



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patricia Fahy

Senator Fahy Introduces MELT Act to Prohibit Masking by ICE Agents

PATRICIA FAHY July 15, 2025

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ALBANY, N.Y. – Senator Patricia Fahy announced today she is introducing the Mandating End of Lawless Tactics (MELT) Act (S.XXXX Fahy/A.XXXX Simone), previously introduced in the State Assembly by Assemblymember Tony Simone, which would ban the use of face coverings and plainclothes by ICE and other federal enforcement agents during civilian immigration actions conducted in New York State.

“When agents of the federal government are operating like masked militias, we’ve crossed a dangerous line by turning immigration enforcement into a paramilitary secret police force that should shock the nation’s collective conscience,” **said bill sponsor Senator Patricia Fahy (D—Albany)**. “This goes beyond immigration enforcement; it’s intimidation and it echoes authoritarian regimes, not the United States of America. While I have long supported comprehensive immigration reform at the national level, I’m introducing the MELT Act to restore transparency, accountability, and the rule of law before these tactics and the fear they create in our communities become normalized. What makes these developments even more disturbing is the scale of funding ICE has received under the so-called “Big Beautiful Bill,” signed by President Trump on July 4th, which provided ICE with one of the largest funding increases of \$75 billion in its history.”

“Our communities, immigrant and not, are living in complete and utter fear,” **said bill sponsor Assemblymember Tony Simone (D—Manhattan)**. “Masked agents acting under the direction of Donald Trump are entering our workplaces, courthouses, and communities. They are disappearing people to extranational prisons with no due process. What is to stop vigilantes from taking up these same tactics? This is flat out un-American. The MELT Act will restore accountability over these masked vigilantes. Having a champion for every-day New Yorkers like Senator Fahy carry this bill in the Senate shows that from the West Side of Manhattan to Albany NY, and everywhere in between, New Yorkers will always fight back against tyranny.”

There is mounting evidence that the use of masked and unmarked ICE agents is creating a serious public safety risk. There have been extremely disturbing reports of individuals impersonating ICE and other law enforcement officials to conduct robberies, assaults, and other crimes, most notably in Florida and California. In some instances, impersonators have worn tactical gear, badges, and face coverings to enter homes, seize passports, or detain

civilians under false pretenses. These impersonators have no accountability, and their crimes are made easier by the Trump administration's normalization of plainclothes, masked immigration enforcement.

Attorney General James, joined by 20 attorneys general from across the country, today warned that these faceless operations breed confusion, fear, and chaos, even leading bystanders to believe they are witnessing kidnappings, and wrote that "It is deeply disturbing that, in the United States of America, masked agents can pull people off the streets without ever identifying themselves as law enforcement."

The MELT Act seeks to ensure accountability in enforcement by requiring that federal immigration agents operating in New York do so in clearly visible uniforms with name badges and agency-identifying apparel. The bill would also prohibit the use of masks or face coverings during civil enforcement and require federal agencies to publicly report all mask use, use-of-force incidents, and civil arrests conducted in New York State.

With billions of dollars now flowing into tactical units, unmarked vehicle fleets, and intelligence operations, the result is a dangerous expansion of what increasingly resembles a paramilitary force functioning with minimal oversight. Furthermore, County Executive Bruce Blakeman has signed an executive order permitting local law enforcement, including those deputized to assist ICE raids, to conceal their identities during "approved operations" such as immigration enforcement.

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