

RESOLUTION #4, 2026

A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VALPARAISO REGARDING RECENT IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS AND REAFFIRMING THE CITY'S COMMITMENT TO CIVIL RIGHTS, DUE PROCESS, AND COMMUNITY TRUST

WHEREAS, the Common Council of the city of Valparaiso, Indiana, is entrusted with safeguarding the health, safety, and welfare of the community and with expressing the values and priorities of the City; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Valparaiso seeks to be a city where everyone thrives; and,

WHEREAS, Valparaiso is a diverse and inclusive community that values fairness, equal protection under the law, and respect for the dignity and humanity of all persons; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Valparaiso seeks to be a welcoming community, including being welcoming to immigrants from other countries; and,

WHEREAS, by prohibiting discrimination on the basis of national origin and ancestry, Valparaiso City Ordinance No. 9, 2016 underscores Valparaiso's commitment to foster an inclusive environment that embraces people of all origins and ensures equal opportunity and treatment for residents and visitors alike; and

WHEREAS, recent immigration enforcement actions undertaken by federal authorities, including actions that have resulted in the deaths of American citizens, have generated widespread public outrage regarding civil rights, accountability, and the appropriate use of force; and,

WHEREAS, such actions, regardless of the ultimate outcome of any investigation, can profoundly affect public trust, community cohesion, and the willingness of residents to engage with local government and public safety services; and,

WHEREAS, the City recognizes that immigration enforcement is a federal responsibility and that the City has no authority or responsibility to regulate, direct, or control the operations of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE") or other federal agencies; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council nevertheless retains the authority and responsibility to speak on matters that affect the safety, rights, and trust of the Valparaiso community, and to advocate for constitutional protections and humane treatment for all persons.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Common Council of the City of Valparaiso:

1. Expression of Condemnation and Grief

The Common Council expresses its profound sorrow and sympathy for the families, friends, and communities affected by the lives lost or harmed by recent immigration enforcement actions. The City unequivocally condemns any enforcement tactics that needlessly endanger human life,

disregard basic dignity, and erode the rule of law.

2. Affirmation of Community Values and Practices

The Common Council affirms its commitment to constitutional rights, equal protection under the law, and the humane and respectful treatment of all individuals within the community.

The Common Council rejects the normalization of fear, secrecy, and violence as tools of governance. Public safety must never be achieved through terror, humiliation, or the abandonment of due process. Peaceful assembly is an American constitutional right and not a valid target for federal action.

3. Public Safety and Community Trust

The Common Council finds that, in the context of federal immigration enforcement, practices such as concealing an official's identity, operating in plain clothes, using unmarked vehicles, failing to clearly and promptly identify authority, or engaging in confrontational tactics without clear legal justification create an unreasonable risk of violent escalation. Moreover, tactics that deny persons access to basic human needs and rights guaranteed by the Constitution, such as operations aimed at schools, medical facilities, courthouses, voting locations, and houses of worship should not be tolerated.

Such practices do not merely undermine community trust; they place residents, bystanders, and officers themselves in immediate danger, and are incompatible with principles of transparent, accountable policing.

As a local law enforcement agency, the Valparaiso Police Department's primary mission remains the safety and security of everyone in our community. Valparaiso Police officers do not hide their identities. Valparaiso Police officers activate their body-worn cameras when working in the community. Valparaiso Police officers have been trained to de-escalate confrontations. Valparaiso Police officers receive extensive training on how to protect the Constitutional rights of all persons. The Common Council is proud of its Police Department's commitment to building trust with all residents and recognizing that community trust is essential to public safety.

4. Federal Immigration Authority

The Common Council recognizes that federal immigration enforcement authority is derived from federal statute and limited by the United States Constitution, and that unless the City and ICE enter into an agreement under Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Naturalization Act, the City has no responsibility or authority to enforce immigration laws.

Federal law does not generally authorize immigration officers to stop vehicles, enter private property, or take enforcement actions absent lawful authority supported by probable cause and, where required, a judicially issued warrant.

The Common Council rejects enforcement actions that exceed or evade these legal limits and finds

that such actions erode public confidence, destabilize communities, and undermine the legitimacy of lawful authority itself.

5. Call for Transparency and Accountability

Based on the inherent principles of transparency and accountability in good government, the Common Council believes federal authorities should conduct thorough, independent, and transparent investigations into incidents involving the use of force in immigration enforcement and to make findings available to the public to the extent permitted by law.

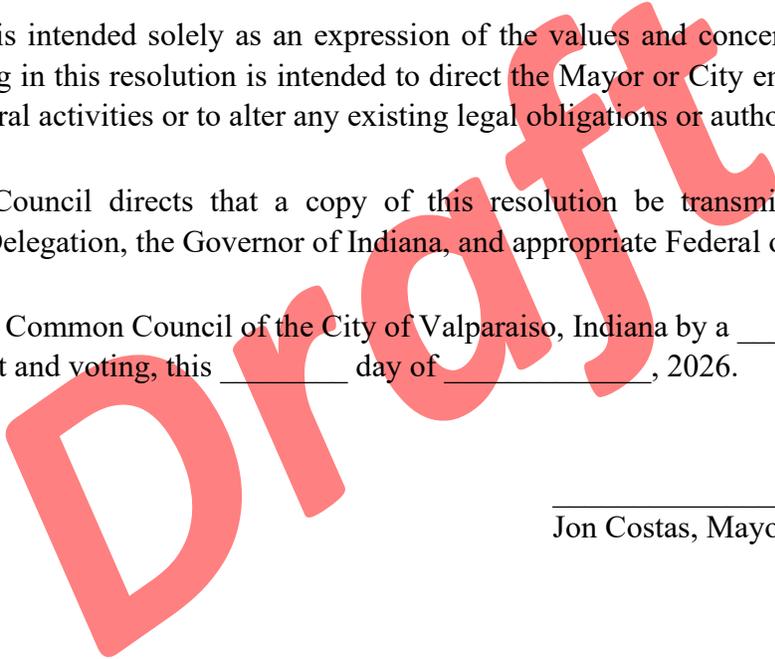
The Common Council further believes federal agencies should immediately reevaluate and discontinue tactics that conceal identity, obscure authority, or rely on fear and force rather than clear legal process.

6. Limitation on Scope and Authority

This resolution is intended solely as an expression of the values and concerns of the Common Council. Nothing in this resolution is intended to direct the Mayor or City employees to interfere with lawful federal activities or to alter any existing legal obligations or authorities.

The Common Council directs that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Indiana Congressional Delegation, the Governor of Indiana, and appropriate Federal oversight bodies.

PASSED by the Common Council of the City of Valparaiso, Indiana by a _____ vote of all members present and voting, this _____ day of _____, 2026.



Jon Costas, Mayor

ATTEST:

Holly Taylor, Clerk-Treasurer