

ANTI-ICE Protests Aimed at Ending All Immigration Enforcement

I. INTRODUCTION

The protests at the Delaney Hall immigration detention facility in Newark, New Jersey represent the latest attempt by anti-borders radicals to undermine the rule of law, shield violent criminal illegal aliens from removal, and propagate lies designed to weaken immigration enforcement.

After four years of catastrophic anti-borders policies under President Biden, the Trump administration is reversing the policies that led to more than ten million illegal aliens being encountered at our borders – along with another two million gotaways – and attempting to enter the country through deliberately open borders and the systematic abuse of our laws. FAIR estimates that at the start of 2025, at least 18.6 million illegal aliens were residing in the United States.¹

Between Fiscal Years 2021 and 2024, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) encountered more than 170,000 illegal aliens with criminal warrants or convictions at the border.² During that same period, nearly 400 suspected terrorists were apprehended attempting to cross into the country between ports of entry, and an additional 1,587 were encountered at ports of entry.³ More than 1.7 million special interest aliens – aliens from countries potentially posing national security threats – were encountered at our borders.⁴

The consequences for American communities have been devastating. Illegal aliens who should have been put in detention centers and removed were instead allowed to roam free. The results are well-known, sadly.

- Twelve-year-old Jocelyn Nungaray was sexually assaulted and strangled to death in Houston by two Venezuelan nationals the Biden administration had detained at the border and released.⁵
- Eighteen-year-old Sheridan Gorman, a Loyola University Chicago freshman, was shot and killed near the Loyola Beach Pier by a Venezuelan national who had been released by Border Patrol under the Biden administration and then released again by Chicago's sanctuary city authorities after a shoplifting arrest.⁶
- Twenty-two-year-old Laken Riley was murdered during a morning jog near the University of Georgia campus by a Venezuelan national the Biden administration had paroled into the country.⁷

These women, and more Americans like them, are dead because their killers were released onto the streets rather than handed over to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and placed in a detention facility before being swiftly removed from the country.

But the consequences of illegal immigration are not limited to violent crime. Mass illegal immigration undermines national sovereignty and our constitutional form of government. It cheapens the concept of citizenship and allows foreigners to take advantage of our generosity. Illegal immigration imposes fiscal burdens on American taxpayers, suppresses wages for

American workers, drives up the cost of housing, medical care, and insurance, and contributes to putting the American dream beyond reach for far too many.⁸ In sum, it is completely contrary to our Constitutional principles and allowing it is antithetical to preserving the general welfare of the nation.⁹

The smear campaign against Delaney Hall is part of a broader assault on immigration enforcement and on the men and women in uniform tasked with carrying out the job *Congress gave them* through our immigration laws.

Detention is indispensable to immigration enforcement and failing to enforce that will have devastating consequences. Beyond just allowing violent criminal aliens to roam freely, failing to detain those who violate our laws sends a clear signal to the world that the United States is not serious about protecting its sovereignty and safeguarding the integrity of its immigration system.

II. DELANEY HALL

Beginning with the unsubstantiated allegations about conditions inside the facility, there are reasons to be skeptical, to put it mildly.

During the period when a hunger strike was alleged, commissary sales at the facility surged 161 percent, jumping from \$11,498 on May 26 to \$30,013 on June 1—even as the detainee population fell from 724 to 621.¹⁰ Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Deputy Press Secretary Lauren Bis said the data told the real story: “The hunger strike hoax was actually just Delaney Hall detainees trading nutritious meals for Honey Buns and Hot Cheetos. It’s time for sanctuary politicians to drop the political theater and work with us to get criminal illegal aliens out of our communities.”¹¹ White House Border Czar Tom Homan, who made an unannounced visit to the facility and ate the same cafeteria meal as detainees, offered a similar explanation for why some detainees were skipping the cafeteria: “They may not be eating in the cafeteria, but what I found out they’re ordering food from the commissary and eating it in their cells.”¹²

DHS also affirmed that there was no hunger strike and that conditions at Delaney Hall remained sound.¹³ And DHS Secretary Markwayne Mullin further rebutted these allegations in a Senate hearing in June.¹⁴ In reality, ICE abides by high detention standards, providing detainees with three daily dietitian-approved meals, communication with family and attorneys, and on-site medical care.

The demands of the protesters reveal the true nature of their agenda. These activists fundamentally do not believe the United States has the right to detain anyone for purposes of immigration enforcement, regardless of what the law says or what Congress has authorized. And those demands are being stoked by radical, anti-ICE politicians.

The tactics employed in pursuit of those demands have been extraordinary. In May 2025, Newark Mayor Ras Baraka was arrested after attempting to force his way into the Delaney Halle facility.¹⁵ Congresswoman LaMonica McIver (N.J.) was also charged following the incident.¹⁶ In the most recent unrest this year, N.J. Governor Mikie Sherrill – who herself has attacked the Trump administration’s immigration enforcement policies – conceded at a May 30 press conference that “some national extremist groups have become involved in the protests here today,” and that five of the six people arrested by state police the previous night were not New Jersey residents.¹⁷ In

response to her call for demonstrators to “bring the temperature down,” the Democratic Socialists of America’s (DSA) New Jersey chapter and the Climate Revolution Action Network of New Jersey responded by declaring, “We’re going to turn up the noise.”¹⁸

III. THE BROADER ANTI-ICE CAMPAIGN

The protests at Delaney Hall are part of a national campaign against immigration enforcement that FAIR has documented in detail. This campaign has produced riots and resulted in a massive increase in assaults on ICE officers since the beginning of President Trump’s second term. Delaney Hall is just the latest front in a war that the anti-borders movement is waging against immigration enforcement itself.

These protests are not organic or spontaneous. They are highly organized and funded by radical agitators. These organizations are not shy about their ultimate goals:

- Indivisible, an organization backed by anti-borders billionaire George Soros, has been explicit about its objective of “Dismantling Detention”, in its own words.¹⁹ That organization received nearly \$8 million in funding from Soros’ Open Society Foundation between 2018 and 2023.²⁰
- The Democratic Socialists of America has been an active participant and gone so far as stating: “We demand the immediate shutdown of Delaney Hall, and all immigrant detention centers! We demand the abolition of ICE, and free movement of all people everywhere!”²¹
- A *Fox News* investigation found that the national anti-ICE apparatus is funded in significant part by Neville Roy Singham, a self-described Marxist residing in Shanghai, China, whose network has channeled at least \$278 million to radical organizations creating division in the United States since 2017.²²

The consequences stemming from organizations like these are unmistakable. Since the beginning of President Trump’s second term, DHS has documented a 1,300 percent increase in assaults on ICE officers, a 3,200 percent increase in vehicular attacks against them, and an 8,000 percent increase in death threats.²³ FAIR’s investigative report on the June 2025 Los Angeles riots documented widespread violence against officers, including assaults with vehicles, rocks, and improvised explosive devices.²⁴ California Governor Gavin Newsom and Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass, like their counterparts in New Jersey, repeatedly invoked inflammatory language about ICE in the months preceding the riots.

IV. WHY RADICALS ATTACK DETENTION

These radical organizations are seeking to undermine detention because increased detention capacity is crucial to carrying out mass deportations and undoing the damage caused by four years of open borders. The passage of the “One Big Beautiful Bill” Act last year substantially increased ICE detention capacity, meaning that more aliens subject to removal can be held while their cases proceed and while removal is executed.²⁵ Being detained makes it more likely that an alien will not contest their removal and will depart voluntarily. Facilities like Delaney Hall are essential to the enforcement agenda that the American people voted for. This is precisely why radical anti-ICE

activists target them; their end goal is unambiguously to abolish ICE and make the Biden administration's border disaster look like child's play.

Indivisible's own recently published materials acknowledge that ICE was detaining over 70,000 people with plans to expand to 100,000, and that Congress has provided \$45 billion to fund that expansion.²⁶ Their stated demand is to cancel the expansion entirely. And, as noted above, DSA has explicitly called to end all detention and ICE itself.

Since January 2025, the detained population has grown precipitously since the Biden era and continues to expand. The results speak for themselves: in 2025, 28 percent of detained aliens opted for voluntary departure, the highest rate ever recorded, and the percentage of bond hearings ruled in favor of alien respondents fell from 59 percent in 2024 to 30 percent in 2025.²⁷ Without detention centers like Delaney Hall, immigration cases risk not being processed at an acceptable rate, pushing them into limbo, and potentially buying illegal aliens years to roam free.

V. BROAD IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT IS NECESSARY — NOT JUST FOR VIOLENT CRIMINALS

Setting aside violent crime, the presence of millions of illegal aliens in the United States imposes considerable costs on every American taxpayer, every American renter, and every American worker competing for employment in the sectors most affected by illegal alien labor.

The fiscal burden of illegal immigration is staggering. FAIR's 2023 study found that illegal aliens cost American taxpayers a gross total of at least \$182 billion annually.²⁸ Taxes paid by illegal aliens offset only \$32 billion of that figure, leaving a net annual burden of \$150.7 billion.²⁹ The average American taxpayer pays a net \$957 per year as a direct result of illegal immigration, without being asked, without consenting, and with no mechanism to opt out. Illegal aliens are a massive fiscal burden for taxpayers and take far more than they contribute.

State and local governments spend \$73.3 billion annually on education for illegal aliens and their U.S.-born children, \$18.6 billion on medical costs, and \$21.8 billion on policing, courts, and corrections for criminal alien offenders.³⁰ These expenditures are directly imposed on states and localities by the federal government under administrations that neglect, or willfully abandon, their responsibility to enforce our immigration laws.

Increased demand for housing is another cost of illegal immigration imposed on Americans. A March 2026 working paper from the Federal Reserve Banks of Dallas found that that growth in the working-age illegal alien population between early 2021 and 2024 accounted for shocking increases of about 30 percent in home prices and 20 percent in rents in the average metropolitan area during that period.³¹ Those findings are reinforced by FAIR's recent housing study demonstrating that the burden has been especially severe in metro areas least equipped to handle a sudden population influx. According to FAIR's research, a 5 percent increase in immigrant population correlates with a 12 percent increase in rents for U.S.-born households in those areas, while even a 1 percent increase spikes home prices by up to 9.6 percent in neighboring metro areas.³²

Illegal aliens, the vast majority of whom are economic migrants, accept wages below the minimum or prevailing rates and working conditions that often violate American labor laws, undercutting

workers in industries where those illegal aliens are concentrated such as construction, food service, agriculture, and manufacturing. In short, illegal immigration has resulted in a transfer of economic opportunity from American workers to those who disregard our laws. Some may argue that because mass immigration increases GDP by increasing demand for goods and services it is a net benefit, but the reality is that it significantly decreases per capita GDP and overall quality of life for everyday Americans.³³

Detention is key to deterring the large-scale theft that is illegal immigration. Without it, the message broadcast to every migrant, cartel, smuggling network, or visa overstayer is that there will not be any consequences for their actions, and that they should simply enter illegally, file an asylum claim or accept a notice to appear for a court date years away, and disappear into the interior and wait until another anti-borders administration gets into office. That message invited the historic surge under the Biden administration, the largest sustained wave of illegal immigration in American history. Yet when potential migrants know that illegal entry will lead to detention, a swift hearing, and removal, the calculus changes. The dramatic decline in border crossings since January 2025 is proof that credible enforcement deters illegal immigration. Undermining detention will invite the next border surge, which is precisely what the activists attacking Delaney Hall want.

VI. CONCLUSION

A nation that cannot detain illegal aliens, who are in the country in violation of its laws, has already surrendered its sovereignty. The protests over Delaney Hall are part of a much broader campaign against immigration enforcement whose end goal is mass amnesty and the elimination of all immigration enforcement. Rather than surrendering to those efforts, we must remain focused on repairing the loopholes that allowed the largest border crisis in our nation's history and strive to strengthen detention as a key component of that, and as a deterrent to future illegal immigration.

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⁴ FAIR Staff, "1.7 Million Special Interest Aliens Encountered over Past Three Years, According to New Congressional Report," Oct. 7, 2024, <https://www.fairus.org/news/executive/1-point-7-million-special-interest-aliens-encountered-over-past-three-years-according-new>.

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⁹ Dale Wilcox, "Immigration Enforcement Should Not Be Limited to the Worst of the Worst," Feb. 5, 2026, <https://www.fairus.org/opinion/immigration-enforcement-should-not-be-limited-worst-worst>.

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