https://prospect.org/2026/01/29/ice-trump-killed-injured-list-dhs-cbp-border-patrol-renee-good-alex-pretti/>.⁹ ICE, “Detainee Death Reporting,” accessed April 19, 2026.

Deaths in ICE Detention — 2025⁹

(31 formally reported in ICE custody; some sources cite 33 including additional cases)

#	Name	Age	Nationality	Date	Location
1	Genry Ruiz Guillen	29	Honduras	Jan. 23	Krome Service Processing Center, Miami, FL
2	Serawit Gezahegn Dejene	45	Ethiopia	Jan. 29	Eloy Detention Center / Banner University Medical Center, Phoenix, AZ
3	Maksym Chernyak	45	Ukraine	Feb. 20	Krome Service Processing Center, Miami, FL
4	Juan Alexis Tineo-Martinez	44	Dominican Republic	Feb. 23	Centro Medico Hospital, San Juan, PR
5	Brayan Rayo-Garzon	27	Colombia	Apr. 8	Phelps County Jail, Rolla, MO
6	Nhon Ngoc Nguyen	55	Vietnam	Apr. 16	El Paso Processing Center, TX
7	Marie Ange Blaise	44	Haiti	Apr. 25	Broward Transitional Center, Pompano Beach, FL
8	Abelardo Avelleneda-Delgado	68	Mexico	May 5	Lowndes County Jail, Valdosta, GA
9	Jesus Molina-Veya	45	Mexico	Jun. 7	Phoebe Sumter Hospital, Americus, GA
10	Johnny Noviello	49	Canada	Jun. 23	Bureau of Prisons Federal Detention Center, Miami, FL
11	Isidro Perez	75	Cuba	Jun. 26	Krome Service Processing Center, Miami, FL
12	Tien Xuan Phan	55	Vietnam	Jul. 19	Karnes County Immigration Processing Center, TX
13	Lorenzo Antonio Batrez Vargas	32	Mexico	Aug. 31	Central Arizona Correctional Complex, Florence, AZ

⁹ ICE, "Detainee Death Reporting," accessed April 19, 2026.

"List of Deaths in ICE Detention," Wikipedia, last modified April 16, 2026,

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_deaths_in_ICE_detention. NBC News, "ICE Releases Delayed Detainee Death Reports as 2026 Total Rises to 17," April 18, 2026, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/ice-report-deaths-detainees-rcna340802>.

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<https://www.npr.org/2026/04/17/nx-s1-5789092/deaths-of-migrants-in-ice-custody-hit-record-high-under-trump>.

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<https://austinkocher.substack.com/p/ice-detention-and-deportation-by>.

14	Chaofeng Ge	32	China	Aug. 5	Moshannon Valley Processing Center, Philipsburg, PA
15	Oscar Duarte Rascon	58	Mexico	Sep. 8	Eloy Detention Center / Banner Desert Medical Center, Mesa, AZ
16	Santos Reyes-Banegas	42	Honduras	Sep. 18	Nassau County Correctional Center, East Meadow, NY
17	Ismael Ayala Uribe	39	Mexico	Sep. 22	Adelanto ICE Processing Center, Victorville, CA
18	Norlan Guzman-Fuentes	37	El Salvador	Sep. 24	Dallas, TX
19	Miguel Angel Garcia-Hernandez	31	Mexico	Sep. 24	Dallas, TX
20	Huabing Xie	53	China	Sep. 29	San Diego, CA
21	Leo Cruz-Silva	34	Mexico	Oct. 4	Ste. Genevieve County Jail, MO
22	Hasan Ali Moh'D Saleh	67	Jordan	Oct. 11	Krome Detention Center, Miami, FL
23	Gabriel Garcia-Aviles	56	Mexico	Oct. 23	Adelanto ICE Processing Center, Victorville, CA
24	Kai Yin Wong	63	China	Oct. 25	South Texas ICE Processing Center, San Antonio, TX
25	Francisco Gaspar-Andres	48	Guatemala	Dec. 3	Camp East Montana, El Paso, TX
26	Pete Sumalo Montejo	72	Philippines	Dec. 5	Montgomery Processing Center, Harlingen, TX
27	Shiraz Fatehali Sachwani	48	Pakistan	Dec. 6	Prairieland Detention Center, Fort Worth, TX
28	Jean Wilson Brutus	41	Haiti	Dec. 12	Delaney Hall Detention Facility, Newark, NJ
29	Fouad Saeed Abdulkadir	46	Eritrea	Dec. 14	Moshannon Valley Processing Center, PA
30	Delvin Francisco Rodriguez	39	Nicaragua	Dec. 14	Adams County Correctional Center, Natchez, MS
31	Nenko Stanev Gantchev	56	Bulgaria	Dec. 15	North Lake Processing Center, Baldwin, MI

Deaths in ICE Detention — 2026

(17 as of April 18, 2026)

#	Name	Age	Nationality	Date	Location
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1	Geraldo Lunas Campos	55	Cuba	Jan. 3	Camp East Montana, El Paso, TX
2	Luis Gustavo Nunez Caceres	42	Honduras	Jan. 5	Joe Corley Processing Facility, Conroe, TX
3	Luis Beltran Yanez-Cruz	68	Honduras	Jan. 6	Imperial Regional Detention Facility, Calexico, CA
4	Parady La	46	Cambodia	Jan. 9	Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Philadelphia, PA
5	Heber Sanchez Domínguez	34	Mexico	Jan. 14	Robert A. Deyton Detention Facility, Lovejoy, GA
6	Victor Manuel Diaz	36	Nicaragua	Jan. 14	Camp East Montana, El Paso, TX
7	Lorth Sim	59	Cambodia	Feb. 16	Miami Correctional Facility, Bunker Hill, IN
8–11	<i>(4 additional deaths reported by ICE in Feb–Mar, names not yet fully publicized)</i>			Feb.–Mar.	Various
12	Damas <i>(first name not published)</i>	—	—	Mar. 2	Florence Detention Center, Florence, AZ
13	Jose Guadalupe Ramos-Solano	—	Mexico	Mar. 25	Adelanto Detention Center / Victor Valley Global Medical Center, CA
14–16	<i>(Additional deaths through early April)</i>			Apr.	Various
17	Aled Damien Carbonell-Betancourt	27	Cuba	Apr.	Federal Detention Center, Miami, FL

FUNDING LAPSE AND SECURITY GAPS: ASSESSING THE HARMFUL IMPACTS OF THE DHS
SHUTDOWN ON AMERICANS

Hearing Before the House Homeland Security Committee

Testimony of Ryan Ecklund
U.S. Citizen

Wednesday, April 22, 2026

Chair, Ranking Member, and members of the Committee—My name is Ryan Ecklund.

I'm a lifelong Minnesota resident, a business owner, a husband, a father—and a United States citizen. On January 7th Renee Good was shot and killed in Minneapolis by ICE. She left behind loved ones including a young son. This event was broadcast worldwide and immediately sparked conversations about what immigration agents were really doing in Minnesota. When my older son asked my wife and I if ICE was going to come to our East Metro suburb of Woodbury, my wife gave what she thought was a truthful answer: That ICE would probably stay in more densely populated areas, and that he and his friends would remain safe.

Just five days later my family and I learned that was not the case.

On Monday, January 12, after dropping my son off at school I went to the grocery store less than a mile from our home. I saw a vehicle with heavily tinted windows and Texas license plates slowly rolling through the parking lot. As they drove by I noticed men in tactical gear and face coverings. At that moment I made a decision to grab my phone and record the vehicle as I followed from a safe distance. Now, I have been asked by many people why I made that decision, and the simple answer was and continues to be *accountability*. Up to this point ICE and their presence in the Twin Cities had been well documented, and I felt a strong conviction to continue to hold these individuals and the administration who sent them here to spread fear and intimidation accountable for their actions in my own community. As other events showed, the best way to hold federal officials in Minneapolis accountable for their misconduct was by documenting their actions, so that's what I did.

Once the vehicle noticed me following, the agents parked in another area and I parked a few spaces away. An ICE agent in military fatigues came up to my window and took my photo, said nothing, got back into the vehicle, and left the shopping area. I followed them down the road as they then turned in to my neighborhood and drove right in front of my house. I realized they had likely used facial recognition software to identify me. *Please consider this for a moment* – that a government agent used advanced technology to identify and intimidate a US citizen for exercising his First Amendment rights. What purpose does this serve? Remember, these agents were not in pursuit of a violent criminal; they were lurking in a grocery store parking lot at 9:45 in the morning. I followed them out of my neighborhood, and an additional vehicle joined the front of our caravan. After the agents boxed-in my car, five masked ICE agents then approached my vehicle.

One of the agents opened my door and another agent came through the back seat and put me in a choke hold. They forced me from my vehicle and to the ground.

I was never ordered out of the vehicle, and at no point did any of these men identify themselves. One agent had a knee on my back, and one had a knee on my neck – that agent moved and scraped my face on the pavement. My hands were forced behind my back and I was handcuffed. I was put into an unmarked van and transported to the Whipple Federal Building. Once at the Federal Building I was put into leg irons and into an empty holding cell. Throughout my nine-hour, unlawful detention I was joined by eight additional detainees, each one a US citizen. The young man who entered after me was an apprentice plumber and said that he was on a new home construction job site in the South Metro when ICE came onto the property. One of the agents demanded that this young man shake his hand and when he refused, he was taken into custody.

I was released that evening with no charges, and less than two weeks later Alex Pretti, who former Secretary Noem called a "domestic terrorist", was shot 10 times by ICE. The siege on the people of the Twin Cities by their own government has forever altered our State. And in response, Minnesotans did what we always do; we showed up for one another. We *stood* up for one another. We supported our neighbors, delivered food to those who didn't feel safe leaving their homes, and stood with our children at the bus stop so they wouldn't feel scared. We protected and supported our immigrant-owned businesses. We proved that Minnesota is not a place, but a way of being. This administration hoped the Twin Cities would be a proving ground for the farce that was Operation Metro Surge; instead they learned what Minnesotans have always known; "We All Do Better When We All Do Better."

After thousands of arrests, unlawful detentions, and documented violations of constitutional rights—we still cannot answer a basic question: How many dangerous individuals were actually removed? Why refuse state and local agencies access to investigations? A government proud of its accomplishments would certainly report about what a success this had been. Instead the government has denied, deflected, and scapegoated those in leadership roles to avoid accountability. ICE assaulted and detained thousands of lawful residents, U.S. citizens, immigrants here legally and those on a path to citizenship – they went after our entire community, not the “worst of the worst.”

We will spend years accounting for the financial toll taken on the Twin Cities. We will spend years recovering from the fear instilled in our valued immigrant communities.

But I believe in us. Minnesotans showed the world what courage looks like.

When operations like this are carried out without precision, without transparency, and without accountability—they impact entire communities. This Committee has a responsibility to demand answers. To demand accurate data.

The American people deserve the truth, and our citizens demand *accountability*; only those who want to avoid accountability need to wear masks.