

Talking Points: Ayotte vs. Warmington on Cooperating with ICE

by Joanne Linden and Mary Wilke, Kent Street Coalition

October 14, 2026

- **Gov. Ayotte embraces ICE.** In 2025, months into the Trump administration's ICE crackdown, Gov. Ayotte signed [SB 62 \(2025\)](#). It prohibits towns and cities from stopping their police agencies from entering agreements to help ICE enforce federal immigration laws ["287(g) agreements"].
 - As of Oct. 6, 2026, twenty-nine New Hampshire law enforcement agencies had entered 287(g) agreements with ICE. See [Concord Monitor 10/6/26](#)
 - These agreements led to **a surge of ICE arrests** in NH. [NHPR 9/14/26](#)
 - Participating in these agreements **makes NH complicit in the unlawful and inhumane tactics** used by ICE
 - NH is **the only New England state** with local law enforcement agencies that have entered 287(g) agreements with ICE. [NHPR 9/14/26](#)
- **Ayotte's justification for encouraging 287(g) agreements echoes Trump's.** In a press release, she said: "**Criminals who are in our country illegally and pose a danger** should be apprehended and removed." [2/27/25 press release](#). (Trump's [stated rationale](#) for ICE was to arrest and deport "the worst of the worst".)

HOWEVER....

- Only about 2% of the people arrested by ICE in NH between Jan. 2025 and June 2026 were classified by ICE as having been charged with a violent crime. [See *data collected by ICE and processed by [Deportation Data Project](#). Go [HERE](#) to see a graph showing numbers of "book-ins to detention" broken down by whether the detainee had a record of violent crime, non-violent crime or no crime.*]
 - Even using a broader definition of "posing a danger" (Ayotte's words), only 14% of people arrested in NH between Jan. 2025 and April 2026 were classified by ICE as having a "threat level equal to a conviction for a dangerous or violent crime." [NHPR 4/13/26](#)
 - Only about 1/3 of people arrested by ICE in NH since 2025 have a criminal conviction of **ANY** kind. [NHPR 4/13/26](#)
- **This is not what Granite Staters want.** Many NH residents endorse secure borders, but **most oppose ICE tactics** like arresting people without warrants, entering schools and churches, and wearing facemasks. And 52% of Granite Staters think ICE's actions under the Trump Administration have **made the country less safe**. [UNH Survey](#)

- **287(g) agreements have additional harmful consequences:**
 - They **undermine community trust in their local police**, who come to be seen as threats. This makes people less likely to report crime or cooperate with investigators. Police work better when communities trust them. [American Immigration Council 9/26/25](#)
 - 287(g) agreements **make racial profiling and civil rights violations more likely**, because local police are not sufficiently trained in the complexities of immigration law. [Id.](#)

- **Cinde Warmington recognizes the threats:**
 - After ICE detained at least three people in Keene this summer and nearly 200 residents packed a special city council meeting, Warmington posted, "Again and again we've seen how ICE agents terrorize communities and the devastating price too many have paid. **The last thing NH needs is a group of unaccountable, masked agents instilling fear and causing worry. I stand with Keene.**" [8/13/26 X Post](#)
 - When asked in an interview what kind of cooperation she'd like to see between local police and ICE, Cinde Warmington answered: "Yes, our law enforcement will cooperate with ICE if they have a warrant or have documentation to pick up a convicted criminal or somebody that should be brought into custody. But **no, our local law enforcement are not going to assist ICE in breaking down the doors of American citizens without a warrant.**" [WMUR 2/27/26](#)
 - Re: ICE detention facilities, Warmington said: "For weeks, Kelly Ayotte cowered in the corner office and refused to stand up to Donald Trump's human warehouse — even as the people of Merrimack made it loud and clear they do not want this detention center in their community. Granite Staters had to take to the streets — and I was proud to join them — to get Kelly Ayotte to listen. Now, Kelly needs to have the guts to say **what I have said from the start: NO ICE human warehouse anywhere in New Hampshire.**" [Press Release 2/24/26](#). See also her [website's homepage](#).