

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 28, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

We have heard several concerning reports of United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents stopping, detaining, and harassing members of Tribal Nations. Native American Tribal members are United States citizens. Stopping people because of what they look like - with dark skin, Asian, Latino or Native American characteristics is never acceptable. We urge you to immediately direct your agents to stop harassing Native Americans and violating Tribal sovereignty.

In one confirmed incident in New Mexico, an ICE agent stopped a New Mexico Tribal government citizen at a convenience store and questioned the individual's citizenship status.<sup>1</sup> The individual showed the ICE agent a picture of their Tribal identification and New Mexico driver's license. Even worse is that there are several other reports of ICE stopping, detaining, and harassing Native Americans in multiple states.<sup>2</sup>

ICE's dangerous behavior of harassing American citizens, seemingly only due to the way they look, is unconstitutional and un-American. The Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 granted citizenship to all Native Americans. Native Communities are quintessentially American communities. Your Administration's actions and policies are quickly spreading fear in communities that have existed since time immemorial. It is unconscionable to question their citizenship and cause them to live in fear.

Your recent statement that you can tell an immigrant who is "trouble" by the way they "look" suggests that sending ICE agents after our communities is about the color of a person's skin, not their immigration status.<sup>3</sup> Families who have lived in the same area for centuries if not thousands of years are now afraid to go to nearby towns. You must put a stop to ICE agents targeting Native Americans, take additional actions to prevent racial profiling and protect Tribal sovereignty, and direct ICE to accept Tribal identification as proof of U.S. citizenship. Additionally, we urge you to explain the criteria that ICE has used to stop and question Native Americans.

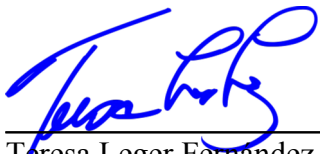
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<sup>1</sup> *How to Respond If Confronted by U.S. Immigration Agents*; Mescalero Apache Tribe, 2025, [mescaleroapachetribe.com/22804/how-to-respond-if-confronted-by-u-s-immigration-agents/print/](https://mescaleroapachetribe.com/22804/how-to-respond-if-confronted-by-u-s-immigration-agents/print/).

<sup>2</sup> Becenti, Arlyssa D. "Navajo Nation Leaders Address Reports of Ice Detaining Tribal Citizens." *The Arizona Republic*, Arizona Republic, 24 Jan. 2025, [www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/arizona/2025/01/24/navajo-nation-leaders-address-reports-of-ice-detaining-tribal-citizens/77911978007/?taid=6793b20aa1457a000113fbd1](https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/arizona/2025/01/24/navajo-nation-leaders-address-reports-of-ice-detaining-tribal-citizens/77911978007/?taid=6793b20aa1457a000113fbd1).

<sup>3</sup> Fox News, "President Donald Trump: We will bring our country back," posted January 22, 2025, Youtube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQUmy6gkwWg>

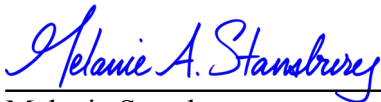
Sincerely,



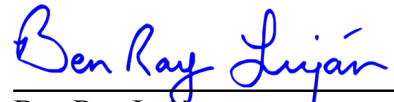
Teresa Leger Fernandez  
Member of Congress



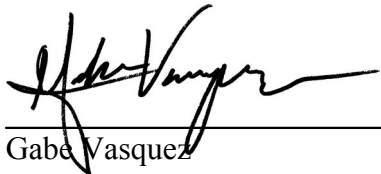
Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator



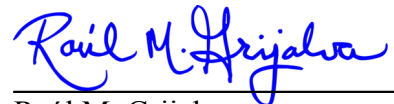
Melanie Stansbury  
Member of Congress



Ben Ray Lujan  
United States Senator



Gabe Vasquez  
Member of Congress



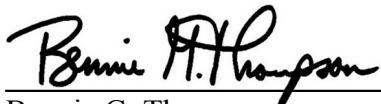
Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress



Yassamin Ansari  
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress  
Ranking Member, House Natural  
Resources Committee



Bennie G. Thompson  
Member of Congress

cc:

The Honorable Kristi Noem, Secretary, Department of Homeland Security  
Jennifer B. Higgins, Acting Director, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services