

# Defending Local Stability: The Business Response

How business owners and leaders can prepare for possible federal deployments, protect their teams, and advocate for their communities.

MARCH 2026



**The deployment of federal forces on the streets of American cities is a critical business issue. In addition to the destructive impacts on our communities, civil rights, and rule of law, these deployments are having a devastating economic impact. The recent unconstitutional tactics and court order violations from ICE have caused mass chaos and upheaval of the rule of law.**

**As federal forces deploy across the country, business owners, leaders, and organizations like you can help protect your community and your neighbors. Whether it is educating your team about their legal rights, practicing scenarios with your staff and neighboring businesses, speaking out about the violation of community member rights alongside fellow business leaders, or sharing the impacts of the deployment on your business with your elected officials — your actions and perspective are valuable at this critical moment.**

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# Protecting Your Business and Community

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# How Businesses and the Business Community Can Take Action

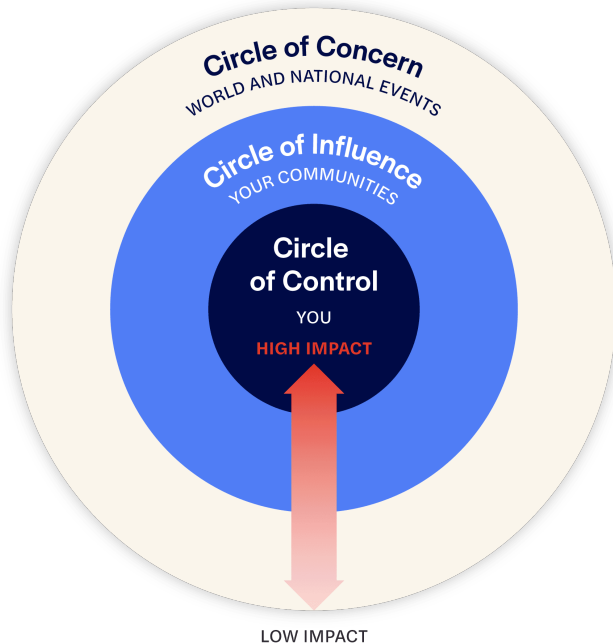
There are countless ways to stand up for the rule of law, a stable investment environment, and the safety of our communities. And just as every business is unique — what type of engagement makes sense for your business, based on sector and size, is unique. And that's good! A wide range of tactics and voices means we will reach more private sector leaders and build a broader, stronger movement. This toolkit offers ideas and options for ways to get involved. You know best what works and doesn't work for your situation. Please note, this toolkit should not be considered as legal advice. We recommend consulting an attorney with relevant expertise with any specific questions.

A range of responses — some public, others private — will also have a greater impact on shifting administrative policies. This toolkit is relevant for any size business, but is specifically focused on small businesses. We know public engagement is not feasible for every business and that's totally ok. There are many important ways to make a difference behind the scenes.

## Focus on Your Impact

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The closer issues are, the more they impact us. But thankfully, this goes in both directions: We have the best shot at changing things immediately around us. When autocratic policies threaten our communities & businesses directly, we have an opportunity to act.





Everything we do seems small and insignificant, but everything we do matters. And it's huge."<sup>1</sup>

ANGELA, BOOKSTORE OWNER IN MINNESOTA

### **A Note on Federal Forces**

We have seen the deployment of a variety of different types of federal forces by this administration. We provide more detailed information on different types of federal forces in the "Glossary" section at the end of this resource.

The most important thing to keep in mind is that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) are agencies within the Department of Homeland Security charged with enforcing immigration laws and securing the U.S. border. Although they often dress in military attire, they *are not* part of the U.S. armed forces.

National Guard forces are our friends and neighbors — most of them have regular day jobs and many are military veterans — who signed up to serve our communities. They are normally deployed in emergency situations like natural disasters and are generally under the authority of state governors (except in exceptional circumstances). They are prohibited by federal law from participating in domestic law enforcement.

## Step 1: Build Your Community

With high levels of polarization and increasing uncertainty in our country, community is what grounds us and binds us together. As a business leader, you and your company can help build your community. By engaging about the issue of militarization, you are mitigating risk for your business, your neighbors, your employees, and your investment. Community means partnering with other businesses, as well as faith, veterans, civic and labor organizations. It also means connecting with local elected officials who share your concerns about executive overreach and the militarization of our cities and towns.

There are many ways to bring the community together, whether as a convener or participant. Responding to a crisis requires a huge number of small contributions from data processing and signmaking to providing meeting spaces and parking lots. It may be helpful to make a list of your business's resources and how they might be helpful to the community in an emergency situation to help you assess and plan.



**The public enforcement that creates chaos and hurts small businesses is not only unacceptable, but it's not necessary. It's intentional on their part, and that's why it's unacceptable."**<sup>2</sup>

**FRANK KNAPP, PRESIDENT, SOUTH CAROLINA SMALL BUSINESS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

### Start the conversations.

Take stock of your relationships, the people around your business, and how they might be impacted as there are changes in your community. What's the local conversation been like, and what are the relevant issues? If there hasn't been one, don't wait for an invitation — start it yourself. Don't underestimate the importance of talking out loud to colleagues about the problem. Doing so makes others feel safer to speak.

### Help prepare your local business community.

Consider hosting a happy hour, coffee chat or online or in-person training for other local businesses and community members to share how you prepared your business for deployments and discuss challenges and opportunities for further engagement.

## Connect with your local business organizations.

Are you already part of your local chamber of commerce, business association, or trade group? If not, they are great places to meet other business owners and share your concerns about increased ICE presence and deployments.

If ICE or the National Guard have already impacted your community, document any lost revenue and report it to your local or state business organization as proof of why action must be taken immediately. Here is an [example of a public statement](#) made by the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce in June, 2025, as a result of complaints from their members.

There are also several national business organizations that are collecting stories of business impact to share with legislators and the media including [American Sustainable Business Network's Tell Your Story Campaign](#).

BUSINESSES TAKE A STAND

### From [a letter](#) signed by over 250 business associations and businesses:

The American marketplace is built on the Rule of Law — a system in which individual rights are guaranteed to all, regardless of background. These rights include the freedom to live, own property, speak freely, assemble peacefully, petition the government, be protected from unreasonable search and seizure, and move freely without constant fear of detention or violence. No economy can remain strong when people are afraid to go to work, open their businesses, send their children to school, or participate in public life.

## Document the impact.

Document the adverse economic impact that deployment has on your community (see “Business Owners are in the Eye of the Storm” section below for key data from studies thus far on the economic toll of deployments).

## Support your community.

Support local mutual aid or fundraising by becoming a staging or drop-off location. Get creative!

- Set up a revolving loan fund for affected businesses
- Create a donation program to support the families of affected workers
- Secure legal counsel for impacted businesses and employees

For example, Amanda Baumann, owner of Tandem Vintage in Minnesota, organized a diaper drive [explaining that](#), “People need community right now, and that’s part of what our small businesses provide to folks: safe spaces to be together.”

## Step 2: Prepare Your Business

Making sure your business is prepared for a potential federal deployment is important to keep your company, your employees, and your community safe. This is a deeply personal process and will look different for every business. Think about your personal values, red lines, customers, and employees. What risks are you willing and able to take? Consider your reputation and standing in the community, and appreciate that you may encourage others to stand up. Acknowledge that some may not appreciate your efforts. What support will your business and community need? What unique resources and skills can you bring to the table? What questions do you need to sort out so you can make a plan?

As a reminder, we're not offering legal advice. Below are some options that you may want to consider. Please consult legal counsel if you have specific questions about your business or employees.



**If I had known it was coming, I would have told myself to be more open. Talk more with folks. Listen more. That was really important as part of building community. Openness will spread openness.”<sup>3</sup>**

**ANDY KOPP, A KOPP MUSIC**

### For brick-and-mortar businesses

If you have a brick-and-mortar business, have a clear plan of action on what to do if federal forces seek to enter your business or if activity occurs on or around your property.

4th Amendment Workplace has [useful resources](#) on how to prepare your business and is a great way to connect with other business owners building safe constitutional spaces.

You can find some helpful resources from the National Employment Law Project and National Immigration Law Center [here](#). The Welcome Standard also has a [resource page](#).

Make sure your employees are trained on the plan and that any emergency contact information is easily accessible.

Practice! Make sure they know:

- Who is authorized to speak with federal agents and what they should ask for and say
- What information employees should document about any encounter with federal agents, including taking photos and videos
- The difference between a judicial and administrative warrant and how to recognize each.
- Who should be notified
- Who your immigration attorney is or what other legal resources should be called up, if needed.

## Train employees on their rights.

Provide a Know Your Rights Training for your employees or connect them with community trainings. Consider attending deescalation training and offering training to your employees as well.

The American Immigration Lawyers Association has a good resource for employees [here](#) and the Immigrant Legal Resource Center's [Know Your Rights FAQ page](#) has a huge amount of valuable information.



**Business that are clear regarding their public v. private physical spaces and train staff on how to reach when and if ICE visits their premises face far less business interruption and create a sense of trust ... "4**

**JONATHAN GRODE, MANAGING PARTNER, GREEN AND SPIEGEL**

## Understand the difference between public and private spaces.

Examine your business to see what is a public versus private [area](#). Parking lots and waiting rooms are usually public spaces. Private spaces usually include back offices and employee break rooms.

## Designate private areas of your business.

These are areas that generally are not available to the public and cannot lawfully be accessed without a signed judicial warrant. Make sure those areas are clearly labeled. Examples of signs to affix to the doors of those private areas can be found [here](#).

## Work with your local business community.

Once you have a plan in place to protect your own business, work with the other businesses in your community to come up with an organized protocol should ICE arrive. Perhaps even [host a training](#) like the residents of Charlotte, NC, did in order to mitigate the damage and help their community feel safer in the midst of ICE raids. Siembra NC's Defend and Recruit campaign has put together a [guide for how to build a coalition](#) and prepare your communities to stand up to ICE. Create a system to inform other businesses (phone tree, text, whistles, etc). There are many legal, constitutionally-protected ways to observe and inform, that do not physically intervene or obstruct justice.



I think at the core what small businesses can do is say that we treat people like human beings ... <sup>5</sup>

STEVE MITCHELL, SCUPPERNONG BOOKS (VIA 4TH AMENDMENT WORKPLACE)

## Step 3: Own Your Voice as a Community Leader

After preparing your business and building your community, you can continue your involvement by amplifying your voice through public and private actions. Coming together with others, either other individual businesses, associations or your customers, help to make more of an impact when speaking up.

### Write to the local paper.

Submit an Op-ed or Letter to the Editor to a local paper about the effects the current operation ICE or Guard is having on your business, such as this [powerful letter](#) from Chambers of Commerce in Maine or [this letter](#) from a Milwaukee small business owner. You can find tips on writing an effective letter to the editor [here](#).



**The recent ICE operation in Maine has been crippling business operations and productivity. The confusion surrounding what ICE can or cannot lawfully do, how long [it] would last and ... whether enhanced activity will restart, has created a lingering uncertainty.”<sup>6</sup>**

**QUINCY HENTZEL, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE PORTLAND REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, AND SHANNA COX, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE LEWISTON AUBURN METROPOLITAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

### Use your voice on social media.

Your account can help inform your customers and community about the challenges your business is facing. This can be helpful in harnessing a broader group of citizens to speak out against ICE actions. This [powerful video](#) from Minnesota business owner Alicia Kopp, owner of Kopp Music, is a great example. This is even more powerful if done in coordination with other business owners as with these [viral videos](#) created by Chicago small business owners. United For Chicago has a helpful [social media toolkit](#) to use as a starting point.

Need help figuring out how to share the ways the increased ICE and National Guard presence have impacted your business? Want to help share your story with legislators and the media? Check out the American Sustainable Business Network’s [Share Your Story campaign](#), complete with guiding questions to help you.

## Organize a sign-on letter with other businesses.

Work within your local business associations to work with other like-minded businesses to circulate a sign on statement similar to the [one businesses in Chicago organized](#) or this [similar statement](#) by a range of Chicago community leaders. Express your concern about aggressive ICE tactics that alienate the public. Please let us know if you would like help organizing a statement, we would be excited to help!

Another fantastic example comes from the [American Sustainable Business Network](#), which built a coalition of more than 32 business associations representing over 50,000 businesses and 250 companies from around the country to [join a letter](#) declaring that defending the free market means defending civil rights.

### CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES SPEAK OUT

Nearly one-third of the construction workforce in North Carolina is made up of immigrants (both documented and otherwise). Regardless of legal status, the reckless and discriminatory way these raids are carried out deter immigrants from going to work, causing massive disruptions. When the president threatened an increased presence of ICE would soon be coming to the state, many owners of construction companies publicly spoke about the devastating impact this would have on their business not just currently, but for years.

## Contact your elected officials.

This is an extremely effective way for business owners to make a difference particularly around deployments. In Louisiana, Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser pushed back on aggressive ICE tactics after [behind-the-scenes outreach](#) from local business owners. In Maine, mayors highlighted [stories from local businesses](#) when speaking with Governor Mills. 23 Maine companies representing \$183 million in revenue sent a private letter to the Maine Congressional delegation urging action to stop Operation "Catch of the Day" and accountability for ICE actions.

Find contact information for your federal, state, and local officials [here](#).

### Simple example message

Keep your message clear and short, and make sure you let them know you're a business owner!

*Hello, I am XXXXX from [Business Name]. I am calling your office today as a small business owner who is concerned about issues coming up around a potential increased ICE presence in my town. My employees are fearful of coming to work and we have had to scale back operations to accommodate their new reality. Doing so is hurting my bottom line and making*

*it difficult to make payroll. I am unable to serve the local community as usual and also fear for my employee's safety. What actions are you taking to protect our community?*

### **National Guard deployment advocacy**

Advocacy around National Guard deployments is also important. If you learn about a potential National Guard deployment in your state, contact the Governor's office to voice your concerns. Remember, a federal court has [already determined](#) that the Administration has illegally used the Guard for domestic law enforcement purposes.

### **Say thanks!**

Thanking elected officials who are speaking out is just as important as urging others to act — and can be a great way to start building a relationship for future advocacy.

### **Band together.**

Organize a public or private letter with other local businesses to urge your local elected officials to take action. Coordinating as part of a group of businesses amplifies your concerns and there is strength in numbers.

#### **BUSINESSES REFUSE TO SELL TO DHS**

Another issue that has been percolating in states has been the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) plan to build large-scale holding centers across the country to speed up deportations. Due to local bipartisan pushback from local elected leaders, community members and businesses, up to 12 warehouse locations are not moving forward. In some instances the businesses that own these warehouses are refusing to sell them to DHS. This is another issue where businesses can get involved and raise concerns within your community and to your elected officials.

### **Speak to the press.**

Support the press covering ICE operations by sharing your perspective with them. Proactively reach out to reporters covering federal deployments in your area.

### **Host a meet-and-greet.**

Invite your elected officials to your business to meet other business leaders and share concerns about a federal deployment.

## Provide material support.

If your business is able, creating or publicly contributing to a financial support network for those impacted by the ICE raids — such as the fund started by the [Los Angeles archbishop](#) and local business leaders — not only helps the community at large weather the storm, but sends a clear message to the administration of dissent and disapproval. This [creative effort](#) in Chicago makes it easy for community members to support local restaurants most impacted by deployments.

There is also an opportunity to push for government support. In Minnesota, leaders are collectively advocating for \$100 million in Small Business Relief Grants to help stabilize our Main Street small businesses and Minnesota's economy.

## Plan how to engage.

Have a plan for how you want to engage if and when your community is involved in large coordinated action such as the protests, boycotts, and business closures we saw in [Minnesota](#) and across the country recently. [This article](#) provides some great suggestions for different ways to engage.



**When the unidentified armed agents came to our block, we treated them professionally — but together insisted on due process, legal warrants, and respect for our private property. We banded together in a calm but clear defiance to these unconstitutional raids.”<sup>7</sup>**

**STEVEN DYME, CO-FOUNDER AND CEO OF FLOWERS FOR DREAMS, CHICAGO**

## Ask Your Customers to Take Action.

Organize your customers to take further action such as this [bike shop in Minneapolis](#). Reminder that the community you serve is unique and each business's action will reflect that!

## Engage in public acts of legal noncompliance.

The administration is counting on blind compliance and complacency from the private sector in order to carry out these acts, even when they are legally questionable or outright undermine our rule of law. It is therefore more important than ever to uphold due process and exercise our rights

and autonomy. Instances of legal noncompliance — such as [putting signs in your place of work](#) telling ICE they are not welcome and refusing to make mass warrantless arrests and detentions easier for ICE agents, refusing to do business with companies that hold contracts with ICE and [refusing to allow ICE to operate](#) on your private property — are all well within your rights and make these erosions of our democracy harder to carry out.

# Why Business Action Matters

Over the past year, as federal forces have deployed to cities across the country, we've seen time and again how vital small businesses and their leaders are to the response. Small businesses are employers, gathering spaces, and places of civic connection. Alongside schools, hospitals, and places of worship, local businesses are places where residents really experience and build community. Small businesses re-invest in their communities, rather than exporting capital to other geographic locations. People look to you as a key barometer of the civic health of your community, how things are and how they might be in the future.

When federal forces descend on Main Street, the economic disruptions to small businesses are huge; the personal impact on customers, employees, and owners are direct and can be severe. Taking action means protecting your community and your business investments.

## Businesses are vital to the response.

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**Business owners  
are in the eye of  
the storm**



**Business owners  
are at the center of  
the community**



**Business owners  
are trusted  
messenger**

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## Business Owners Are in the Eye of the Storm

Federal deployments of law enforcement to American cities are bad for business — [depressing employment](#) in key industries including [agriculture](#), [caregiving and childcare](#), [hospitality](#), and [construction](#). Small businesses, particularly businesses in diverse communities, continue to suffer. Here are just some examples of the financial impact:

- [More than 44%](#) of Hispanic households report avoiding public places
- Restaurants and small businesses in Minneapolis report [\\$81 million per month in losses](#)
- The US had [2.5 million fewer](#) international visitors in 2025 — costing an estimated [\\$12.5 billion](#) in lost revenue for U.S. businesses.

Increased federal deployment has disrupted normal operations for thousands of Americans across the country. We can expect the economic toll from more deployments to become increasingly clear and dramatic as economists have time to gather and process the data. A [recent study](#) found that in **Orange County businesses lost nearly \$59 million** in the 8 weeks following the federal immigrant enforcement surge in California last year, with one business reporting an 80 percent drop in foot traffic and overall reports of substantial impacts on productivity, increased absenteeism, and plummeting employee morale.



The economic impact to the Minneapolis area alone is in the hundreds of millions ... Spreading the facts and asking everyone to continue showing up, documenting what they see, and contacting their local representatives is important, so is taking part in public protests ... ”<sup>8</sup>

CARLA SCHOLZ, SOAK IT UP, MINNESOTA

A [recent report](#) from the Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity and Economic Development Corporation found that **82% of businesses surveyed reported negative impacts from immigrant enforcement**. 44% of businesses reported losing over half of their revenue and [47 percent](#) of businesses reported being “very concerned” about their long-term viability as a result of the deployments.

Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey [reports](#) that small businesses and restaurants in the city lost up to \$81 million in revenue during the federal deployment, and a preliminary impact report estimating

an average of \$20,000 in losses for each week of the deployment. Minneapolis' [preliminary assessment report](#) estimates that the operation has cost the city at least \$203.1 million at the end of January 2026 — including a **\$37.9 million hit to the construction industry and \$4.7 million in hotel cancellations**. The report estimates that consumer-facing small businesses are experiencing minimum losses of \$15 million per week.

“ [Everyone is] staying at home rather than risking arrest. Tourists are being deterred from visiting our city. The needless unpredictability discourages consumer activity, especially hurting small, neighborhood businesses that depend on steady foot traffic.”<sup>9</sup>

JACK LAVIN, CEO, THE CHICAGOLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

National Guard deployments are also expensive for businesses and consumers. In Washington, D.C., restaurant sales [dropped by an average of 25%](#) following federal troop deployment, a clear indication of the chilling effect such actions have on commercial and consumer confidence. By looking at sales tax collections we can also see [a staggering decrease in revenue across hotels and restaurants in DC correlating to the timeline of National Guard deployment in the city](#). In Portland, [deployment of the National Guard was also predicted to negatively impact foot traffic and therefore businesses](#) throughout the city. Far from making people feel safe, an armed military presence dissuades customers from shopping and damages tourism and small businesses.

National Guard mobilization also imposes hidden costs on the private sector. Between January and August of 2025, [there were over 90,000 reported instances of workers needing to take at least a week away from their jobs due to military deployments, jury duty, or other civil service](#). This is nearly double the number of reported instances during the same period in 2024. In fact, as a result of National Guard deployments, [work-absences caused by military duties in 2025 were the highest reported number in nearly 20 years](#). Pulling skilled personnel like nurses, technicians, and tradespeople from their civilian jobs exacerbates staffing shortages and disrupts essential services.

And of course, there is the matter of the National Guard's cost to taxpayers. According to [a recent report](#), the cost of these deployments to taxpayers is estimated to be \$473 million so far. We as American taxpayers are funding the mobilization of thousands of troops that are not only unnecessary, but have in fact been explicitly unwanted by the leaders of the communities they are deployed in.

## Business Owners Are Critical to the Pro-Democracy Movement

Business owners are resourceful, nimble, and adaptable problem solvers — that's what it takes to run a business. That's also what it takes to build a movement. Showing up for your community and your neighbors is a patriotic thing to do, and it doesn't have to be overtly political. It's about showing your neighbors you see what's happening, and you care about their well-being.

Small businesses are the most trusted institutions in the United States. Per recent Pew Research Center data, an astounding [86% of Americans](#) believe small businesses have a positive effect on the direction of the country. Confidence in small businesses is one of the few things Americans can agree on, with 68% of Democrats and 79% of Republicans [reporting](#) that they have “a great deal” or “quite a lot” of confidence in small businesses. Spend a minute with that chart. There's no other institution that even approaches that level of cross-ideological support.



**We have [let our staff] know about Know Your Rights presentations and how individuals can support the small businesses in Minnesota ... We're also thinking about how we can further leverage our experience in insecure and conflict environments to support those communities under occupation by ICE.”<sup>10</sup>**

**A MENTAL-HEALTH COUNSELING PRACTICE**

This combination of factors — the relationships we all have with our local businesses, our cross-society trust in the small business community, and small business owners' unique skillset — make small business leadership in the pro-democracy movement critical. The courage of small business owners living their values is infectious.

# Messaging Guidance

As federal forces deploy nationwide, the business community is uniquely positioned to serve as a stabilizing force. This guidance is designed to help you protect your employees and neighbors through proactive leadership. From educating your team on their legal rights to using your platform to inform elected officials, your actions during this critical window will help define the safety and resilience of your local community.

## **MESSAGE: Lawless federal deployments are bad for business.**

- Small businesses depend on the rule of law to level the playing field.
- Democracies create stable investment environments. While you may hate the red tape, at least you know what the process is, know who's making the decision, and have an opportunity to be heard.
- The Trump administration is creating chaos with daily changes, which is no way to run a business, much less a country.

## **MESSAGE: Democracy drives economic growth.**

- Economists have found that democratization causes an increase in GDP per capita of [between 20% and 25%](#). per foreign affairs expert Rachel Kleinfeld autocratic countries across the ideological spectrum experienced similar rates of economic decline.
- Under authoritarian regimes, corruption and connections are the only path to economic success. This doesn't just hurt small businesses — it depresses the entire economy.

## **MESSAGE: Immigration is [critical to our economy](#).**

- Immigrant spending power: \$ 1.7 trillion annually
- Immigrants pay \$651.9 billion in taxes annually — including \$215.8 billion to Social Security and \$58.7 billion to Medicare, plus \$232.1 billion in state and local taxes.
- Immigrant entrepreneurs generated \$116.2 billion in income in 2023
- 230 Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants or children of immigrants (around 46 percent of the Fortune 500). These “New American” companies generated [\\$8.6 trillion](#) in revenue in 2023 — more than the economies of Germany, Japan, and India — and employed more than 15.5 million people worldwide.
- State — and industry — specific details on the economic contributions of New American companies available [here](#).
- A recent [Cato Institute study](#) found that immigrants have helped reduce our national, state, and local deficits by \$14.5 *trillion* since 1994.
- More data on the importance of immigration for our economy available [here](#) (and you can find state level data [here](#)).

**MESSAGE: Immigrants are not taking jobs from U.S. workers or increasing prices.**

- [Recent research](#) finds that immigration has had a positive impact on the wages of less educated native workers and little to no impact on the wages of college-educated native workers. Another [recent study](#) out of California found that immigration between 1990 and 2004 caused a 4 percent real wage increase for the average native-born worker.
- In 2017, the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine established an interdisciplinary working group to study the economic effects of immigration. This [study found](#) little to no negative impacts of immigration on wages or employment of native born workers.

**MESSAGE: Mass deportations and immigration raids are bad for the economy**

- According to [one estimate](#), if the administration succeeds in its stated goal of removing 4 million people from the United States over the next 4 years, there would be 2.6 million fewer jobs for U.S.-born workers.
- Economists have [estimated](#) that deporting 1.3 million immigrants would increase prices by 1.5 percent in the next three years.
- Studies have found that immigration raids don't do much to raise wages — [and actually deflate them](#). Even after a raid, employers are no more likely to use federal immigration verification tools like E-Verify during hiring.

**MESSAGE: Immigrants are deeply enmeshed in our communities.**

- 22.9 *million* U.S. citizens live with at least one immigrant parent.
- More than [one million](#) immigrants work in health care jobs in the United States, and one-third of them are undocumented. In some states, immigrants comprise [one-third](#) of all health care sector workers.
- Approximately 40 percent of the farm labor force has been made up of [undocumented immigrants](#) — mass deportations and decreased immigrants to the United States are already “really hurting” U.S. farmers.

## Glossary

**ICE (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement)** is a federal agency within the Department of Homeland Security responsible for enforcing immigration laws, investigating cross-border crime, and removing individuals who violate U.S. immigration regulations. ICE is currently conducting a widespread series of raids and arrests across U.S. cities to detain and deport people who they suspect are in the country without legal status. However, while the law states that [these arrests must be made only with probable cause](#), the current administration is attempting to erode the law and claim that all that is needed for arrest is [probable suspicion](#). This is important, as it leads to mass arrests on a far larger scale than ever seen before, often targeting people of color or anyone who might speak Spanish under the guise of probable suspicion. They have also been using intimidation tactics such as dressing in military-like [garb](#) and using physical [force](#) to deter people from exercising their basic rights (demanding a judicial warrant, not allowing agents into private spaces, etc). These raids have happened in homes, workplaces, schools, and public areas, even waiting outside courthouses for immigrants who are following due process to obtain legal status. Multiple [courts](#) have found ICE's tactics illegal and unconstitutional and found that ICE has violated court [orders](#). While many of us would agree that immigration reform is needed in this country, rather than put forward workable new policies, the recent unconstitutional tactics from ICE have caused mass chaos and upheaval of the rule of law.

**CBP (U.S. Customs and Border Protection)** is a federal agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with securing borders and ports of entry into the United States (up to 100 miles inland). While CBP is *not* responsible for domestic immigration enforcement, under the current administration they have been heavily involved in these operations.

**The National Guard** is made up of individuals often enlisted for multi-year contracts, who are meant to serve local communities and respond to emergencies and natural disasters in their state (fires, floods, hurricanes, etc), under control of their state's governor and paid by the state. Even when supporting federally requested missions and being paid for by federal funds (such as Hurricane Katrina in 2005) they are meant to remain accountable to their state leadership. However, in a massive executive overreach, National Guard troops are being "federalized" — serving at the pleasure of the President rather than the people. A [federal court ruled](#) in September that the administration's deployment of National Guard troops, without authorization from Congress, in cities across the United States constitutes an illegal policing action. In December of 2025, the Supreme Court [upheld the ruling](#) of a federal judge halting National Guard deployment in Chicago.

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Protect Democracy is a nonpartisan nonprofit organization dedicated to preventing American democracy from declining into a more authoritarian form of government.

[protectdemocracy.org](https://protectdemocracy.org)



The Horizons Project strengthens connections and collective action among U.S. pro-democracy movements and networks.

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Integrity Matters equips small business owners, neighbors, and community leaders to stand up for the rules that protect us all.

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The American Sustainable Business Network amplifies the voice of sustainable business to lead the way to a regenerative economy.

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