



333 6th Street Southwest | Willmar MN 56201 | 320.235.4913

February 2, 2026

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
425 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tina Smith
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Michelle Fischbach
1237 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Andrew Lang
Minnesota Senate Building
95 University Avenue W., Room 3205
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Dave Baker
2nd Floor, Centennial Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155-1298

Dear Senators and Representatives,

On behalf of the City Council of the City of Willmar and in coordination with City of Willmar leadership, we write to provide context from a local and regional position regarding recent immigration enforcement activity within our community and to outline local public safety considerations arising from these federal actions.

The City of Willmar fully recognizes that immigration enforcement is an exclusive federal responsibility of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and that components of the Department, including Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and various divisions within, have been actively engaged in federal enforcement work in Minnesota. The City of Willmar further recognizes that these responsibilities occur independently of the City of Willmar and of the Willmar Police Department.

Federal immigration operations in and around Willmar have drawn heightened regional, statewide, and national attention, resulting in increased concern, uncertainty, and fear among residents. Across the region, residents are afraid to travel, report to work, attend school, buy groceries, or participate in everyday activities. Families are limiting movement, avoiding public places, and living in constant uncertainty, regardless of their legal status, including United States

Citizens. The consequences of these actions are immediate and severe. This level of disruption is unacceptable in any community.

In this environment, the role of local government is not to challenge federal authority, but to ensure public safety, maintain civic order, and preserve trust between residents and local institutions. Our responsibility is to reinforce calm, lawful conduct and to prevent uncertainty or misinformation from undermining the stability of our community. The City of Willmar has consistently worked in good faith with federal agencies to support lawful investigations and to ensure the best outcomes for community safety. However, what is occurring now, along with the apparent lack of coordination, oversight, and accountability among the aforementioned federal agencies, is damaging those partnerships and eroding confidence in government at all levels never thought to be conceived.

Furthermore, the City of Willmar firmly supports constitutional rights, including free speech and peaceful assembly. Residents who choose to express their views are encouraged to do so peacefully, respectfully, and lawfully. Conduct that escalates into threats, violence, or interference with law enforcement—at any level—places individuals, bystanders, and public safety personnel at risk and detracts from the City's ability to maintain order and safety.

The City of Willmar respectfully requests that federal enforcement activities be carried out with oversight, humanity, dignity, and decency toward all individuals. The manner in which enforcement actions are conducted has direct implications for community trust, family stability, and overall public safety at the local level.

Recent events have also highlighted a practical challenge for communities when federal authorities detain residents. Families often turn to local officials and law enforcement seeking basic information about the location, status, or well-being of detained loved ones.

Accordingly, the City of Willmar respectfully requests that federal authorities provide regular, timely communication to local law enforcement when residents of our community are detained. Providing limited operational updates—consistent with federal law and agency protocols—would allow local officials to direct families to appropriate federal resources and ensure families have a means to contact their loved ones.

At a minimum, after any federal arrest or detention in our community, we request that federal agencies provide local law enforcement with timely, basic information, including:

- the detainee's full legal name
- country of origin
- the location to which the detainee has been transported, and
- the charge or stated basis for detention.

Additionally, the City of Willmar formally requests that residents of the city or county who are detained and subsequently released by federal immigration authorities be released at the Kandiyohi County/City of Willmar law enforcement facility, or that local law enforcement be contacted and provided with the relevant information as requested above.

The City of Willmar reinforces these requests in the interest of accountability, humanity, and decency.

We share this perspective to ensure state and federal leaders understand how federal enforcement actions have had an immediate and significant effect on our community. Continued communication and coordination across all levels of government are essential.

We request a meeting with you to further discuss, collaborate, and work collectively to uphold public safety, the rule of law, and the well-being of our residents.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your continued service and representation of residents of Willmar and the State of Minnesota.

Respectfully,

Douglas E. Reese, Mayor

City of Willmar