

# ‘Stand up, fight back’: Protesters on Common assail deportation tactics around country

By **Nathan Metcalf** Globe Correspondent, Updated January 31, 2026, 2:00 p.m.



Protestors crowded Beacon Street at the State House during the rally. JOHN TLUMACKI/GLOBE STAFF

Carter Chamberlain stood out in the crowd on Boston Common on Saturday, with about 15 American flags protruding from a harness strapped to his back.

The 38-year-old Burlington man was among the hundreds who gathered in the frigid weather to denounce the Trump administration's deportation tactics around the country and to urge leaders on Beacon Hill to step up pressure against federal immigration actions in the state.

Chamberlain said he regularly protests outside the regional ICE facility in his hometown, and he called for greater oversight of immigration enforcement at the facility.

"We need our representatives to wield the power they've been constitutionally given — to use their power to do random inspections of the facility and make sure everyone's rights are being followed," he said.

Saturday's "ICE Out Everywhere" rallies, which followed similar protests Friday, were planned in dozens of states. Protests have intensified nationwide following the killings of Alex Pretti and Renee Good in Minneapolis earlier this month, incidents that have heightened scrutiny of federal agents' tactics.

The most recent rally was held two days after Governor Maura Healey [unveiled a bill](#) to bar federal immigration agents from entering schools, hospitals, and courthouses, and an executive order to prevent ICE from using state resources for civil arrests.

While some advocates welcomed the proposals as a step toward protecting immigrants, others said state leaders had been slow to act and that the measures did not go far enough.

"I would like to see them not be so compliant and not be in the background," said Frank Maiorca, 69, of Framingham. "I'd like to see them fight more on behalf of us and the constituents across the country."



Nancy Roosa held a sign as thousands took part in the protest on Beacon Street in front of the State House. JOHN TLUMACKI/GLOBE STAFF

Demonstrators, led by a brass band assembled by the steps of the State House, chanted “Ain’t no power like the power of the people, ’cause the power of the people don’t stop,” and “Civil rights are under attack — what do we do? Stand up, fight back.”

Some held handmade signs reading “ICE out,” “Stop ICE terror,” and “Stop separating families.”

Saturday’s event followed a demonstration Friday evening in Copley Square, where hundreds gathered in front of the Boston Public Library to join US Representative Ayanna Pressley as part of a national day of action calling for the abolition of ICE.

Friday’s rally, organized by the Party for Socialism and Liberation, brought together students, professionals, and longtime activists from across Massachusetts.

For Genevieve Garceau, a 25-year-old trauma therapist and Boston College graduate who came from Newton, the issue is deeply personal. A Guatemalan adoptee raised in a predominantly white community, Garceau said that seeing images of migrant children caught up in immigration raids felt “close to home.”

“I had to assimilate,” Garceau said. “I didn’t have a choice. Seeing 5-year-old kids being taken away, that could have been me.”



Thousands took part in a protest against US Immigration and Customs Enforcement on Beacon Street in front of the State House and Boston Common Saturday. JOHN TLUMACKI/GLOBE STAFF

Speakers at Saturday’s rally on the Common also spoke of the personal toll exacted by the ICE crackdown.

Stephanie Gonzales, leader of outreach for the [Education Freedom Project](#) and a Northeastern University student, said in a speech that she attended the demonstration out of fear for her family and community. Gonzales, who grew up in Texas as the

daughter of Mexican immigrants, said immigration enforcement has shaped her life since childhood.

“My parents have sat me down and explained what to do if they we’re ever detained by immigration,” Gonzales said. “Being thousands of miles from home, I don’t have the privilege to believe they’ll always be there when I come back.”

Gonzales added that she and other US citizens have a responsibility to speak out on behalf of those who risk deportation by attending demonstrations.

“Being born on the right side of the border, I have the privilege to be able to protest,” she said. “I understand why my Latino peers are scared to come out to protest, knowing that in this day and age, speaking out can jeopardize the people we love.”

Rebecca Winter, executive director of [Mass 50501](#), which describes itself as a nonpartisan, nonviolent movement to defend democracy, said law enforcement tactics have put immigrants, activists, and bystanders at risk nationwide.

Winter said volunteers and military veterans have been providing medical aid to protesters in Minneapolis amid aggressive enforcement operations.

“Trained veterans feel it is necessary to suit up in tactical gear just to offer medical aid to civilians in this country,” she said, adding that law enforcement actions there have created “reckless and dangerous” conditions.

“In Minnesota, they’re arresting protesters — American citizens — and throwing them into crowded ICE detention facilities without adequate access to food or water,” Winter said. She said detainees have been denied phone calls and legal representation, calling the tactics a form of intimidation meant to suppress dissent. “They want fear to do the work for them.”

Winter rejected the characterization of nationwide anti-ICE protests as violent riots, as some Trump administration officials have claimed.

“We are not the threat. We are the patriots,” Winter said. “We believe in the Constitution, we believe in the right to protest, and we believe in community care.”

Cyclists arrived at Government Center at the end of a bike ride in memory of Alex Pretti. MATTHEW J. LEE/GLOBE STAFF

In a separate rally Saturday, about 250 people gathered at Copley Square to take part in a bicycle ride to honor Alex Pretti, who was [shot and killed](#) by federal agents during an ICE operation on Jan. 24. The ride, which traveled six miles through downtown Boston, was inspired by Pretti’s passion for mountain biking.

“We are coming together as a community today in very difficult circumstances to say this should never happen,” said Alexa Jakob, 25, an organizer for Critical Mass Boston, a social cycling group that organized Saturday’s local ride.

Organizers said major cities around the world, from San Francisco to Rome, planned parallel memorial rides. They were carried out in solidarity with [Angry Catfish](#), a Minneapolis bike shop where Pretti, an intensive care nurse, was a regular.

“The recent events are terrifying and horrifying, and the fact that he could be shot in daylight for exercising his rights is something you don’t want to be quiet about,” said Clara Rockwood, 41, who was riding in Boston with her husband.

*Correspondents Aayushi Datta and Sabrina Lam contributed to this report.*

---

Nathan Metcalf can be reached at [nathan.metcalf@globe.com](mailto:nathan.metcalf@globe.com). Follow him on Instagram [@natpat\\_123](#).

[Show 277 comments](#)

---

©2026 Boston Globe Media Partners, LLC