



PRESS RELEASE

RAPID RESPONSE GROUPS ACROSS THE COUNTRY RESPOND TO THE SHOOTING OF LEGAL OBSERVER IN MINNEAPOLIS; CALLS FOR JUSTICE & DIGNITY

UNITED STATES — January 7, 2026 — Rapid response and community observer networks across the country are heartbroken and deeply troubled by reports that a legal observer was shot and killed during a federal immigration enforcement operation in Minneapolis. Legal observers are unarmed civilians who serve as witnesses—present to document, to uphold transparency, and to protect the dignity of those impacted by enforcement actions. Violence against someone serving in this role is deeply alarming, authoritarian, and should concern anyone who believes in upholding the rule of law.

This incident has sent a wave of grief and fear through communities that rely on observers to help safeguard dignity and accountability. “This action is a violation of public safety and demands accountability and consequences for the federal officers who just murdered a civilian,” said Lisa Bennett of the Marin Rapid Response Network. When violence reaches those who are present simply to witness, it calls all of us to recommit to the protection of human life and to restraint in the use of force.

“Make no mistake – violence is built into the very fabric of immigration enforcement, especially so under this administration. Their violence does not mean that the critical work of community protection is wrong. Rather, it makes our work more urgent. We know we are stronger when we stand together,” said Gracie Willis, Rapid Response Coordinating Attorney for the National Immigration Project.

“Across our networks, personal safety is our highest priority. We train volunteers to avoid risk, to disengage when situations escalate, and to never place themselves in harm’s way. Bearing witness should never come at the cost of one’s life,” said Jaime Martinez, Executive Director of Frontline DIGNITY, an organization that trains and organizes dignity-driven rapid response networks across the country.

The networks issuing this statement call for an immediate, independent investigation; the full release of all available footage and evidence; and clear, enforceable protections for legal observers, journalists, and community members. Dignity, accountability, and restraint must guide all enforcement actions.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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