

Philadelphia City Council Hearing on Monday to Put Limits on ICE

Should federal immigration agents in the City of Brotherly Love be allowed to conceal their identity behind face masks? Should they be allowed to use parks and other city property as staging areas for immigrant raids? Should they be allowed to detain immigrant parents and children at public schools without a judicial warrant?

These are among the questions that Philadelphia City Council will begin to consider on Monday, April 13 as it holds its first committee-of-the-whole hearing on proposed legislation aimed at reining in overly aggressive tactics by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Border Patrol as they carry out President Trump's mass deportation campaign.

The legislation, dubbed ICE Out, will be introduced during an all-day session from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in council chambers on the fourth floor of City Hall. The proposed measures have been endorsed by Saint Martin's Vestry as well as other religious groups. New Sanctuary Movement, the interfaith immigrant rights group to which Saint Martin's belongs, is encouraging the faith community to make a strong showing at the hearing.

Leaders of Saint Martin's immigration ministry invite you to attend any portion of the hearing that works for your schedule. If you want to travel as a group to the morning session of the hearing, we will meet up at the church parking lot at 7:45 a.m. on Monday and catch the 8:02 a.m. Chestnut Hill West from St. Martin's Station to Suburban Station.

Although the hearing doesn't start until 10 a.m., we need to arrive by 9 a.m. in order to get seats on the floor of the chamber, which is expected to be packed. The Chestnut Hill West runs on the hour, but the 9:02 train would put us there too late for floor seating. We want the trip to be fun and a time for community as we put our faith into action together. We plan to return to Saint Martin's around noontime.

Saint Martin's support for the proposed ordinances is grounded in our Christian call to welcome the stranger, our respect for the dignity of every person, and the constitutional right to due process. For more information, call or text parishioners Emily Law at 215-214-9990 or Huntly Collins at 267-226-8480, who co-chair the immigration ministry.

- Refuge Resettlement and Immigration Ministry