



## METROPOLITAN URBAN INDIAN DIRECTORS GROUP

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January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026

To the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce –

This letter has been written on behalf of the Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors Group (MUID) – a collaborative of over thirty-five American Indian organizations operating within the Twin Cities metropolitan area of Minnesota (*please see the attached organizational listing*). The purpose of this communication is to share our collective dismay with your publicly issued communication sent out on behalf of your membership on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

Your letter called “for an immediate deescalation of tensions and for state, local and federal officials to work together to find real solutions.” This in fact is a laudable goal to aspire towards, however you have completely ignored the real crisis at hand – the often lawless and violent actions of Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) agents that have been unleashed within our community during their self-titled “Operation Metro Surge”.

You must hear our community now when we tell you that any possible deescalation of tensions can only occur once ICE ends “Operation Metro Surge” and completely shuts down all activities within our state at once. This is an absolutely necessary precondition required for any future collaboration efforts to occur between any party. The brutality being exhibited by anonymous, armed, and masked federal agents must stop immediately before any form of talking by any stakeholder can begin to take place. The violence that has been loosed upon Minnesotans in broad daylight – directed against U.S. citizens who have been peaceably exhibiting their Constitutionally protected rights - must stop *first* before any further de-escalatory actions can occur.

Before there can be peace and negotiations, ICE must first stop harassing our fellow U.S. citizens at random, demanding that they produce their papers or risk being arrested and detained. ICE must first stop kidnapping our children and elders without due process. ICE must first stop killing our neighbors in broad daylight on the cold, wintery streets of the Twin Cities. ICE must now leave Minnesota entirely before anyone can sit at a table in good faith, and plan a new strategy “for a swift and durable solution.”

*"In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends."*

*Martin Luther King*

Your absolute failure to call for an immediate end to the active and inhumane trauma being inflicted by ICE throughout the Twin Cities – with an over-the-top focus upon communities of color and the Urban American Indian population – is shocking to us within MUID. Our organizations have been active partners with many of your members for decades, and we have believed you when you told us that you actually care about communities of color and American Indian people. We believed in your commitment to working in partnership with our communities in order to improve people’s lives, and that the well-being of your customer base was paramount to your own company’s well-being. We accepted *as an article of faith* that you valued yourselves as being good neighbors in the state of Minnesota, and that you respected the rule of law and the Constitution of the United States. For all these years, we were able to take your membership at their word.

However, without any condemnation of ICE, their tactics, and without any call for ICE to immediately leave Minnesota, you are in fact sending a very different message to our community, to all communities of color, and to the state of Minnesota. If such silence were to continue, our faith regarding your value systems would be fatally compromised. We would no longer be able to trust what your membership says about their principles as being true. Instead, all previous claims about your commitment to people of color and Indigenous people would be considered a lie as you are not following these principles now when it matters most. If your silence on ICE were to continue, our community – as well as others - will have no choice but to coordinate across sectors and begin boycotting many of the commercial enterprises operated by your members. This would not only include how and where we spend our money, but also who we would choose to partner with, and where our people would choose to work and invest their talents and labor.

*"To sin by silence, when we should protest, makes cowards out of men."  
From the poem "Protest" by American poet Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850–1919)*

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MUID now calls on the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce and its membership to clarify their position and to openly condemn ICE and their actions undertaken during “Operation Metro Surge.” MUID also calls upon the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce and its membership to join with us, and with so many millions more here in Minnesota and across the nation, by demanding that all ICE agents immediately leave Minnesota altogether so that key stakeholders can then plan a new path forward without further trauma being inflicted upon the people. In so doing, the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce will verify and validate to our community - and to the people of Minnesota - that their membership does in fact care about the well-being of their customer base, that it is not putting their need for political favor with the federal government ahead of the safety of human beings, and that they can be trusted going forward as being legitimate allies to our community.

The time to make such clarifications is now. History has brought us to this juncture, forcing us all to speak to our values through demonstration of action.

MUID then posits the following question to the membership of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce – what are your values and where do you stand? Will you publicly denounce the tactics of ICE? Will you publicly call for an immediate end to “Operation Metro Surge”?

As we are all connected, let us now work together to achieve your stated goals by joining our voices to demand ICE out of Minnesota now – as the necessary first step for further collaboration.

We respectfully await your response.

Pidamayaye ye, Pilamayaye ye, Chi Miigwech, Pinagigi,

Dr. Joe Hobot (Author)  
*Sunkmanitu Tanka Se Tokeya Hiyaye (He Leads Like A Wolf)*  
Descendant of the Hunkpapa Band of the Oceti Sakowin and Stand Rock Sioux Tribe  
President and CEO  
American Indian OIC

Co-Signed by the Voting Membership of the Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors Group (MUID):

**Listing of Voting Member Organizations within the Metropolitan Urban Indian**

**Directors Group:**

*Ain Dah Yung*

*All Nations Indian United Church of Christ*

*American Indian Community Development Corporation*

*American Indian Family Center*

*American Indian OIC*

*Bdote Learning Center*

*Bois Forte Urban Office*

*Department of Indian Work*

*Division of Indian Work*

*Dream of Wild Health*

*Elders Lodge*

*Fond Du Lac Urban Office*

*Ho-Chunk Nation Urban Office*

*Indian Health Board*

*Indigenous Peoples Task Force*

*Indigenous Protector Movement*

*Leech Lake Twin Cities Office*

*Little Earth Residents Association*

*Mni Sota Fund*

*MIGIZI*

*Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Urban Office*

*Minneapolis American Indian Center*

*Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center*

*Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition*

*Montessori American Indian Childcare Center*

*NATIFS*

*Native American Community Clinic*

*Native American Community Development Institute*

*Nawayee Center School*  
*New Native Theatre*  
*Owámniyomni Okhódayapi*  
*Red Lake Embassy*  
*Tiwahe Foundation*  
*Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi*  
*Wicoie Nandagikendan*