

Council of the District of Columbia
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND OPERATIONS
DRAFT COMMITTEE REPORT
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20004

TO: All Councilmembers
FROM: Councilmember Brianne K. Nadeau, Chairperson, Committee on Public Works and Operations
DATE: January 8, 2026
RE: Roundtable Report on Potential Human Rights Violations due to Federal Government Intrusion

On October 29, 2025 at 9:30AM in the John A. Wilson building, the Committee on Public Works and Operations held a public roundtable on potential human rights violations due to the federal government takeover.

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On October 29, 2025, the Committee on Public Works & Operations, chaired by Councilmember Brianne K. Nadeau, held a public roundtable to hear from residents and D.C. organizations about incidents witnessed since January 2025 involving D.C. government coordination with federal law enforcement – specifically, incidents related to the Committee's jurisdiction over the D.C. Office of Human Rights and human rights laws.

The roundtable was the first official forum for District residents to speak about what they have experienced and witnessed and to voice their fears and anger. An overwhelming majority of the testimony was about actions by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and other federal agencies participating in immigration enforcement activities—over which District government has no legal authority— and the actions of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), which is legally bound by the D.C. Human Rights Act, the Sanctuary Values Act, and other District laws. The Committee also heard testimony about District agencies' involvement in the displacement of unhoused people.

More than 50 people testified before the Committee, including many who appeared in person, and many more who submitted written testimony. The testimonies painted a picture of federal law enforcement agents acting with impunity, arresting individuals perceived to be immigrants or Latino, terrorizing communities, and violating federal law (according to a recent federal ruling)¹ and local law. The Committee also heard numerous accounts of masked and unidentifiable armed agents with no visible badges questioning, arresting, and “disappearing” residents into unmarked cars.

The Committee heard a range of testimony from the public about what they have seen and experienced first-hand, all centered on how MPD and other D.C. government agencies have been involved with federal law enforcement in ways that may have circumvented the District’s current protocol and policies. The Committee continues to investigate these accounts and is seeking information from and related to agencies named in witness statements and news reports. The Committee acknowledges that what a resident sees during an incident is often not the complete picture, and that MPD has long had cooperative agreements with numerous federal agencies under Congressional statutes. This report does not question the lawful execution of those long-standing agreements.

To the extent possible, the Committee has reviewed testimony, record statements, research, and conducted interviews, and this report is a summation and analysis of that information. The most significant finding, based on the testimony and other information in this report, is that many residents have lost trust in MPD.

¹ <https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.dcd.285268/gov.uscourts.dcd.285268.68.0.pdf>.

This report recommends actions that can and should be taken by the Executive and recommends continued oversight by the Council, including:

- The Mayor should rescind Mayor's Order 2025-090, the "Safe and Beautiful Emergency Operations Center" order, which authorized indefinite local coordination with federal immigration authorities. The emergency declaration has ended and there is no justification to continue cooperation for immigration enforcement.
- The Interim Chief of Police at MPD should immediately sunset the order on immigration enforcement, which authorizes MPD officers to share information about people not in their custody, such as those they interact with during traffic stops, and to provide transportation for federal immigration officers and people they have detained.
- The Council should reaffirm the Sanctuary Values Act and strengthen its protections by closing any gaps that have expanded the Executive's power to cooperate with federal immigration enforcement. This includes holding a hearing on B26-0549, the "Safe Community Places and Policing Amendment Act of 2025" and acting swiftly to move it through the Council.
- The Council should exhaust all means to require that federal law enforcement officers are subject to the same restrictions imposed on MPD officers not to wear masks or face coverings and to provide identification.
- The Committee recommends that the Office of Human Rights continue to collect data and will work with the agency to continue oversight on human rights issues.

II. BACKGROUND

A. Federal Overreach

During the 2024 presidential campaign, Donald Trump repeatedly pledged that, “on Day One... [w]e will begin the largest deportation operation in the history of our country.”² After taking office in January, his administration imposed an arrest quota of 75 arrests per day on Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) field offices across the country, including the District of Columbia ICE field office.³ In May, the arrest quota increased to a new goal of 3,000 arrests each day, a number that White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller publicly confirmed and about which he reportedly claimed, “the number is going to keep getting bumped higher over time.”⁴

On August 11, 2025, President Trump declared a “crime emergency” in the District that led to significant deployments of federal law enforcement agents, including ICE, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), and the militarized deployment of the National Guard to patrol the streets.⁵ Trump’s Presidential Executive Order invoked Section 740 the Home Rule Act, which allows the President to request the services of the MPD, through the Mayor, to assist with law enforcement for up to 30 days.⁶ On August 15, 2025, U.S. Attorney General Pamela Bondi issued an order directing the Mayor to use local resources to assist with “enforcement of federal immigration law,” including “locating, apprehending, and detaining aliens unlawfully present in the United States.”⁷ Although a lawsuit prevented⁸ U.S. Attorney General Bondi from removing then Police Chief Pamela Smith and installing Drug Enforcement Administrator Terrance Cole as head of the MPD, the presiding U.S. District Judge Ana Reyes indicated that the Trump

² Press Release, The White House, Promises Made, Promises Kept: Border Security Achieved in Fewer Than 100 Days (Apr. 28, 2025), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/articles/2025/04/promises-made-promises-kept-border-security-achieved-in-fewer-than-100-days> (quoting Transcripts, Roll Call, Donald Trump Holds a Campaign Rally in Concord, North Carolina – October 21, 2024, <https://rollcall.com/factbase/trump/transcript/donald-trump-speech-campaign-rally-concordnorth-carolina-october-21-2024/#108>); See also *Escobar Molina et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security et. al.* <https://www.aclu.org/cases/escobar-molina-v-dept-of-homeland-security-challenging-warrantless-immigration-arrests-without-probable-cause-in-d-c/> (extensive record of federal takeover and timeline in court documents).

³ *Id.*; Nick Miroff & Maria Sacchetti, *Trump Officials Issue Quotas to ICE Officers to Ramp Up Arrests*, Wash. Post (Jan. 26, 2025), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/immigration/2025/01/26/ice-arrests-raids-trump-quota>.

⁴ *Id.*; Cameron Arcand, *Trump administration sets new goal of 3,000 illegal immigrant arrests daily*, Fox News (May 29, 2025, 3:25 PM), <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/trump-administration-aims-3000-arrests-illegal-immigrants-each-day>.

⁵ Exec. Order No. 14333, 90 Fed. Reg. 39301 (Aug. 11, 2025).

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ United States Office of the Attorney General, Executive Order No. 6372-2025, “Restoring Safety and Security to the District of Columbia,” (Aug. 15, 2025).

⁸ *District of Columbia v. Donald J. Trump, et al.*, (1:25-cv-02678), D.D.C. (2025)https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/71116258/district-of-columbia-v-donald-j-trump/?filed_after=&filed_before=&entry_gte=&entry_lte=&order_by=desc

administration could still, on an emergency basis, mandate assistance from MPD officers on immigration matters.⁹ Although some Congressional Republicans pushed for an extension, Congress ultimately did not extend the President’s emergency. The declaration therefore expired on September 10th.

B. Relevant District Laws, Regulations, and Executive Orders

D.C. Human Rights Act

The D.C. Human Rights Act prohibits both intentional discrimination and policies or practices that have a discriminatory effect based on protected traits including national origin, race, color, personal appearance, homeless status, or place of residence.¹⁰ While the Office of Human Rights has no authority over federal agencies, it does handle cases involving violations by private entities and the District government.¹¹

Mayor’s Order 2011-174

In 2011, Mayor Vincent Gray issued Mayor’s Order 2011-174 to “establish District-wide policies and procedures concerning the disclosure of immigration status” and “to ensure that District resources [were] not used for federal immigration enforcement activities.”¹² Subsequently, MPD issued General Order 201.26, which included a prohibition against inquiring into any person’s immigration status. Then, in 2012, the Council passed the “Immigration Detainer Compliance Amendment Act of 2012”, which limited the circumstances under which the Department of Corrections (DOC) could comply with an immigration detainer request from ICE.¹³ Among other provisions, the legislation prohibits the District from providing ICE with space, facilities, or equipment to conduct a search or inquiry about inmates or interview an inmate without the inmate having the opportunity to have counsel present.¹⁴ In July 2019 it was reported that DOC’s practice was to provide ICE with a person’s release date and time so that

⁹ 2025.08.15 AG Order No. 6372-2025 - Restoring Safety and Security to the District of Columbia; *See also* <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/08/15/doj-dc-police-department-control-hearing-00512503>.

¹⁰ <https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/code/titles/2/chapters/14>, In accordance with the DC Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, D.C. Official Code § 2-1401.01 et seq., (Act) the District of Columbia does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intra-family offense, or place of residence or business. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination which is also prohibited by the Act. Discrimination in violation of the Act will not be tolerated.

¹¹ The District of Columbia Human Rights Act of 1977, D.C. Law 2-38, D.C. Official Code § 2- 1403.03 (2001).

¹² Mayor’s Order 2011-174, <https://cdn.cnsnews.com/documents/Mayor's%20Order%202011-174.pdf>.

¹³ B19-0585, the “Immigration Detainer Compliance Amendment Act of 2011,” <https://lims.dccouncil.us/Legislation/B19-0585>.

¹⁴ *Id.*

ICE could take custody of an individual as they were released from DOC custody.¹⁵ This discovery sparked outrage from the community and demands for changes to DOC's policies of cooperating with ICE, ultimately leading to the Council's passage of the emergency, temporary and permanent versions of the Sanctuary Values legislation.¹⁶

Sanctuary Values Amendment Act

Enacted in 2020, the *Sanctuary Values Amendment Act of 2020* (SVA)¹⁷ was overwhelmingly passed by the D.C. Council to restrict the city's ability to work with ICE. Specifically, the SVA prohibits District government agencies from the following activities:

- (1) holding an individual in custody after they would otherwise have been released;
- (2) providing a federal immigration agency space or equipment for a generalized search of an individual in the District's custody;
- (3) permitting an interview of an individual in the District's custody unless there is a judicial order authorizing the interview and the individual has counsel present or waives counsel;
- (4) providing any space for a federal immigration agency to detain individuals for immigration enforcement purposes;
- (5) providing federal immigration agencies with the date and time of release, location, address, personal identifying information, medical information, photograph, or criminal case information;
- (6) granting a federal immigration agency access to any District detention facility for the purpose of releasing an individual into federal custody;
- (7) releasing an individual for the purpose of transferring the individual into the custody of a federal immigration agency;
- (8) inquiring into the immigration status of an individual in its custody;

It also requires:

- (9) the District to conduct trainings of its employees on compliance with the provisions in this section;
- (10) the Department of Corrections, the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, the Department of Behavioral Health, and the Metropolitan Police Department to

¹⁵ According to the Washington City Paper, DOC processed over 40 such "pick-ups" from its facilities between January 2016 and June 2019, Will Lennon, D.C.'s Department of Corrections Has Processed Over 40 'ICE Pick-Ups' From Its Facilities Since 2016, WASH. CITY PAPER (Aug. 23, 2019), <https://washingtoncitypaper.com/article/178824/dcs-department-ofcorrections-has-processed-over-40-ice-pickups-from-its-facilities-since-2016/>.

¹⁶ <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/Legislation/B23-0501>

¹⁷ <https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/laws/23-282>

send a report on January 1 of each year to the Mayor and the Council providing data regarding requests from and transfers to immigration enforcement agencies.

MPD Executive Order 25-005

On August 14th, 2025, former Police Chief Pamela Smith issued executive order (EO) 25-005, which substantially expanded the authority of MPD to assist federal immigration enforcement officers.¹⁸ First, the order authorized MPD to share information about people *not* in their custody. For example, under the EO, if a person is stopped during a traffic stop, police could now send information about that person to federal immigration enforcement agencies. Second, the order allows MPD to provide transportation for federal immigration agency employees and individuals they have detained.¹⁹ To date, the Police Chief's directive has not been formally terminated.

Mayor's Order 2025-090

On September 2, 2025, the Mayor issued Mayor's Order 2025-090, creating the "Safe and Beautiful Emergency Operations Center (SBEOC)" to manage the District's response to the President's emergency declaration "and on a continuing basis," and requiring local coordination with federal law enforcement "to the maximum extent allowable by law within the District."²⁰ That order also remains in effect.

C. Impact on the District

Although the President's 30-day emergency declaration has expired, the Bowser administration has still not been forthcoming about how or why MPD continues to participate, assist, or cooperate in civil immigration enforcement.²¹ When asked about the impact of the federal surge and immigration enforcement on public trust, Mayor Bowser said, "We're concerned about community trust, because in a public's eye, anybody in a uniform is the same...so our MPD, our police department, which we worked for 20 years to get them a great reputation, that has been terribly disrupted by the presidential emergency."²² Former Chief

¹⁸ https://go.mpdconline.com/GO/EO_25_005.pdf

¹⁹ *Id.*

²⁰ https://mayor.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/mayormb/release_content/attachments/2025-090_Creation_of_the_Safe_andBeautiful_Emergency_Operations_Center.pdf

²¹ <https://51st.news/mpd-dc-police-ice-immigration-enforcement/>; <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2025/10/17/bowser-mpd-ice-immigration-enforcement/>; <https://wtop.com/dc/2025/10/dc-residents-say-police-department-still-cooperating-with-ice-agents-violating-illegal-immigrants-human-rights/>

²² <https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/bowser-says-mpds-cooperation-with-immigration-enforcement-has-undermined-public-trust-in-police/3999310/>

Pamela Smith also acknowledged that D.C. police are patrolling with federal agents who are authorized to conduct immigration enforcement.²³

Since the President's emergency declaration, it has been reported that over 40 percent of the arrests made were federal civil immigration arrests—totaling 943 immigration arrests, more than any other cause for arrests.²⁴ Over a 10-day period in August 2025, over 70 percent of those arrested for immigration law violations had no criminal records.²⁵ More recently, the Washington Post gathered more than 6,000 arrest reports filed in D.C. Superior Court since the federal takeover and reported that while arrests involving federal officers occur across all eight city wards, they are “most heavily concentrated in neighborhoods that have historically experienced higher levels of poverty and violent crime.”²⁶ On December 18, 2025, the Council sent a letter to MPD requesting information on arrest data and reporting, cooperation agreements, and specific incidents.²⁷ At the time of the publication of this report, the agency had not yet responded.

The actions of Mayor Bowser and her administration have fallen far short of assuring residents that, at the very least, District government is not abetting these federal actions – significantly impacting the lives of people who live and work in the District.²⁸

Some of these arrests suggest racial profiling. As reported by NPR and other news outlets, on August 31, 2025, as a Latina woman was walking to a CVS in Northwest D.C. to pick up medicine for her daughter, two officers wearing camouflage and masks and armed with weapons stopped her to check her immigration status. They refused to identify themselves and stated the reason for stopping her was because—as the officer stated explicitly—he believed she did not “look like a citizen” and they said “you look like from another, you know, country.”²⁹ In fact, the woman is a U.S. citizen, has a REAL ID, and carried a copy of her passport.³⁰ Similar

²³ <https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/trust-is-broken-parent-reacts-to-possible-immigration-arrest-near-dc-school/3998887/?ref=51st.news>.

²⁴ Alanna Durkin Richer & Rebecca Santana, *Over 40% of arrests in Trump's DC law enforcement surge relate to immigration, AP analysis finds*, Associated Press (Sept. 10, 2025), <https://apnews.com/article/dc-immigration-federal-intervention543a6079974fda90f96bae17ae53729e>.

²⁵ Teo Armus and Emmanuel Martinez, “*Most immigrants arrested in Trump’s D.C. crackdown had no criminal records*,” The Washington Post, (Dec. 4, 2025), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/immigration/2025/12/04/dc-ice-federal-takeover-immigrants-criminal-trump/>.

²⁶ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2025/12/23/dc-police-arrests-federal-takeover/>

²⁷ <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/jjn8haa2ofksqig3b50wb/2025.12.18-Letter-to-MPD.pdf?rlkey=jjy5yskix4p6br5ro8pdsuv80&e=3&st=ga9jxrhk&dl=0>.

²⁸ <https://www.dcfpi.org/all/the-devastating-economic-and-human-toll-of-mass-deportation/>.

²⁹ Michael Martin, “*I don’t want them to think they won’: U.S. Citizen says masked officers stopped her*, NPR (September 8, 2025), <https://www.npr.org/2025/09/08/nx-s1-5528729/i-dont-want-them-to-think-they-won-u-s-citizen-says-masked-officers-stopped-her>.

³⁰ *Id.*

encounters have led to a class-action lawsuit by Maryland and District Latino residents alleging a practice of racial profiling by federal law enforcement.³¹

In another incident on August 20, 2025, a U.S. citizen from Maryland was detained in Northwest D.C. during a traffic stop initiated by U.S. Park Police for an alleged minor violation. Despite repeatedly stating that he was a U.S. citizen and possessing proof of citizenship, the individual was handcuffed, questioned by unidentified and masked agents, and detained for approximately 25 minutes while his colleague was forcibly restrained and placed in an unmarked vehicle. Multiple federal agents, including MPD, were present. Although the individual was ultimately released without explanation, and officers departed without identifying themselves, the individual was left feeling shaken by what he described as a frightening and unlawful confrontation.³² These encounters have occurred despite the fact that U.S. citizens have a right to know who is questioning them, including name and agency, and have the right to remain silent beyond answering identification questions under the Fifth Amendment.³³

Other incidents have escalated to fatal³⁴ and non-fatal encounters, followed by alleged cover-ups.³⁵ On October 17th, 2025, D.C. police were patrolling in an unmarked car in the Northeast quadrant of the city in collaboration with officers from five federal agencies, including the FBI and Customs and Border Protection.³⁶ According to court records obtained by reporters, the officers spotted an SUV with a missing front tag and believed the driver was trying to flee.³⁷ At some point, a Homeland Security Investigations agent shot into the SUV. While none of the bullets struck the driver, two pierced his passenger seat, and a third ripped through the jacket he was wearing near the collar, according to his attorneys. News outlets reported that one of the

³¹ <https://www.aclu.org/cases/escobar-molina-v-dept-of-homeland-security-challenging-warrantless-immigration-arrests-without-probable-cause-in-d-c/>

³² https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025.12.8_ICE-Report-revised-FINAL.pdf.

³³ U.S. Const. amend. V.

³⁴ Alanna Durkin Richer and Gary Fields, “*2 National Guard members shot in an ambush attack just blocks from the White House*,” Associated Press, (Nov. 26, 2025), <https://apnews.com/article/national-guard-shooting-dc-c5785dd8920d2d1ac7d71fab769faf5f>

³⁵ Mark Segraves, “*Federal agent fired into car during DC traffic stop, was omitted from police reports*,” NBC Washington, (Oct. 29, 2025), <https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/federal-agent-fired-into-car-during-dc-traffic-stop-was-omitted-from-police-reports/4008087/>; Olivia George and Emma Uber, “*After a federal agent shot at a D.C. driver, claims of a police coverup*,” The Washington Post, (Oct. 28, 2025), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2025/10/27/dc-traffic-stop-shooting-dispute/>; Mitch Ryals, “*A Federal Agent Shot at a Driver in D.C. An MPD Officer Was Told To Omit the Shooting from His Report*” Washington City Paper, (Oct. 27, 2025), <https://washingtoncitypaper.com/article/773235/federal-agent-shot-coverup-mdp-police-report/>.

³⁶ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2025/10/27/dc-traffic-stop-shooting-dispute/>; Mitch Ryals, “*Federal Agent Shot at a Driver in D.C. An MPD Officer Was Told To Omit the Shooting from His Report*” Washington City Paper, (Oct. 27, 2025), <https://washingtoncitypaper.com/article/773235/federal-agent-shot-coverup-mdp-police-report/> (“Sterling’s [MPD officer] affidavit filed in D.C. Superior Court describes how he and Powell were patrolling with agents from U.S. Customs and Border Patrol, the Diplomatic Security Service, the U.S. Marshal Service, the FBI, and HSI.”).

³⁷ *Id.*

MPD officers testified in court that “he was instructed by a ‘team leader’ not to include details of the federal agent’s shooting in his report because there would be an internal affairs investigation into the incident.”³⁸

During an encounter that occurred on November 11, 2025, MPD and federal agents were involved in a non-fatal incident following a disputed traffic stop, which escalated into a high-speed pursuit through the District. During the chase, an MPD vehicle collided with a Metrobus, and an HSI agent discharged a firearm, striking the driver’s side door of the vehicle while the driver was stopped, unarmed, and seated inside. Subsequent court testimony later revealed that at least one federal agent involved was unaware of the basis for the pursuit and stated he was acting at MPD’s direction.³⁹

Residents and the media have continued to report sightings of MPD officers and federal agents sharing vehicles, showing up to arrest scenes side-by-side to secure perimeters, and jointly apprehending individuals. Nevertheless, the Mayor and her administration maintain their position that that no involvement or cooperation is occurring⁴⁰ and have not clarified to the Council or the public how or why the coordination is occurring and to what extent.⁴¹

Countless first-hand accounts shared on social media and directly with the D.C. Council have documented immigration officers and MPD stopping and arresting people together without a warrant or probable cause, in violation of the law.⁴² On December 2, 2025, the D.C. District

³⁸ *Id.* Washington Post, (“Sterling testified in D.C. Superior Court that he was told by a department leader not to mention the shooting in the court documents, a transcript of the Oct. 21 hearing shows. When asked during cross-examination why there was no mention of gunfire in the police report, Sterling said at first he wasn’t sure he was even going to be the officer authoring the report and he “inquired in the office” about whether to mention it. One of the “unit team leads” advised him not to, he said. He didn’t mention the gunshots to the prosecutor either, he added. He said that wasn’t at the direction of someone else — it appears he was tired.”).

³⁹ Letter from EPW Law & Armand Law, to Councilmember Nadeau (December 31, 2025), RE: Request for Oversight and Transparency Regarding Federal Agents Use of Force in Washington, D.C. (on file with the Office of Councilmember Brianne K. Nadeau); *See also*, <https://www.fox5dc.com/news/federal-agent-shoots-driver-during-dc-police-chase>; <https://51st.news/federal-police-dc-tactics-accountability/>.

⁴⁰ Mark Seagraves, *NW DC arrest raises more questions about MPD involvement with ICE*, News4 (September 26, 2025), <https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/nw-dc-arrest-questions-mdp-ice/3993801/?ref=51st.news>; *See also* Testimony of Deputy Mayor of Public Safety and Justice Lindsay Appiah and the Metropolitan Police Department Executive Assistant Chief Andre Wright, Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety Hearing, December 4, 2025.

⁴¹ Council of the District of Columbia, Letter to MPD, December 18, 2025 (“The Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety has received numerous concerns regarding the federal surge and ongoing coordination between MPD and federal law enforcement agencies, especially regarding immigration enforcement. On December 4th, the Committee held a hearing on several bills and public safety in the District. Over 130 witnesses signed up to testify and many shared stories and experiences with federal immigration authorities in their communities. A primary concern raised was alleged coordination between MPD and federal immigration authorities. Representatives from MPD were present to answer some questions from Councilmembers and I appreciate this engagement even though you, as Chief, were unable to attend. However, questions remain and those are included herein. MPD’s formal response will help provide clarity to the Committee and the public, ensure accountability, and bolster public trust.”).

⁴² *See* Plaintiff’s Complaint in *Molina et. al. v. United States Dep’t of Homeland Sec. et. al.*, Case No. 1:25-cv-03417 (D.D.C. Sept. 25, 2025).

Court issued a ruling in *Escobar Molina et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security et. al.*, temporarily blocking the Trump administration from continuing the unlawful practice of civil immigration arrests in the District.⁴³ In an 88-page opinion, the judge criticized the Trump Administration's systemic failures to follow the law and found that individuals' rights were being routinely violated.⁴⁴ The Court reiterated the recent ruling made by the D.C. District Court in *N.S. v. Dixon* that as a legal matter, an immigration status violation is a civil sanction, not a criminal penalty.⁴⁵ The decision does not, however, opine on MPD's role and relationship to federal immigration enforcement.⁴⁶

D. Committee Roundtable

On October 29, 2025, the Committee on Public Works and Operations held a public roundtable on the matter of potential human rights violations in the District.⁴⁷ The purpose of the roundtable was to hear from residents and D.C. organizations about incidents witnessed since January that involve D.C. government coordination with federal entities or joint enforcement activity that may violate D.C. human rights laws.⁴⁸ The Committee has oversight of the D.C. Office of Human Rights (OHR) and requested the agency's participation at the roundtable to

⁴³ *Molina et. al. v. United States Dep't of Homeland Sec. et. al.*, ___ F. Supp. 3d ___, (December 2, 2025), <https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.dcd.285268.gov.uscourts.dcd.285268.68.0.pdf>.

⁴⁴ *Id.*

⁴⁵ *Id.* at 1-2 (“Consequently, viewing all immigrants potentially subject to removal as criminals is, as a legal matter, plain wrong. Second, immigration policy is indisputably important and “can affect trade, investment, tourism, and diplomatic relations for the entire Nation, as well as the perceptions and expectations of aliens in this country who seek the full protection of its laws.”); *See also N.S. v. Dixon*, 141 F.4th 279, 281-82, 286-87 (D.C. Cir. June 27, 2025) (citing, *Arizona v. United States*, 567 U.S. 387, 407 (2012) (citing *INS v. Lopez-Mendoza*, 468 U.S. 1032, 1038 (1984)).

⁴⁶ *Id.* at 18, several *amici* briefs were filed by local groups, restaurants, unions, and advocacy organizations in support of the plaintiffs and illustrated the ways in which these immigration arrests have impacted the community and quality of life (“Brief of Amici Curiae Washington Teachers’ Union et al., ECF No. 46 (teachers’ union explaining that defendants’ “mass, warrantless arrests have . . . caused a sudden increase in absenteeism in D.C. schools . . . because both students and their parents fear being arrested and detained on the way to school”); Brief of Amici Curiae District of Columbia Legal Services Organizations, ECF No. 47 (legal services providers explaining that when ICE “arrest[s] first and ask[s] questions later, U.S. citizens and immigrants with lawful and protected status are also at risk every time they leave their homes,” which “instills fear,” “impacts economic stability,” and “harm[s] residents’ health because people delay medical care out of fear of detention”); Brief of Amici Curiae Busboys and Poets et al., ECF No. 48 (“companies and individuals who are part of . . . the local business community” explaining that “[g]iven the critical role that immigrants play in the local business community, adherence to the statutory guardrails [in 8 U.S.C. § 1357(a)(2)] will . . . benefit the local businesses of D.C. and the residents it serves”); Brief of Churches, Faith Leaders, and Religious Organizations as Amici Curiae, ECF No. 49 (“[Faith organization] [a]mici have become all too familiar with accounts of worshippers unable to participate in religious services out of fear of being subject to warrantless arrests while en route to their places of worship,” including specific instances of arrests on the way to and from worship services, which has “interfered with the free exercise of religion.”)).

⁴⁷ <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/Hearings/hearings/1987>.

⁴⁸ *Id.*

assess the impact on the agency of these incidents, such as increased complaints, case filings, or staffing needs.

Despite the Committee's oversight authority, the Mayor refused to allow an agency representative to testify at the roundtable.⁴⁹ On October 23, 2025, a representative from the Executive Office of the Mayor called Committee staff to decline participation.

The Committee heard significant testimony from the public in which a consistent theme was the constant fear that immigrant and Latino residents experience when in proximity to public safety officials, particularly MPD officers. The witnesses spoke about the apprehension they feel when they step outside or when seeing their neighbors forcefully detained and taken away. Several first-hand accounts reported D.C. government agencies sharing information and vehicles with federal officers, police inquiries about the immigration status of stopped individuals, MPD presence with ICE conducting stops or detentions that disproportionately target people perceived as immigrants and/or Latino, disproportionate enforcement activities in residences and businesses in neighborhoods with larger immigrant populations, and encampment clearings using District resources.⁵⁰ Residents also testified extensively that seeing and interacting with armed and masked officers in their neighborhoods who also refuse to identify themselves has created a feeling that their neighbors are being kidnapped or disappeared.

Subsequently, on December 4, 2025, the Committee on Public Safety and Judiciary held a hearing to hear from the public about public safety issues. Numerous residents testified that they have seen federal agents riding along in the backseat of MPD vehicles. Residents also testified that MPD officers have been present alongside federal agents carrying out immigration enforcement activities. The government witnesses, Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice (DMPSJ) Lindsay Appiah and MPD leadership, both testified regarding agency participation in civil immigration enforcement and compliance with the Sanctuary Values Act (SVA).⁵¹ The majority of the testimony by the government witnesses failed to answer directly the questions on whether MPD is still cooperating with federal immigration enforcement and, if so, to what extent.⁵²

⁴⁹ Mark Segraves, “‘Extraordinary climate of fear’: DC residents testify on ICE arrests, ask mayor for answers” NBC Washington, (October 30, 2025), <https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/extraordinary-climate-of-fear-dc-residents-testify-on-ice-arrests-ask-mayor-for-answers/4008770/> (“Well, I just talked to a lot of residents here. Nobody told me that they were upset with me. In fact, what they told me is, ‘Thank you, mayor, for your leadership during unprecedeted times,’ she said.”).

⁵⁰ See Section IV. Summary of Testimony.

⁵¹ <https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/laws/23-282>.

⁵² See Testimony of Deputy Mayor of Public Safety and Justice Lindsay Appiah and the Metropolitan Police Department Executive Assistant Chief Andre Wright, Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety Hearing, December 4, 2025, (“The DMPSJ and MPD Executive Chief Assistant testified on the record to the following statements asked by PWO Committee Chair Nadeau:

- “[i]f you're asking are we coordinating with ICE? No. We're acting in accordance with the mayor's order. ICE was not one of the entities that's listed. MPD is not coordinating with ICE because ICE is not listed [in the

III. CHAIRPERSON OPENING REMARKS

Good morning. I am Ward 1 Councilmember Brianne Nadeau, the Chair of the Committee on Public Works and Operations. I am calling to order this meeting of the Committee to conduct a public roundtable to examine potential human rights violations in the District of Columbia. Today is Wednesday, October 29, 2025. The time is 9:34am.

Since the end of the Metropolitan Police Department's forced 30-day collaboration with federal law enforcement, Mayor Bowser has said MPD is no longer cooperating with federal immigration officials. Residents say that is not accurate.

Our residents are afraid, and they are angry. They want the executive to be forthcoming about current policies. They want the Council of D.C. to hold some sort of forum to hear the testimony and consider action to address the impact of the collaboration of District government agencies and employees with federal law enforcement on immigration issues. Today, we are providing one such forum.

This Committee has oversight of the D.C. Office of Human Rights, which is responsible for administering and enforcing the D.C. Human Rights Act. D.C. human rights law prohibits both intentional discrimination and policies or practices that have a discriminatory effect based on protected traits including national origin, race, homeless status or place of residence.

The purpose of the roundtable is to hear from residents and organizations about incidents they've witnessed since January that involve D.C. government coordination with federal entities or joint enforcement activity that may violate D.C.'s human rights laws, in order to understand the impact these incidents have had on the agency, such as increases in case filings, complaints, or resource needs. While the Office of Human Rights does not have authority over federal

Mayoral order].” When asked again whether MPD is cooperating with ICE or HSI, the executive stated no, followed by “[w]hen you say cooperation, what do you mean?” The executive declined to clarify this point or provide an answer on what the executive defines as involvement, cooperation or coordination in this context.

- “During the [declared] emergency, MPD was operating under a 740 federal-use order, but after September 11, we reverted to pre-emergency policy.” When asked whether MPD is cooperating with ICE, the DMPSJ answered they have reverted to pre-emergency policy and stated the Chief’s order has sunset. The Chief’s general order has not been rescinded, and the order does not contain a sunset clause.
- “MPD is not doing immigration enforcement.” When asked whether MPD is physically present or standing next to ICE during immigration enforcement, the DMPSJ avoids answering the question at hand by defining “working with ICE” as MPD itself doing immigration enforcement. When asked as a follow-up whether MPD is executing warrants—of any kind—with ICE, the DMPSJ again avoided answering the question.
- “Feds using MPD substations? Only for roll call...[t]here’s a mix of federal and local at roll call.” When asked whether federal law enforcement is meeting MPD for roll call at the 4D police substation, the DMPSJ admitted that they are sharing information and equipment with federal law enforcement. The executive’s representatives refused to elaborate on why federal agents are present for MPD roll call.

agencies, it does handle cases involving private and public actors, including police and other District workers.

The Committee requested that the D.C. Office of Human Rights participate in this roundtable. We were informed by the executive that the agency would not participate. This is disappointing.

This hearing comes a day after news reports that a federal Homeland Security Investigations agent shot at a man in D.C. during a traffic stop this month and the MPD officers with them did not report the shots in their incident reports, possibly after being instructed not to do so. The U.S. Attorney was, reportedly, not aware of the shots. The judge is quoted as saying, “It is shocking to me that someone was almost killed over a missing front license plate.”

We have no control over federal agents, but we, the Council, do have oversight of MPD and deserve to know why police officers are being told to keep details hidden to protect federal agents.

Today’s testimony could include instances of government agencies sharing arrest or booking info, including immigration status, with federal agencies, conducting stops or detentions that disproportionately target people perceived as immigrants, disproportionate enforcement activities in residences and businesses in neighborhoods with larger immigrant populations, and encampment clearings.

To say that D.C. residents are traumatized by the surge of federal agents and stepped-up immigration enforcement is not hyperbole. I personally have heard multiple stories of parents snatched by masked and unidentified agents. I’ve witnessed incidents, as well. We’ve heard of kids left on their own after parents have been removed. We’ve heard of U.S. citizens being detained without warrants and with no apparent reason. And in many of these cases, D.C. police have participated.

Students in 8th, 9th, and 10th grades at several schools in Ward 4 give us a window into how this has affected them, with anonymous responses they shared in a recent survey:

- “Sometimes I can barely attend school due to what’s happening right now, which is affecting my education.”
- “Sometimes my family is scare(d) to let me going to school.”
- “When ICE took one of my family members, it was a very difficult and emotional experience. Seeing federal law enforcement so close to my family made me feel scared and powerless.”

- “Most of the time there’s ICE cars with police cars near my school getting innocent people and when they do that the (families) who are trying to drop off their kids at school have to drive in fear on the way there and the way back. This not only happened to me but many others right now where their only provider or family gets taken by ICE and sometimes the kids get left behind, having nowhere to go and leaving them alone with nobody to be there for them, or even provide them with any (type of) care. I think it’s unfair to the community on how there’s more things to worry about out there but they are focusing more on innocent Latin/Hispanic humans.”
- “One time [my mom] wrote everything like her bank account password and everything she thought I would need in a book for me to have if ICE took her, and mind you my family lived in a apartment and my parents didn’t know if one day ICE would take them because ICE had came in the building 3-4 times looking for people and there was this time that I was babysitting my sister and my 9 y old cousin and I had just gotten a call from my cousin telling me that ICE was in the first floor and to lock my door.”
- “I was terrified because I never been in a situation like that, but I did what she told me to do and went in my parents room with my 4-year-old sister and told my cousin to be quiet and not say nothing. I was just praying to the Lord that nothing happens and my dad called me – he just told me to stay in there and my mom was coming and to pray that everything will be okay so I did that. And just stayed there waiting until my mom finally came home and she said that they left, but I just saw from the look of her that she was scared and relieved that we were okay and the next day I didn’t go to school because ICE had came back around 7 in the morning looking for someone.”

As I noted earlier, D.C. government does not have authority over federal agencies. But we do have authority over our own agencies. If actions by our agencies do not comply with D.C. laws on human rights, we need to know and we need to make demands of the executive to put an end to those actions.

Thank you to all of you who plan to speak today, and the many more who have submitted or plan to submit testimony. Anyone may submit written testimony through November 28th.

IV. SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

A video recording of the hearing can be viewed on the Granicus website.⁵³ The following witnesses testified live at the hearing via zoom and in-person and/or submitted written statements to the roundtable record.⁵⁴

Public Witnesses

Abi Hollinger testified that MPD's collaboration with federal enforcement has devastated the city and violated the safety and human rights of residents. She said she witnessed people stopped for minor traffic violations and subsequently disappeared and that people are afraid to go to work or send their children to school. She asked, "what is the purpose of the Sanctuary Values Amendment Act if our neighbors and friends are in danger every day?"

Alexandra Simbana has been a resident for twenty years and testified that terror has been delivered to DC streets through this MPD/ICE collaboration. She said her phone begins to "ding" just before 5:30 am every morning in group chats, and that "ding" means kidnappers—referring to MPD and federal agents—have already started disappearing neighbors, friends and longtime community members. She said she believes this takeover is localized terrorism and is meant to make residents feel belittled and make immigrants appear to be less than human and blames the Mayor for allowing this. She noted that residents are profiled for their personal appearances and that federal agents are unidentifiable most of the time with covered up masks.

Alicia Yass, Supervising Policy Counsel at the American Civil Liberties Union-DC (ACLU-DC) submitted written testimony stating a class action lawsuit has been filed alleging federal agents of making immigration arrests without a warrant and without probable cause. She noted that this policy and practice has sown terror in Latino and other communities across the District and violate unequivocal statutory restrictions on warrantless arrests. The complaint details many instances of similarly situated plaintiffs: men and women who are ethnically Latino and legally reside in the United States that are physically seized and arrested by unidentified federal agents without a warrant or probable cause.

Andrew Wassenich, Director of Policy at Miriam's Kitchen, testified about an incident that occurred in Washington Circle on August 14 and 15. He said that earlier in August, the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services posted signs that an encampment closure would take place on August 29; however, following social media posts and rhetoric from the President, new signs were posted saying the closure would take place on August 18. On the evening of August 14, he said federal officers arrived on the scene and wanted to clear the tents on the spot. Wassenich continued that advocates and city officials were able to point to the new signs and diffuse the situation, but the next morning police and DPW returned to the Circle, and all other unattended tents and belongings were thrown away without any advanced warning. He highlighted that people lost all their belongings in these clearings, including an artist who lost his art supplies and pieces he was working on, and a bike that was his primary means of

⁵³ https://dc.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=58&clip_id=9975.

⁵⁴ All written testimony submitted for the record can be viewed on the Hearing Management System. <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/Hearings/hearings/1987>

transportation; another individual lost their identification documents. Wassenich said it was “a shocking display of dishonesty, utter disregard for the humanity of those living in Washington Circle.”

Ashlei Anderson, Policy Counsel at DC Justice Lab, testified that the increase in law enforcement is not making residents safer, citing “violent and dangerous law enforcement practices” such as car chases and checkpoints. Anderson said the continued collaboration between MPD and federal agencies will have long-term consequences, including making residents feel unsafe and unwelcome in their own city. She said that transparency and accountability are needed to repair the damage that has been done.

Athena Viscusi, a resident of the District since 1987 and a clinical social worker who has worked for D.C. government and several nonprofits, testified that the damage to public trust from MPD collaboration with federal agencies may be irreparable, citing multiple incidents where federal agents committed potential violations of human rights such as warrantless arrests and refusing to identify themselves to community members.

Bill Mefford, Executive Director of the Festival Center and representative of the Interfaith Network, testified about multiple instances of collaboration between ICE and MPD, stating that these forces are terrorizing their neighborhoods and their community and that he no longer trusts the police to keep his community safe.

Bob Hayes, a resident of Ward 4 who was born in D.C., raised in Maryland, and has lived in D.C. since 2011, testified about the numerous examples of police misconduct he has personally observed, including “unaccountable federal agents” arresting, detaining, and disappearing his neighbors. He also stated that he had been threatened with physical violence by a plainclothes FBI agent.

Brendan Troy testified about two incidents that he says amount to MPD collaboration with federal agents to “kidnap and disappear our neighbors and terrorize and traumatize our children.” In one incident, he said a driver was profiled and pulled over, and a crowd of community members gathered. Troy also noted in incident where a law enforcement officer alleged that a child spit in their direction and officers then chased down the 13-year-old, slammed him into a wall, causing significant injury, and proceeded to detain and interrogate the child for at least 30 minutes.

Brittany K. Ruffin, Legal Director, Systemic Advocacy and Litigation, and Charisse Lue, Policy and Advocacy Attorney for The Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless submitted testimony that the Bowser Administration and federal government have continued to escalate efforts to clear the encampments of unhoused community members, causing displacement, trauma, and a disconnect with service providers. They stated that residents cannot be assured of their safety or protection by D.C. government if the Bowser Administration continues to cooperate with federal efforts to disrupt our local community and frustrate local protections.

Brooke Edgecombe, a D.C. resident since 1995, asked why her tax dollars are being spent on terrorizing people, citing an incident she witnessed in her neighborhood the morning of the

hearing where five individuals in military fatigues arrived in unmarked vehicles and proceeded to pound on her neighbor's door.

Carmen Daugherty, Interim Executive Director of the Advancement Project, testified that the surge of federal law enforcement presence has come with a surge in pretextual policing – stops initiated under the guise of minor infractions that are used to justify intrusive questioning, searches, or referrals to federal immigration or criminal databases – that is deeply harmful for Black, brown, and immigrant residents. She said this surge has eroded trust between these communities and law enforcement and placed vulnerable residents directly in harm's way. Daugherty continued that immigration enforcement has torn families apart, disappearing parents and family members to immigration detention facilities far away from home and in remote areas. She said that parents are therefore afraid to leave their homes to take their children to school, and kids are afraid of the police.

Chad Oliver, a resident of Ward 4, testified that he participates in community watches in his neighborhood and has witnessed many disturbing and cruel actions of the federal government and MPD, who willingly aids and abets these activities. He stated that this is not public safety, but bigotry and racism.

Chris Magunson, a resident of Ward 4, testified that the over-policing of the community due to MPD collaboration with federal agents is detrimental to community members, public trust, and public resources, citing an incident where the aggressive escalation tactics of an FBI agent made a routine traffic stop a much bigger incident.

Claudia Schlosberg, a 47-year resident of Ward 1, testified that she has witnessed firsthand the violent abduction of Latino workers by masked, heavily armed ICE agents. She said these abductions have torn families apart, forced many of our immigrant neighbors into hiding and devastated local businesses.

Dancer Sze, a DC native, testified that ICE, the National Guard, and other federal agents have people afraid to leave their homes. Sze said the traffic at the farmer's markets where they work each week is dropping consistently because of this.

Daniela Anello, CEO of DC Bilingual Public Charter School in Ward 5, testified about the repeated arrests of community members by masked federal agents just outside the school in full view of children and families that have left students and community members feeling fearful, anxious, and unsafe. She stated: "Our families, like all DC families, deserve safety, respect, and dignity. They should be able to bring their children to school without fear."

Dante O'Hara, resident of Ward 1, testified about the terror and harassment he and his neighbors have experienced since August. He cited an incident on August 12 during which he saw MPD officers were taking orders from the federal agents, particularly CBP. He also described an incident during which ten ICE kidnappings took place outside of St. Stephen's Church during a food distribution.

Eliza Cava, a resident of Ward 4, testified to share the stories of friends who were unable to testify themselves. She shared the story of a friend who is undocumented, who stated “every time I go outside the house, my throat gets tight. I feel like I can’t talk.” Cava described seeing caravans of MPD vehicles followed by one or two unmarked sedans full of federal officers. Another friend who has a pending asylum claim told Cava she feels “hunted.”

Nearly 300 parents and caregivers at Takoma Elementary School, Whittier Elementary School, Brightwood Elementary School, Ida B. Wells Middle School, Coolidge High School, Breakthrough Montessori Public Charter School, Capital City Public Charter School, and other local schools and child development centers, as well as local community members in Takoma and the surrounding area submitted a letter stating that joint and local law enforcement operations are terrorizing their children, families, and neighbors, citing multiple incidents that “demonstrate a recurring, militarized posture by MPD.”

Geovanna Izurieta, a resident of Ward 4, testified that she has personally witnessed seven arrests by federal immigration agents in her neighborhood. In at least two of these cases, she said that MPD officers were visibly collaborating with federal immigration agents. She noted that many of the operations took place in the early morning hours, involving armed and masked agents in unmarked vehicles. She stated that the agents are racially profiling Latino families, breaking apart homes, and leaving children without their fathers.

Greg Afinogenov testified that in early September he witnessed federal agents pull over a work van, smash the window, and pull out a passenger while his terrified wife sat next to him. He explained that the passenger was loaded into a vehicle and driven away to an unknown destination. As neighbors gathered, he said the federal agents aggressively yelled to back off and then drove away, abandoning the vehicle and its other occupants. Afinogenov called this a moment of grave moral crisis.

James Wells, a resident of Ward 1, asked, “How are we expected to live like this?” He stated that he, his neighbors, and his family all feel unsafe when they see flashing blue lights because they have seen squads of MPD officers, HSI/ICE, IRS, and FBI agents stopping and searching or arresting neighbors without any apparent reason aside from their skin color.

Jaqueline Castaneda, on behalf of the D.C. Latino Caucus, testified that she feels the anxiety, the helplessness and the anger of the past few months in her body, as someone who has witnessed and has been affected by family separation. She asked: “How did we go from enacting policies that ensure safety, protection, and sanctuary for all DC residents, regardless of their status, to this? How did we go from passing the Local Residents Voting Rights Amendment Act, which allows noncitizens to participate in our local elections, to this?”

Jenn Kauffman, Chair of ANC 4D, testified that at many of the law enforcement actions of the past several months, MPD is present and driving around in caravans with ICE. She stated that MPD officers have been actively participating in the repeated targeting of local schools with significant Latino populations during drop-off and pick-up times, even taunting concerned residents. Her seven-year-old son was recently crying during bedtime, asking Kauffman if she

would be “deported away” because she is Mexican. She said this has all created a climate of fear and irrevocably broken the trust between many of our communities and MPD.

Jennifer Ferreri, a resident of Ward 1, testified about a personal encounter with 10-12 federal agency representatives and 4-5 MPD officers on her block that made her concerned that officers were unable to put the safety and needs of residents above other federal administration priorities.

Jessica Weisz, MD; Matthew Magyar, MD, MPH, FAAP; and Elizabeth Ireson, MD submitted testimony as leaders of the DC Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics stating that in recent weeks, they have seen an abrupt decrease in the number of immigrant families willing and able to seek care at their clinical sites. They noted that families have articulated that “they fear their family is one minor traffic violation away from deportation.” They state that the collaboration between MPD and ICE will decrease MPD’s effectiveness as first responders in times of medical crisis due to broken trust.

John Payne, a resident of Ward 4, testified that MPD has been complicit in creating the culture of fear that is present in the city. He stated that children should not have to walk past federal agents terrorizing their neighbors on their way to and from school: “No child should have to experience this and be asked to be so brave.”

Julia Keane, a resident of Ward 1, testified that she has personally seen MPD vehicles escort caravans of agents in unmarked cars in her neighborhood. In August, Keane witnessed two MPD officers pull over a delivery driver on a scooter for an expired tag and then hand off the delivery driver to federal agents to be questioned about their immigration status. Keane stated: “Let’s be clear, their purpose here is not to arrest criminals. Their purpose here is to disappear people. And MPD is actively helping them do that.”

Dr. Kate Sugarman, a family doctor in Ward 1, testified that many of her immigrant patients are living in such fear that their health is getting much worse, because they believe leaving their home for medical appointments means risking abduction and never seeing their families again.

Katharine Landfield, Senior Advocacy Strategist at Fair Budget Coalition, testified that the last several years of budget decisions have served to enable and worsen the harm to communities at the hands of both federal and local law enforcement, citing the underfunding of community needs like ERAP, Alliance healthcare, and Out-of-School-Time Programming, and the overfunding of police.

Katherine James, a resident of Ward 1, testified about two incidents that occurred following the end of the 30-day emergency on September 10. In the first incident, she said two masked men pulled two Latino individuals out of a construction van and into an unmarked vehicle, adding that the two men were not provided any reason for their arrest and neighbors were told the men were being taken to a detention center in Chantilly. During the second incident, James said four MPD officers were questioning two men and checking their

immigration documents, but no arrests were made. James stated: “However, as far as I am aware, the MPD is not CBP, nor is it ICE, and checking people’s legal status is not part of its mandate.”

Katie Legomsky, a resident of Ward 4, testified that the ICE arrests and kidnappings are destroying the lives of her neighbors. She stated: “It is an unspeakable tragedy that our country is treating immigrants in this way.”

The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc submitted testimony that the practices of MPD have failed to improve public safety and instead have instilled fear in the community and subjected residents to the risks of police violence due to the use of juvenile curfews and traffic checkpoints. The Fund also shared their concern about the possible use of the MPD’s Gang Tracking and Analysis System to facilitate abuses by federal law enforcement, stating that Black and Latino D.C. residents are more likely to be entered into D.C.’s gang database, based on unreliable criteria, and therefore are more likely to be targeted.

Larissa Costa dos Santos, DC Organizer at the National Domestic Workers Alliance, shared the stories of domestic workers—mostly immigrant women—who clean homes, care for children and for elders, and sustain the daily life of the city. One woman asked: “How can being an immigrant in DC mean living in fear—afraid to walk, to pray, to pick up our children?” She shared that in some buildings that members of the Alliance live in, someone is kidnapped by federal agents every single day and put into unmarked cars without reasonable suspicion or a warrant.

Laura de Vera testified that in the last 30 days alone she has personally witnessed multiple stops including detentions, attempted detentions, and stops that did not result in a detention. She stated that in the majority of the events MPD has been present with federal agents and has acted not as bystanders, not as escorts or peacekeepers, but as active participants. She calls these events “a disgraceful erosion of the spirit of America.”

Lauren Weiss, a resident of Ward 1, urged the Council and the Mayor to do everything possible to make sure all kids can go to school safely and all residents can move about freely without fear of being kidnapped by federal or local agents.

Leah Tribbett, a resident of Ward 1, testified that every day she is watching her neighbors be harassed, assaulted, and kidnapped. She stated: “I — and many others present today — could fill our entire time together and still not recount every instance of brutality that we’ve seen: parents ripped away from their children on their way to school, people being dragged out of their cars through a smashed window, elders being grabbed from bus stops, teenagers tackled to the ground.” She stated that she was told by a 3D MPD captain that MPD is present at every single incident that involves a law enforcement agent from a federal agency — which includes ICE.

Madhvi Bahl, Core Organizer with Migrant Solidarity Mutual Aid (MSMA), testified that since August, the MSMA hotline has fielded 4,852 incoming calls from community members, an almost six-fold increase in calls. Bahl noted that MSMA has also seen an exponential increase in requests for support, and that the grocery, supplies, and community meal team has had to scale up to deliver to five times the number of families a month. Bahl stated: “And the increase in

federal agents in the District accounts for only part of this increase, without MPD’s full-throated collaboration, this level of enforcement would not have been possible.”

Marianne Wood Forrest, a resident of Ward 4, testified that her relationship to MPD is forever altered after she witnessed a routine traffic stop turn into an immigration-related detention. She said she now questions MPD’s presence and motives in her community.

Mary Calhoun, a resident of Ward 4 and an educator in Ward 5, testified that after witnessing an incident involving MPD cooperation with federal agents, her five-year-old child now describes police as “mean” and explains that police “take away brown people.” She stated: “We deserve to live in a city where we feel safe to go to and from school without witnessing or experiencing human rights violations.”

Merawi Gerima from the DC Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression testified that on October 17 federal agents shot into the car of an unarmed Black man. He stated: “Not only were his charges dropped, the MPD officer who wrote the report was forced to admit under oath that his superior officer told him to omit the fact that the feds shot into the car. This is a full-blown cover-up.”

Michelle Chappell, a resident of Ward 1, testified that the federal forces wish to divide residents along the lines of race, nationality, and language, but we will not be divided because we know that we all share the same human rights.

Miguel Trindade Deramo, Chair of ANC 1B, testified that many questions have been raised because the lines are blurred between a local police force and unidentifiable federal entities conducting immigration enforcement with impunity. He said it is clear that public trust in the police has eroded, putting communities at risk. He asked on behalf of residents in his district: “who will protect us?”

Nancy Leon, Director of Advocacy at Many Languages One Voice, shared the stories of members who have been affected by the increased police presence. One member said, “If anything were to happen to me, I’d rather stay quiet than call the police. If I call local police I feel that they will call ICE too. It’s better for me to stay absolutely silent.” Leon stated that the increased police presence and collaboration has had a psychological, physical, and economic impact on the community.

Parents and guardians of students at Mundo Verde Public Charter School submitted a letter stating that MPD’s protective mission has been confused with and subordinated to their “facilitating role for federal immigration enforcement initiatives that target our friends and neighbors and are carried out in flagrant disregard for the trauma they cause to our students and staff.” They called on the Mayor to reassert common sense restrictions on police actions in school zones.

Paige Dennis, a resident of Ward 1, testified that since August she has seen about a dozen immigration detainments in Ward 1, each “disturbing and tragic.” She stated that she has spoken to ICE officials and been told ICE is “cleaning up the country and protecting it from

criminals.” She asked: “which is more criminal, attempting to go to work to feed your children, or kidnapping someone off of the street?”

Pamela McKinney, a Ward 6 resident, testified about two incidents, one in which MPD fully accompanied and supported federal agents as they detained two unarmed men by a school, and a second in which MPD created and led a checkpoint in Southwest, detaining a Latino delivery driver. She asked: “how will MPD be held accountable for their actions and the blatant lies we’re told that they aren’t supporting federal agents?”

Rachel Johnston, Chief of Staff for the DC Charter School Alliance, testified that too many students have been afraid to come to school because they worry about what will happen when they leave their homes. Johnston cited several incidents – incidents in which agents have used physical force to make arrests in front of students – that have left students and staff shaken, and left school leaders questioning whether calling MPD in an emergency could make their communities less safe.

Rebecca Lichtenberg, a parent of two children attending Barnard Elementary, testified that ICE’s presence is striking fear in the daily lives of children in our city. She stated that it has taken the community coming together to make sure students can still get to and from school without parents “having to choose between their children getting an education and ensuring they can continue to be present in their lives.”

Regine Smith testified that she has witnessed “a culture of impunity where federal agents act like their badges give them the right to endanger us on our streets and treat young Black men like criminals just for existing.” She stated that the increased police presence is not about safety, but about ego and intimidation.

Robin Lipp testified that he has seen masked men with guns jump out of unmarked vehicles and snatch workers off the street. He stated that in virtually every case he has seen, “MPD has been working hand-in-hand” with federal agencies, and “none of this makes me feel safer. The violence I see in my joyful and peaceful neighborhood is not coming from my neighbors—it’s coming from Trump and Bowser’s federalization of policing in my community.”

Sana Siddiq from Muslims for Just Futures testified that the fact that 1,200 people were arrested from early August to mid-September (compared to 85 arrests from January to July) “shows the terrifying consequences of collaborating with and enabling federal enforcement.” He stated that the District government must invest in community needs like SNAP and ERAP instead of policing and incarceration during the supplemental budget process.

Sandra Moore serves with an organization that provides food and other essential items to families in need of support. She testified that in recent months, many families have told her they are afraid for their safety when they go out and therefore they sometimes or frequently don’t have enough to eat.

Shelby Tuseth, a resident of Ward 1, testified that she has personally witnessed six ICE arrests and neighbors in her apartment building have collectively witnessed and documented 25

ICE arrests. She said she has witnessed MPD escort CBP and HSI agents inside her apartment building as part of a criminal investigation.

Sophia K, a resident of Ward 4, testified that D.C. is struggling because so many community members who work essential jobs are being taken or are too afraid to leave their houses to even go grocery shopping.

Steve Harris, a D.C. resident and DCPS charter school parent, testified that ICE agents are becoming increasingly hostile and sometimes violent when confronted by residents. He said that trust between MPD and residents is completely broken, because MPD either will not interfere or is actively assisting ICE abduct our neighbors.

Dr. Tanya Golash-Boza, a resident of Ward 4, Professor of Sociology at the University of California, and Executive Director of the University of California Washington Center, testified that the actions of federal agents in the District is not law enforcement, it is abduction. She stated that the presence of masked, armed federal agents targeting Latino residents has created a climate of fear and trauma on an unprecedented scale.

Tara Sun Vanacore, a Ward 1 resident, testified that the collaboration between MPD and federal agencies has created an atmosphere of fear, mistrust, and instability. She stated that the enforcement seems completely disconnected from any infraction that an individual may or may not have carried out and there is no due process, but rather people stopped or taken by individuals wearing no insignia or recognizable uniforms, or MPD officers working alongside US Marshalls, immigration officials, and other federal agents harassing or arresting individuals on the basis of their appearance.

Thomas Gremillion, a resident of Ward 4, testified that until recently he never had a negative experience with the MPD or law enforcement in the District and supported more investment in policing, but now has less confidence in the police because he has been disturbed by witnessing MPD collaborating with ICE in his neighborhood. He stated he no longer feels the same trust in the police because of these incidents.

Tiana Trutna asked if we want to live in a world that only uplifts and supports the well-being of white people. She stated that the residents of D.C. dream of a world which embraces the diversity of our community.

Tiffani Johnson, Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for Single Member District 4B06, testified that MPD sharing information with ICE and facilitating immigration enforcement undermines the commitments D.C. made to its residents as a sanctuary city. She stated that she has heard from residents who are afraid to report crimes, seek help, or even leave their homes for fear of being targeted.

Rev. Yoimel González Hernández, Rector (Senior Priest) of St. Stephen and the Incarnation Episcopal Church in Ward 1, testified that the recent actions of MPD represent a betrayal of the most basic role of the police, which is to protect the most vulnerable, regardless

of immigration status or identity. He stated that parishioners are afraid to come to church, and residents no longer trust the police – trust that has taken decades to build.

V. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Committee Analysis

The Committee roundtable shed light on the consequences of the Bowser Administration’s cooperation with federal immigration enforcement agencies: the recurring theme of the public witness testimony was the loss of trust in the MPD.

The Committee understands that the District is in a difficult position with respect to the sitting President. As the nation’s capital, and the city where the President resides, D.C. has become the focus of much of the President’s attention and political agenda. Mayor Bowser has responded to his desire to insert himself into local governance by finding ways to appease the President. Unfortunately, the costs of this approach are now abundantly clear.

The Council has signaled repeatedly in recent years its belief that District involvement in immigration enforcement is not in the public interest and not an appropriate function of local policing. There is good reason for this. Ensuring the safety and security of communities is one of the primary responsibilities of local government; this responsibility, long withheld from the District, was finally given to the city in 1973 through the District’s Home Rule Charter. When a local government abuses its responsibility to ensure safety by consolidating or mingling its responsibilities with those of federal law enforcement, or otherwise ceding its responsibilities to federal law enforcement, it threatens local legitimacy, violates the public’s trust in law enforcement, and ultimately makes residents less safe. This has clearly happened in our city.

Studies have shown that crime is under-reported to the police by both immigrant and Latino communities when local police coordinate with federal immigration enforcement, which makes it more challenging for local police to address crime, investigate and close important cases, and protect vulnerable populations.⁵⁵ A police-community relations report published by the D.C. Criminal Justice Coordinating Council found that police approval is “shaped by public opinions and beliefs generated from public trust and confidence in the police, a sense of obligation and responsibility to accept police authority, and a belief that police actions are morally justified and appropriate to the circumstances.”⁵⁶ Law enforcement checkpoints for low-

⁵⁵ Dhingra, R., Kilborn, M. & Woldemikael, O. *Immigration Policies and Access to the Justice System: The Effect of Enforcement Escalations on Undocumented Immigrants and Their Communities*, Polit. Behav. 44, 1359–1387 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-020-09663-w>

⁵⁶ Page 59, <https://cjcc.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/cjcc/Police%20Community%20Report.pdf>, (“Notably, the National Research Council of the National Academies of Science has described [police] legitimacy as one of the most socially and politically important outcomes of policing. Police depend heavily upon legitimacy as a means of securing the public’s cooperation, compliance, and support, and evidence has demonstrated that people who think highly of the police are more likely to report that they would cooperate with officers, offer information that they had about crimes or suspected offenders, participate in community-policing efforts, accept officers’ decisions, comply with officers’ commands, and obey the law.”).

level offenses⁵⁷ or arresting people for disorderly conduct⁵⁸ have not been shown to reduce violent crime. In 2024, crime data from MPD showed that the case closure rates for violent crimes in DC were low: only 60 percent of murders in the District were “cleared” with an arrest—not necessarily a conviction.⁵⁹ And in 2023, the closure rate for homicide was only 45 percent.⁶⁰ Community trust and cooperation is essential to achieving the case closures and convictions needed to meaningfully improve public safety and justice. The testimony received by the Committee is symptomatic of a trust and credibility gap between local public safety agencies and D.C. residents, precipitated by the Executive's handling of the federal surge and its aftermath.

While the consequences are not irreversible, we can only ensure the safety of our community if the Bowser Administration reverses course. In particular, the Metropolitan Police Department must begin to earn back and rebuild the trust of D.C. residents.

The Committee makes recommendations for Mayoral and Council actions that can reestablish trust in MPD, strengthen oversight, and protect against human rights violations against all residents – from recent arrivals to long-standing members of our community.

B. Committee Recommendations

1. The Committee recommends that the Mayor rescind the “Safe and Beautiful Emergency Operations Center” order (Mayor's Order 2025-090) and that MPD formally sunset its order on immigration enforcement (EO-25-005).

The Committee recommends that Mayor Bowser rescind Mayor's Order 2025-090, the “Safe and Beautiful Emergency Operations Center” issued on September 2, 2025.⁶¹ The order established an operations center to manage the District’s response to the President’s emergency declaration “and on a continuing basis,” and requires local coordination with federal law enforcement “to the maximum extent allowable by law within the District.”⁶² The President’s emergency order has expired; as such, there is no justification for continued cooperation. The Mayor has been evasive about the reason for and impact of the order remaining in effect;

⁵⁷ <https://www.fox5dc.com/news/dc-residents-express-concern-mpd-federal-agents-set-up-checkpoint>

⁵⁸ <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/man-who-threw-sandwich-at-federal-agent-in-d-c-found-not-guilty-of-assault> (“A former Justice Department employee who threw a sandwich at a federal agent during President Donald Trump’s law enforcement surge in Washington was found not guilty of assault on Thursday in the latest legal rebuke of the federal intervention.”); <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2025/09/14/trump-dc-crime-arrests-data-federal-takeover/>

⁵⁹ <https://mpdc.dc.gov/page/quarterly-clearance-rates-cy2023-cy2025>; <https://www.cato.org/blog/path-safer-dc-focus-certainty-not-showmanship>

⁶⁰ <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/police-solving-far-fewer-cases-as-homicides-rise-in-washington-d-c>; <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/downloads/LIMS/54415/Introduction/B25-0616-Introduction.pdf?Id=181467>

⁶¹ https://mayor.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/mayormb/release_content/attachments/2025-090%20Creation%20of%20the%20Safe%20and%20Beautiful%20Emergency%20Operations%20Center.pdf.

⁶² https://mayor.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/mayormb/release_content/attachments/2025-090%20Creation%20of%20the%20Safe%20and%20Beautiful%20Emergency%20Operations%20Center.pdf

however, even if the administration is not acting on its authority under the order, as long as it remains in effect, it constitutes a major barrier to rebuilding public trust.

The Committee also recommends that MPD formally sunset Executive Order 25-005, issued on August 14, 2025, concerning immigration enforcement.⁶³ EO 25-005 was issued during a federally declared “crime emergency” and initially intended to signal cooperation to safeguard Home Rule. The order undermines the legislative intent of the Sanctuary Values Act. The order exposed the gaps in the legislation by authorizing MPD to assist in immigration enforcement by sharing information about persons not in MPD custody (e.g., during traffic stops) and providing transportation for federal immigration agents and detained individuals.⁶⁴ On December 4, the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice Lindsay Appiah testified that EO 25-005 had sunset. However, the order does not have a sunset clause. The Council formally requests proof from MPD, including issuance of a superseding order or directive stating that MPD has returned to its pre-emergency policy.

Ending both executive orders is in the public interest. All executive actions or policies that undermine the SVA should be reversed.

- 2. The Committee recommends that the Office of Human Rights continue to collect and analyze data regarding any increase in discrimination complaints filed since January 2025 and share such information with the Committee to support oversight and policy development.**

This Committee has oversight responsibility for the D.C. Office of Human Rights (OHR) and sought to understand the impact of recent events on the agency’s operations, including potential increases in discrimination complaints, case complexity, and staffing needs. To that end, the Committee requested OHR’s participation in the October 29 roundtable to assess these impacts. However, the Mayor prevented OHR from participating. The Committee will continue to request timely information updates from the agency to assess whether additional legislative or budgetary action is warranted.

⁶³ https://go.mpdconline.com/GO/EO_25_005.pdf

⁶⁴ *Id.*

3. The Committee recommends that the Council reaffirm and strengthen enforcement of the Sanctuary Values Act and any other applicable laws governing federal law enforcement cooperation with MPD.

The Council should consider legislative action through appropriate committees of jurisdiction to address the gaps in District law exposed by the executive orders,⁶⁵ particularly in the Sanctuary Values Amendment Act (SVA),⁶⁶ and any other applicable laws governing federal law enforcement cooperation with MPD.⁶⁷ Where executive orders or agency directives are not time-limited or explicitly revoked/amended, the Council should clarify through a legislative mechanism that any provisions permitting MPD cooperation on immigration enforcement beyond what is expressly allowed under the law is deemed unlawful and without force or effect.

The Committee recommends expanding the scope of the SVA to ensure that its protections apply consistently across D.C. government. On December 15, 2025, Councilmember Janeese Lewis George along with Councilmembers Brianne Nadeau, Charles Allen, Zachary Parker, and Robert White introduced B26-0549, the “Safe Community Places and Policing Act of 2025.”⁶⁸ The bill would prohibit D.C. agencies from providing transportation to any federal agency, prohibit agencies from conducting surveillance or patrol operations as part of civil immigration enforcement activity; prohibit conducting law enforcement operations at safe community places (defined as schools, healthcare facilities, shelters, legal service providers, recreation centers, and other critical community institutions); and require the District government to train its employees on the law. Should that legislation advance, this committee recommends that a committee print establish accountability and discipline mechanisms for District employees and agencies that violate the Sanctuary Values Amendment Act and other applicable laws.

Legislative action like that proposed in B26-0549 can play a role in ensuring that local laws are clear on how, when, where, and why cooperation is authorized.

4. The Council should exhaust all means to require that federal law enforcement officers are subject to the same restrictions imposed on MPD officers not to wear masks and to provide identification.

A significant issue raised in the roundtable testimony was the use of masks and lack of identification among federal law enforcement. Residents noted extensively in their testimony the prevalence of masked and armed agents roaming the streets in plainclothes with no badge,

⁶⁵ Mayor's Order 2025-090 (Safe and Beautiful Emergency Operations Center); Mayor's order 2011-174 (Disclosure of Status of Individuals: Policies and Procedures of District of Columbia Agencies); MPD Executive Order 25-005 (Immigration Enforcement); MPD General Order 201.26 (Code of Conduct); MPD General Order PCA 702.01 (Arrest Warrants).

⁶⁶ <https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/laws/23-282>

⁶⁷ <https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/code/titles/5/chapters/3>

⁶⁸ <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/Legislation/B26-0549>

refusing to identify their name or the agency to which they belong.⁶⁹ This leads to the perception that neighbors taken by these agents are being kidnapped.⁷⁰

According to D.C. Code § 5-302, federal officers enforcing local District law under a cooperative agreement “shall be subject to the restrictions imposed on MPD officers under the laws codified in Chapter 1 of [Title 5].”⁷¹ However, these restrictions would not apply under the circumstances in question (i.e., federal law enforcement enforcing federal immigration laws). The Committee recommends that the Council exhaust all means to require that federal law enforcement officers adhere to the same restrictions imposed on MPD officers to wear identification and not to wear masks or face coverings. This should include determining whether existing cooperative agreements and the District laws governing them subject federal officers to these MPD standards to the maximum extent allowable under the law.

⁶⁹ [https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/12/18/us-masked-federal-agents-undermine-rule-of-law;](https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/12/18/us-masked-federal-agents-undermine-rule-of-law) <https://51st.news/masked-feds-dc/>; <https://abcnews4.com/news/nation-world/dc-washington-federal-agents-wearing-masks-hiding-covering-faces-mayor-bowser-trump-president-takeover-city-crime-arrests-identify-officers-control-masked-homeland-security-constitutional-lawful>; <https://wjla.com/features/i-team/dc-ad-campaign-seeks-to-unmask-federal-agents>; <https://www.axios.com/local/washington-dc/2025/09/08/masked-agents-unmarked-cars-trump-crackdown-legality>.

⁷⁰ <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/masked-and-unidentifiable-the-risks-of-federal-law-enforcement-operating-without-identification/#:~:text=A%20lack%20of%20proper%20identification,quell%20opposition%20to%20their%20agend>

^{a.}
⁷¹ D.C. Code § 5-302.

VI. CONCLUSION

District law, while grounded in strong principles of civil rights, transparency, and sanctuary protections, contains gaps that have allowed executive action, intergovernmental agreements, and policy practices to evolve in ways that risk undermining those established protections. Recent executive orders, emergency directives, and lack of transparent cooperation have created ambiguity around the scope of what is permissible, particularly in the context of public safety and immigration enforcement.

While the Mayor and her administration maintain that current practices are within the law, testimony and public observation cast significant doubt on this claim. This has led to significant erosion of public trust and confusion about accountability. The application of a law cannot violate the spirit and intent of it—otherwise, it becomes moot.

The Committee concludes that the Executive's course of action must be reversed to reaffirm and enforce the laws of the District and to rebuild the public trust that is so critical to an effective public safety ecosystem. Further legislative action may be necessary to clarify that District resources are not used in ways that contravene local law, compromise human rights, or undermine public trust.