

Dear Legislators,

I witnessed much of the ICE incursion in S. Burlington on the 11th March and was impressed with the behavior and actions of the South Burlington police.

They spoke and acted to enforce the Constitution, protecting the rights of the protesters and attempting to prevent the excesses that ICE planned and eventually executed.

Until the VT State Troopers arrived, the atmosphere of the demonstration was largely calm and positive. At that point it began to darken and did so with every trooper's arrival. Ultimately, when ICE acted on their search warrant, the troopers facilitated ICE by clearing a path for them to enter. It was one or more troopers, not ICE agents, that both threatened to injure protesters and ultimately did injure protesters, at least one seriously.

Let us learn from this horrid event that tested us all. The huge presence of Vermont troopers had the effect of escalating violence against protesters and aiding ICE in their chaotic, poorly planned, uncoordinated and misguided efforts.

I ask that local police be permitted to manage any future ICE incursions on their own. I ask that the VT State Police be investigated to find out who acted with violence against protesters and whether further training or discipline is needed to prevent this happening in future.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to give my testimony,
Joanna Rankin