



Howard County Council

Liz Walsh

District 1

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Statement from Councilperson Liz Walsh on Recent ICE Activity in Howard County

“That the Fraternal Order of Police Local 21 still is contesting whether ICE is in our community—is harming our community—is deeply unsettling to me. And for that organization to engage in Trump-style tactics to try to silence the singular local elected official who has voiced alarm at that fact suggests to me that there is some work to be done within our Howard County Police Department, from the top down.

“Fact. ICE had been here. ICE was here that day. ICE has been here since.

“Fact. The entity that outed a “three-day covert operation in Columbia” last week was HCPD. On its Facebook page.

“Fact. My D1 office has yet to receive response from either HCPD or ICE as to the identity of several suspicious persons and vehicles in and around Columbia that day, as both agencies have done in response to our past inquiries.

“That said, Chief Der and I spoke after the last known person was taken by ICE, after boxing in their car and smashing in windows, on Route 175 near Tamar Drive. He advises to call 911 whenever you or anyone else is in danger. I advise you also call the CASA hotline if that danger is ICE: 888-214-6016. And I will continue to send reports of suspicious activity to HCPD and ICE for verification.

“Howard County is more than 22% foreign-born. An overwhelming percentage of those recent immigrants come from Asia (69%), and then Latin America (18%) and Africa (14%). These are my constituents I worry most about, missing work and school and worship to avoid what happened again, here, just Saturday morning. I will continue to advocate for their well-being and safety.

“Meantime, I am confident that our Howard County Police Department and the persons part of it are on the side of right, will protect and serve every one of us who lives here, and will uphold our Constitutional rights to due process and against warrantless searches and seizures. Thank you for what you do, Howard County Police Department.”

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