

Item #113-24 Resolution calling for enhanced transparency and accountability with the Department of Homeland Security.

By: Councilman Jorge Cruz

Cosponsors: Councilmembers Denese Taylor-Moye, Alfredo Castillo, Jeanette Herron, Richard Ortiz, Maria Valle, Eneida Martinez, Ernest Newton and Dasha Spell

WHEREAS, the City of Bridgeport, CT values its ethnic, racial, and socio-economic diversity, and the Bridgeport City Council is committed to enabling all our residents to live and pursue their livelihoods in peace and prosperity with stable and united families; and

WHEREAS, Bridgeport's residents are known for welcoming *with open arms* immigrants from nations around the world to Connecticut's most populous city, and the City Council approved a Welcoming City resolution May 15, 2017 to publicly pronounce that position; and

WHEREAS, the City of Bridgeport bears the responsibility for providing local public safety services for all its residents and the Bridgeport City Council maintains its strong support of Bridgeport's status as a Welcoming City; and

WHEREAS, in serving and protecting all City residents, the Bridgeport Police Department does not stop, detain, arrest or transfer individuals based solely on real or perceived immigration status or warrantless immigration detainers or administrative warrants; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with City Ordinance 2.125 TRUST Enforcement Act, the Bridgeport Police Department fully complies with all federal laws; and does not, and will not, attempt to prevent United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or Department of Homeland Security (DHS) or any other federal law enforcement agency from acting independently in their efforts to locate and detain undocumented immigrants; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Bridgeport believes in upholding the due process rights enshrined in the United States Constitution and laws, including those afforded to undocumented persons within the United States; specifically, the Fifth Amendment provides that "No person shallbe deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law,;" (emphasis added), and

WHEREAS, this Resolution is not intended to, and will not, obstruct, hinder, or interfere with the legal exercise of federal immigration enforcement authority, but rather is intended to, and will, enhance transparency, accountability, and public safety within the City; and

WHEREAS, according to a *Connecticut Public Radio* report published in May 2025, there have been at least 12 Bridgeport undocumented immigrant residents who have been arrested recently by federal law enforcement officials (at least some of whom had no criminal record and were not suspected of any illegal activity other than their immigration status), resulting in a palpable sense of fear and unease in our neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, certain law enforcement activities have been conducted by federal officers wearing face coverings, and without prior notice given to city officials; or sharing information about where these individuals are being transported to; and

WHEREAS, face coverings and lack of visible identification can pose significant safety risks to local police officers who must be able to distinguish federal officers performing legitimate immigration enforcement actions from individuals impersonating ICE or other DHS agents, in order to harass or assault others, including vulnerable women; of which there have been various reported instances on the East Coast including in Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New York; and

WHEREAS, the ability for the public to identify all law enforcement officers during interactions promotes professionalism, transparency, and accountability.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Bridgeport encourages local community groups, social service organizations, faith institutions, legal service entities, immigrant advocacy support societies, and other interested agencies to engage in ongoing public education and awareness campaigns throughout the Bridgeport community to inform our residents of their due process rights and how to legally exercise them when interacting with law enforcement agencies and when navigating the civil immigration and criminal legal system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City Council hereby calls upon all federal law enforcement agencies to limit their immigration enforcement action within the City of Bridgeport to those operations targeting undocumented immigrants who have, or are suspected of having, committed felony offenses or crimes of violence, or are known gang members, and/or otherwise pose a serious safety threat to the community, in order to improve public safety in Bridgeport; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City Council hereby calls upon all of its federal elected representatives in Congress to urge federal immigration officials to cease all immigration raids at public places unless the undocumented immigrants have, or are suspected of having, committed felony offenses or crimes of violence, or are known gang members, and/or otherwise pose a serious safety threat to the community, as such activities create palpable fear and disruption in the community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that no City of Bridgeport department, including the Bridgeport Police Department and its officers or employees, shall collect, request, retain, or disclose any information about an individual's immigration or citizenship status, national origin, or place of birth for the purpose of civil immigration enforcement. This includes refraining from entering such information into any local or federally accessible database, unless required by state or federal law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Bridgeport and its departments shall not grant direct or indirect access to any city-operated surveillance or automated data system — including but not limited to license plate readers, CCTV or traffic cameras, predictive policing tools, or biometric databases — to any federal agency for immigration enforcement purposes, except pursuant to a valid, specific judicial warrant, unless otherwise required by state or federal law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, unless prohibited by state or federal law the Bridgeport Police Department shall, on at least a monthly basis, publicly disclose all requests received from federal immigration authorities — including but not limited to ICE or DHS — for information, access, or assistance of any kind. Reports must include the date, nature, legal basis (if any), and whether the city complied, partially complied, or denied the request; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, no City of Bridgeport department, including the Police Department, or any of its employees, shall participate in any joint task force, operation, training, or information-sharing arrangement with federal immigration enforcement agencies, where the primary purpose involves civil immigration enforcement or removal. This prohibition applies regardless of which agency is the lead, unless required by state or federal law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, no department may enter into, renew, or extend any contract, agreement, or memorandum of understanding with a private vendor, data broker, or non-governmental entity that permits, enables, or facilitates access to city-generated data or surveillance systems by federal immigration enforcement agencies — unless required by state or federal law or specific judicial warrant. For any existing contracts that can't be immediately amended or terminated for legal or practical reasons, the City should take all legally permissible steps to restrict the use, disclosure, or sharing of such data for immigration enforcement purposes. That could include imposing access limitations through internal policy, administrative controls, or technical safeguards wherever possible; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City Council hereby calls upon every member of the community to contribute time, resources, and financial support to existing nonprofits, community service organizations, faith-based organizations, businesses, and labor unions so that all can unite in the common goal of assisting individuals and families impacted by the ICE immigrations raids; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, officers of the Bridgeport Police Department and employees of the City of Bridgeport shall not collaborate or support ICE's efforts in the city, per the Trust Act; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED officers of the Bridgeport Police Department and employees of the City of Bridgeport shall not collaborate with, or support, ICE's efforts in the city per the State of Connecticut's Trust Act, unless required by state or federal law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that upon passage of this resolution by the City Council of the City of Bridgeport, a copy of this resolution shall be submitted to State Senators and State Representatives of the City, as well as the City's Federal Congressional delegation.