



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

TO: Hyun Kim, City Manager
FROM: Council Member Sandesh Sadalge and Senior Council Policy Analyst Lynda Foster
COPY: City Clerk and City Council
SUBJECT: **Resolution – Reaffirming Tacoma's Commitment to Immigrants and Refugees and Directing Ongoing State and Federal Advocacy– May 5, 2026**
DATE: April 29, 2026

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

A resolution condemning the broader pattern of overzealous, unjust, and dangerous enforcement actions carried out during recent federal immigration enforcement actions, reaffirming Tacoma's longstanding opposition to private, for-profit detention centers, supporting oversight of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and operations at the Northwest ICE Processing Center, calling on the Congress of the United States to take steps to ensure federal immigration enforcement agencies operate under clear standards that protect public safety, respect constitutional rights and provide real accountability when those standards are violated, and calling on state leaders to take further actions to reaffirm the underlying principles of the Keep Washington Working Act.

COUNCIL SPONSORS:

Council Members Olgy Diaz, Latasha Palmer, Sandesh Sadalge, and Kristina Walker.

BACKGROUND:

Communities across the country have witnessed an alarming escalation in federal immigration enforcement tactics by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection, marked by increasingly aggressive operations and a broad expansion of detention practices, including reports of prolonged, opaque, and potentially unjust detainment conditions, that undermine safety, erode due process, and threaten core civil liberties. These concerns have been brought into sharp and painful focus by the January 2026 fatal shootings in Minneapolis of U.S. citizens Alex Pretti and Renée Nicole Good during encounters with federal agents, two lives lost in incidents that have deeply shaken communities, sparked grief and outrage across the nation, and prompted urgent calls for transparency, accountability, and independent investigation into the use of force by the United States Department of Homeland Security and its enforcement agencies, including ICE and U.S. Customs and Border Protection. The fatal events in Minneapolis, and the widespread public concern that followed, contributed to a national debate over federal immigration enforcement practices, ultimately leading to a legislative impasse in Congress and a partial shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) beginning February 14, 2026, after lawmakers failed to reach agreement on incorporating meaningful civil rights protections into continued funding.

The Tacoma City Council recognizes that this funding lapse is not an isolated disruption, but a reflection of deeper structural challenges within DHS, where insufficient accountability and oversight have strained trust between federal agencies and the communities they serve, underscoring the urgent need for durable reforms that prioritize transparency, safety, and civil rights. Since the City Council does not have the legal authority to prevent ICE from entering our City, or the ability to unilaterally close or directly oversee the NWIPC, the City Council is strongly supporting State and Federal efforts to provide necessary guardrails and protections against the increasingly alarming activities of ICE and the U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

In 2025, while developing Resolution 41627, sponsors met with a broad range of stakeholders to discuss and request feedback on this policy and topics of importance to the immigration and refugee community, including the Commission for Immigrant



and Refugee Affairs, the Tacoma Healing Awareness Committee, the Tacoma Refugee Choir, One America, Advocates for Immigrants in Detention Northwest (AIDNW), Golden Bamboo Walking Group, the Eastside Neighborhood Advisory Council of Tacoma, the South End Neighborhood Council, and other local elected leaders. Over the last year community members have continued to advocate for support of immigrant rights, and specifically support of individuals detained by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and held at the NWIPC.

In 2026, community has continued to call on the City Council to seek ways to support immigrants in the region. The Tacoma City Council actively engaged with the Washington State Legislature during the 2026 legislative session to advocate for policies that protect immigrant rights and promote community safety and trust. Council also directed the City manager to create a web page to share resources for immigrants, community members, and businesses related to immigration issues impacting residents of the City, including background on the City Council legislation in support of the City's immigrant and refugee community and the City's advocacy to restrict the use of for-profit detention centers; and directing the City Manager to create outreach materials and share this information with affected community members.

2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility: *(Mandatory)*

Approximately 7% of the US population, or 22.8 million people, are non-citizens. In 2017, nearly 260,000 people sought asylum, or protection from persecution, within the United States. As of 2022, over 12 percent of Tacoma's population was born outside the United States, and nearly 20 percent speak a language other than English at home. Today, immigrant communities are under threat of mass deportations. Anyone without secure immigration status may be subject to enforcement efforts. People who were ordered deported in the past and people who have had contact with the criminal legal system are at particular risk. These immigrant populations experience unique risks to health, including pre-migratory trauma, unsafe and stressful migration experiences, and post-migration discrimination. Human rights abuses can occur across this spectrum of the immigrant experience. In addition, these health behaviors and outcomes ripple throughout the communities to which immigrants belong.

Civic Engagement: *Equity Index Score: Moderate Opportunity*

Increase the number of residents who participate civically through volunteering and voting.

Increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma.

Livability: *Equity Index Score: Moderate Opportunity*

Improve health outcomes and reduce disparities, in alignment with the community health needs assessment and CHIP, for all Tacoma residents

Increase positive public perception of safety and overall quality of life.

Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).

This resolution directs continued efforts for state and federal advocacy, building on longstanding work the City has lead on for over a decade. This builds on the success of the 2026 legislative session, where the City worked in collaboration with regional partners and state policymakers to advance legislation addressing immigrant worker protections; prohibitions on law enforcement at any level of government wearing masks; strengthened data privacy and personal safety protections for all Washington residents; enhanced reporting requirements and law enforcement responses to incidents at private detention facilities; and requirements for documenting and reporting interactions between state and local law enforcement and federal immigration authorities. The resolution directs next actions to preserve health, safety, and welfare of the people who live and visit our City and



this deep concern extends to those who are detained in the Northwest ICE Processing Center (NWIPC).

ALTERNATIVES:

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. Take no action	Supports a more positive relationship with federal administration	Does not address urgent community needs and calls to action from community.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:

The City Manager is directed to send a copy of this resolution to the members of Washington's congressional delegation representing the City of Tacoma, which includes both U.S. Senators and U.S. Representatives from the sixth and tenth congressional districts, the Washington State Governor and Attorney General, and the Washington State legislative delegation representing the 27th, 28th, and 29th Legislative Districts.

STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:

Sponsors recommend adopting this resolution and clearly stating the City's policy priorities on this issue.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Fund Number & Name	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	Cost Element	Total Amount
1. N/A			
2.			
TOTAL			

What Funding is being used to support the expense?

N/A

Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium's current budget?

N/A

Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?

No

Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?

No

Will the legislation change the City's FTE/personnel counts?

No

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A