



To: Interested Parties
From: Navigator Research
Re: Do's and Don'ts about Discussing ICE and Immigration

As lawmakers discuss guardrails and reforms to ICE and stopping Trump's [unpopular immigration agenda](#), these topics will continue to dominate news coverage for the days and weeks ahead. Recent polling from Navigator found Americans are overwhelmingly supportive of reforms to ICE. There's also support for withholding funding from ICE if Democrats don't get the reforms they're looking for, even if it risks a government shutdown.

Here are some tips to effectively communicate about immigration and ICE:

 DO	 DON'T
Affirm what Americans already see: ICE is being overly aggressive and violent, due to a lack of training and accountability. They are targeting the wrong people: U.S. citizens, children, lawfully residing immigrants, and people based solely on appearance.	Lead with process or specific policies. Voters are outraged at what they're seeing and the first step is to meet voters where they are. Policy solutions should come after a description of the problem, not be the lead. It's impactful to share the stories of people directly impacted by ICE's violence and brutal tactics: the children in detention centers, families ripped apart, and Americans unjustly detained.
Call for a major overhaul of ICE as it currently operates by pursuing meaningful, significant reforms, such as body cameras and full background checks for agents.	Call to abolish ICE in a vacuum or without context that makes clear you're still going to enforce immigration laws. Americans are more receptive when you outline a clear alternative to ICE's current operations.
Focus on "ICE" while adding context to describe the agency's work and recent actions. ICE is far less popular than DHS.	Use acronyms and government jargon disconnected from ICE. Voters are less familiar with DHS or CBP. When you need to talk about them, use full agency names, briefly explain what they do, and link them to ICE.
Focus on outcomes instead of process. Messaging shouldn't center around appropriations or a funding bill. Be sure to describe an alternative vision to explain what Democrats are for on immigration. Most Americans support balancing enforcement (prioritizing deportation of serious criminals, securing the border) with treating people humanely, and creating legal pathways for law-abiding immigrants.	Assume that voters trust Democrats on immigration just because they're losing confidence in Republicans. To gain trust, Democratic lawmakers need to loudly speak out and present an alternate vision that reflects what most Americans support.
Connect the brutality of ICE agents to the Trump administration officials like Stephen Miller and	Shy away from calling for the impeachment of Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kristi

Secretary Kristi Noem, who are enabling and supporting them.	Noem and the firing of Stephen Miller. When mentioning them by name, describe their roles overseeing ICE's violent operations and mass deportations.
Highlight how this issue connects to voters' top issue: affordability. Do this by saying: Trump and Republicans are spending billions of tax dollars on ICE to terrorize our communities, while cutting support for Medicaid and SNAP and driving up health care costs for millions of Americans.	Overlook Americans' top concerns - lowering inflation and the cost of living. Show how Trump and the Republicans are the ones with the wrong priorities – focused on ICE's aggression and foreign conflicts over helping people at home.
Understand the messaging environment. Almost every American has seen videos of ICE in Minnesota and an overwhelming majority are concerned.	Mistake this for a Beltway or Washington-only conversation. This story is breaking through unlike any other events in the past year.