



Fund Care Not ICE: We deserve a Moral Budget

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As we approach a devastating period for millions of people who will soon lose food benefits and medical care due to HR 1 passing last year, Congress just approved another 70 billion dollars for ICE and Border Patrol on top of the 170 billion dollars they were given last year in the same bill cutting people's care. The morning of June 9th, the day new funding for ICE was approved by the House of Representatives, UCC pastors joined an [interfaith action](#) on capitol hill in Washington, DC to call on lawmakers to fund care not ICE and Border Patrol.

We have all seen the impact around the country and especially in cities like Los Angeles, Minneapolis and Chicago. Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss, senior minister at First Congregational United Church of Christ, spoke about the impact in Washington, DC. "Last summer, as our streets were militarized, we saw an uptick in ICE activity. Members of my congregation witnessed brutal arrests, including breaking windows and dragging people out of their cars. A community member was arrested and sent to Farmville. Before we could arrange for clergy visitation, he was sent to Louisiana and intimidated into signing self-deportation papers. A member of our congregation was arrested in January. He was denied the medical care he needed while in detention and had to be taken to a hospital. A judge released him on medical grounds."

Jesus reminds us in Matthew 6:21: "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." As a country, we have lost our way by putting billions of dollars of our treasure towards the separation of families and lawless

immigration enforcement from ICE and Border Patrol that has terrorized our communities. All of this has resulted in 35 shootings (9 deaths from shootings, including Rene Good and Alex Pretti), and at least 50 deaths due to the horrific standards of ICE detention centers.

ICE still has 100 billion dollars left from HR 1 last year and now they will receive an additional 70 billion dollars, at the expense of those who will be kicked off Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program and Medicaid. Congress is now considering giving additional funds to ICE and Border Patrol through the regular Fiscal Year 2027 appropriations process.

As people of faith, we're called to welcome the sojourner, love our neighbor, feed the hungry, and heal the sick. Mothers, fathers, and children are being forced from their homes without due process. People struggling with grocery bills, unaffordable healthcare, empty gas tanks, and skyrocketing rent. Now is not the time to provide additional tens of billions of dollars more for immigration enforcement and detention.

Instead, together let us take action by calling our congress persons through the [UCC action alert](#), see the UCC resources for [Love Knows No Borders](#), the [CWS Rise Up for Refuge](#), consider signing on your congregation to this [organizational letter](#), and [sign up](#) to join a local action at a detention center near you by joining the UCC National Collaborative on Immigration. Through collaborating with other people of faith and good will, we can make a difference in the struggle to stop family separation, end heartless detention conditions and protect our democracy.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Noel Andersen serves as the Minister for Immigration Justice for Education for Faithful Action (EFA) in the National Setting of the United Church of Christ.

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