

Minnesota Dept of Corrections dismisses DHS narrative about them not complying with ICE

By Alec Schemmel - Fox News

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The Trump administration accused Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz and Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey of "actively organizing" anti-ICE resistance after officials from the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) accused the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) of lying about how the state is handling its illegal immigration problem.

DHS called on Walz and Frey earlier this week to honor federal immigration detainers for the more than 1,300 illegal aliens that the federal agency said the state of Minnesota had in custody, accusing officials in the state of releasing nearly 470 criminal illegal immigrants onto Minneapolis' streets. Walz's office subsequently disputed DHS's claim, calling it "categorically false" that the state does not honor federal immigration detainers, meant to hold criminal illegal aliens in custody after committing a crime until Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) can come pick them up.

In a press release Thursday, the Minnesota DOC echoed Walz's verbiage that DHS's claims were "categorically false," adding that they are "unsupported by facts and deeply irresponsible." The Minnesota DOC also claimed that they have "always" coordinated with ICE agents when individuals in custody have detainers.



Federal immigration officers in Minnesota arrest someone during a deportation sweep in Minneapolis, Minnesota on Jan. 14. (Mostafa Bassim/Anadolu via Getty Images)

"The Minnesota Department of Corrections honors all federal and local detainees, including those issued by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)," said the Minnesota DOC. "DHS's assertion that 1,360 non-U.S. citizens are in Minnesota's state custody is inexplicable. Minnesota's total state prison population is approximately 8,000 individuals, and only 207 (less than 3 percent) are non-U.S. citizens. Further, in 2025, 84 individuals with ICE detainers were released. In each case, ICE was notified in advance and DOC staff coordinated with ICE officials to facilitate the custody transfer when requested."

According to the Minnesota DOC, DHS did not identify which "jurisdictions, systems, or timeframes" were relied upon by the agency to support their numbers, and said that they did not align "with DOC records or the reality of Minnesota's prison system."

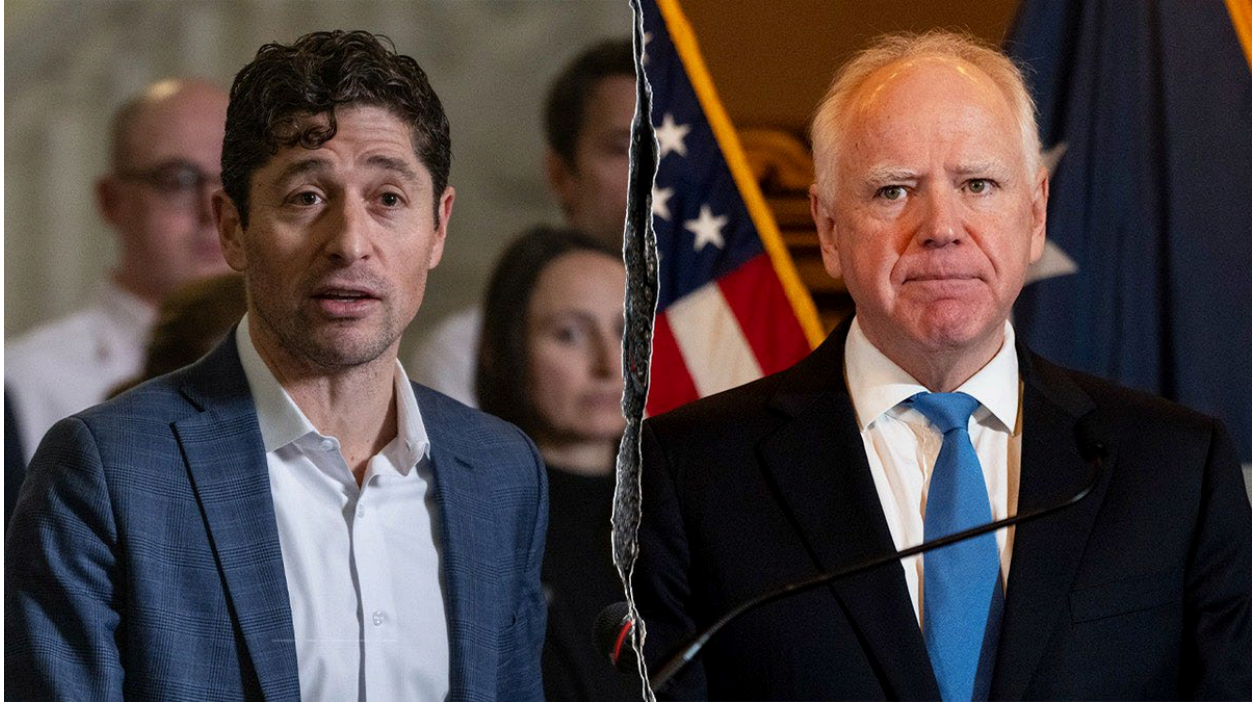
But the Trump administration stood behind their numbers and claims in a statement to Fox News Digital from DHS Assistant Secretary Tricia McLaughlin, arguing Walz and Frey were "actively encouraging an organized resistance to ICE and federal law enforcement officers."



DHS Assistant Tricia McLaughlin (left) accused Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz (right) of "actively encouraging an organized resistance to ICE." (DHS; Tibrina Hobson/Getty Images)

"As DHS stated, across the state of Minnesota nearly 470 criminal illegal aliens including violent criminal illegal aliens have been RELEASED into communities. We have more than 1,360 active detainees on illegal aliens in the custody across all jurisdictions in Minnesota," McLaughlin said. "We are once again calling on Governor Walz and his fellow sanctuary politicians to commit to honoring all ICE detainees."

On the heels of a fatal shooting of Renee Good in Minneapolis earlier this month involving federal ICE officers, Minneapolis Mayor Frey told Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials to "get the f---- out" of his city, while Walz similarly told the Trump administration to "leave Minnesota alone." Mayor Frey has also issued an executive order prohibiting federal agents from using city property to conduct operations, and a city separation ordinance was recently bolstered by local Minneapolis officials to protect illegal immigrants.



Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey and Gov. Tim Walz are at the center of a federal probe into impeding law enforcement. (Victor J. Blue/Bloomberg via Getty Images; Jerry Holt/The Minnesota Star Tribune via Getty Images)

Meanwhile, in February, Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison issued a formal opinion arguing state law prohibited state and local law enforcement from holding someone solely on an ICE civil detainer.

The danger of not properly adhering to ICE detainers reared its head in December after an illegal immigrant with a detainer in Northern Virginia was released from custody and then subsequently killed someone a day later.

On Friday, two sources familiar with the probe indicated that federal prosecutors were investigating both Walz and Frey for allegedly impeding law enforcement efforts in the blue state. Sources said the investigation is in early stages, and it is unclear if it will result in any criminal charges.

Fox News Digital's Alexandra Koch contributed to this report.

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