

Minute of the Billings Friends Meeting

As Quakers we believe that there is that of God in everyone and that every person has an inherent worth and dignity. This is especially true for the stranger in our midst, the dispossessed and the sometimes forgotten. When our government violates this principle and treats immigrants, asylum seekers, and even citizens, with utter contempt and disregard, we feel it is our duty to join with other faith traditions and speak in defense of the dignity of all persons.

Current actions of government agents in Minnesota, Chicago, Los Angeles and other places compel us to speak out in opposition. We call on everyone to oppose such actions which we believe are immoral and contrary to basic human dignity. These actions include but are not limited to:

- ICE agents arriving in plain clothes and plain cars (often with license plates changed) wearing face masks taking men, women, and children out of their beds in the middle of the night and making them stand outside in their bed clothes until morning.
- A business owner asking ICE agents with face masks to see a warrant and the response is to immediately tackle the owner and push his head into the floor.
- A person tackled with his head pressed into the street for peacefully protesting, or, in the case of a priest, peacefully praying with his hands outstretched to the heavens.
- Masked ICE agents following a father taking his kids to school and then when they arrive at the school, in the presence of his children, the agents grab the father and forcibly push him into a vehicle with no explanation and send him off to some foreign country, which he has never been before.
- Ice agents who patiently wait outside a court room doors until law abiding immigrants finish a mandatory appearance before a Judge and then nabs them as they exit the court room and put them on a plane to some foreign country without any regard to what the Judge has just ruled.

Unfortunately, there are many other similar actions of indignity to our fellow human beings.

With the recent unacceptable conduct of ICE agents in Minneapolis, including the **horrific** killing of two innocent citizens as well as one or more immigrants, we must ask if our country is losing its moral compass. **We join with other faith traditions in calling all to recognize the inhumane policies and actions of our federal government and appeal to our common humanity.** As the **Montana Association of Rabbis and Montana Jewish Project** said recently:

Current policies are tearing apart the lives of individuals, families, and entire communities across the United States. They terrorize immigrants communities, conduct indiscriminate arrests, destabilize workplaces and neighborhoods, and undermine the social fabric that binds us together. Mass deportations inflict profound human suffering and erode the moral foundations of our society.¹

The recent “Special Message” of the **Conference of United States Catholic Bishops** refers to the indiscriminate mass deportation of people and the dehumanizing rhetoric and violence. They exhort us to recognize the fundamental dignity of all persons.

¹ Opinion Column, Missoulian, Feb. 7, 2026.

As Quakers, we too are **deeply** concerned. Whether it is the Testimony of Integrity, the Testimony of Equality, the Testimony of Community including Mutual Care or other Testimonies, Quakers believe “there is that of God in every person,” and, as the Bible suggests, we **must** treat our neighbors as ourselves. Everyone is entitled to respect as a human being. It is a matter of **basic** human decency.

We join with other faith traditions in deploring such treatment and ask everyone to help bring such treatment to a halt. **Do not let us as a nation lose our moral compass**. No matter what religion we profess, we can join together in opposing such indecency. We firmly oppose any such indecency and disrespect for other human beings by our public officials and seek to have it stopped as soon as possible.

We urge all persons to speak out. In particular, we urge people to recommend these specific policies.

- 1) Require Homeland Security to follow all Court Orders.
- 2) Stop all illegal search and seizures of persons and property.
- 3) Stop arresting children and follow the Flores Settlement that outlines the standards required for detention, treatment and prompt release of all immigrant minors.
- 4) Stop deportation and removal to another state of any person without full opportunity for a hearing or other safeguards as required by due process of law.
- 5) Stop all conduct by Officers of the United States that are unnecessary, indecent, and disrespectful as treatment for any human being.
- 6) Allow visitation and review of all detention facilities by members of Congress and appropriate State officials.
- 7) Conduct “credible fear hearings” for all asylum seekers and follow US law regarding their right to seek safety in the US while their cases go through the system.
- 8) Require ICE to remove masks and wear ID physically on their clothing.
- 9) Stop all raids in sensitive locations.
- 10) Immediately investigate all deaths and serious injuries associated with ICE confrontations and allow for meaningful independent review.

Adopted by the Billings Monthly Meeting of Friends on March 8, 2026.