



For Immediate Release

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Branch Position on the Implementation of National Immigration Policies in Fairfax County

The Fairfax County NAACP, League of United Latin American Citizens Virginia, and The American Civil Liberties Union of Virginia believe that efforts to implement national immigration policies must be consistent with the values that we cherish locally. Unfortunately, these efforts have taken on a ruthless and inhumane character in recent weeks. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s (“ICE”) efforts to increase deportations have led ICE to engage in overly aggressive and discriminatory actions that are likely unconstitutional and violate both good policy and our county’s values. ICE seems intent on casting such a wide and indiscriminate net against immigrants of color and in religious minorities that it ensnares individuals with no criminal record, who do not pose a threat to their community, and even those who are legal residents.

U.S. immigration authorities arrested hundreds of undocumented immigrants in at least a half-dozen states since February in raids marking the first large-scale enforcement of President Trump’s January 25th executive order. In Virginia, ICE’s wide-net approach has had a disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable members of the Latino community, as was horribly demonstrated by ICE’s recent early morning detention of individuals—including legal residents—whom ICE intercepted as they were leaving the Rising Hope Mission Church hypothermia shelter in Fairfax. Similarly, residents of the Fairmont Gardens apartments in Annandale now live in fear after two raids in February alone. That undocumented immigrants with no criminal records have been arrested and could be deported has sent a shock wave of terror through immigrant communities and suggest that the government may be engaged in racial profiling, and violating the constitutional rights of law-abiding immigrants.

In light of these recent events, the Fairfax County NAACP, LULAC and the ACLU of Virginia call on the

Board of Supervisors and county residents writ large to remember that our immigrant population is a valued part of the county's fabric. They are our neighbors and friends. They care for their families in the same way that we care for ours. And they carry the same hopes and dreams in their hearts as we carry in ours. We must not forget that we are deeply interwoven into each other's lives and that this interconnection is something that makes Fairfax County a special place to live.

The conduct by ICE agents works against Fairfax County's efforts to build trust between law enforcement and the community. Chairman Bulova has said that Fairfax County values the diversity of its residents and to "reassure Fairfax County's residents that our community will remain safe and welcoming to all." We support this position and will advocate for equal and constitutional treatment and legal rights for all our neighbors. We applaud Fairfax County's OneFairfax commitment to promoting diversity, and urge the Board of Supervisors, Fairfax County Police Department, Sheriff's Office, and School Board to stand firm in their commitment. Because we want Fairfax County to continue to be this special place, we strongly oppose the U.S. Department of Homeland Security policy that grants ICE the expanded authority to detain and accelerate the detention of people who have not been convicted of crimes. We encourage faith, advocacy, and community organizations to speak out in strong opposition to these policies and assist families disrupted by these policies in any way they can.

We urgently call on the Fairfax County officials to demonstrate their opposition to these changes by:

- restricting ICE's ability to use county resources or manpower to enforce this discriminatory and inhumane policy;
- discontinuing any policy that allows for individuals in the county jail to be held beyond their scheduled release date to accommodate ICE requests;
- continuing to educate all students regardless of their immigration status;
- ensuring that all immigrant students are made to feel safe and welcome by strongly enforcing the antidiscrimination and anti-bullying policies and helping families plan for the potential adverse consequences of ICE action by ensuring stability in school enrollment for their children;
- continue refraining from participating in the voluntary 287(g) program that would volunteer FCPD officers to serve as ICE agents under delegated authority and supervision of federal agents;
- and refusing to participate in any registry – should one be established – based on race, religion, ethnicity, nationality, or country of origin.

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American Civil Liberties Union of Virginia