

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 27, 2026

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QUEENS COMMUNITY MEMBERS COME TOGETHER FOR A KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AND ICE PREPAREDNESS TRAINING IN FLUSHING

Flushing, NY - In response to increased ICE presence throughout Queens and across New York City, Queens residents turned out to a Know Your Rights and ICE Preparedness Training on Sunday at the Free Synagogue of Flushing to learn how to organize and stay safe in their communities.

Hosted by State Senator John Liu, Hands Off NYC, Minkwon Center, Chinese-American Planning Council, and Northeast Queens Indivisible, the Queens-centered event was part of a broader series of trainings held citywide by Hands Off NYC since Trump took office. The training took place at the Free Synagogue of Flushing, a historic congregation and longtime center of social justice and interfaith community in Queens, to learn how to fight back against ICE's attacks on immigrant communities.

Participants engaged in breakout sessions and received training on a variety of topics, including: how to identify ICE activity and respond safely, ways to support impacted families, and how to build a stronger, more connected community across Queens. All events center on nonviolent action, de-escalation, and ongoing community building in an effort to ensure neighbors are informed, prepared, and empowered with the information they need to keep their families, loved ones, and fellow community members safe.

State Senator John Liu stated, "The Trump administration makes no bones about scapegoating immigrants for every problem under the sun, from global pandemic to economic insecurity, and to rising crime, without offering any real solutions other than telling the country to be afraid. With the huge budget increase Trump gave ICE amidst draconian cuts in healthcare and education, ICE has morphed into his personal secret army, going so far as killing American citizens in cold blood. Here in Queens, we know immigrants are the strength that makes New York City the greatest city in the world, so with an uptick in ICE raids, it's on all of us to make sure we know our rights and understand how to protect our neighbors, stand against federal overreach, and the unjust actions of ICE. Our community deserves to live in safety with dignity, not fear, and we are grateful for those who are standing up in opposition to these unlawful ICE raids that accomplish nothing but tear families apart, destabilize our community, and betray the promise of America."

Rebecca Rodriguez, Co-Founder of Hands Off NYC, stated, "New Yorkers from all backgrounds call Queens home, and that diversity makes the world's borough vibrant and strong. Today's training is about tapping into that strength for this urgent moment, learning how to protect each other and stand against ICE's terror. It's also about building a muscle of community and solidarity. The connections we make today, from neighbor to neighbor, will be

our most powerful resource as we live through the next years of federal chaos — and emerge stronger together."

Yoon Ji Kim, Interim Executive Director of Minkwon Center, stated, "We witness, on the ground every day, community members who are suffering and living in fear due to ruthless immigration enforcement and inhumane immigration policies. At a time like this, we are pleased to participate as a co-sponsoring organization in the community KYR training hosted by Senator Liu, who stands up for our communities, and Hands Off NYC, which is playing a critical role in the current immigration landscape. Through our collective solidarity and action, we hope New York City can truly function as a sanctuary city and foster a safe, caring community where people look out for one another."

Mitchel Wu, Director of CPC Queens Community Services, stated, "Since 1965, CPC serves and fights for low-income, Asian and immigrant New Yorkers. The impact of the current immigration enforcement is real — we see it in the faces of our Queens neighbors every single day. We're honored to stand alongside Senator Liu and Hands Off NYC, and the other local based organizations: KAFSC, Minkwon Center for Community Action, and Northeast Queens Indivisible in bringing this know your rights training at the Free Synagogue of Flushing. This is what solidarity looks like, and it's how we build a New York City where everyone feels safe and cared for."

Susan Gomberg, Northeast Queens Indivisible, stated, "We watched, in horror, the violent, thuggish, inhuman and unconstitutional abduction of our neighbors around the country. We knew that Queens, the most vibrant and diverse community in the country, would eventually come under attack. The members of Northeast Queens Indivisible came together, with a mission to educate, support and protect the children and families living in fear and under threat of being disappeared from our streets, schools and businesses. We work primarily in College Point, with a 75% immigrant population, meeting with businesses, working the bus stops, street corners and Home Depots where day laborers await work, providing resistance materials and resources. We provide mutual aid to families where the breadwinner is in detention or has been deported. Still, it is not enough. Programs like this reach many people at one time, in a safe environment, in their native tongues, providing critical information to protect themselves and their loved ones."

Cantor Alan J. Brava, Executive Director of the Free Synagogue of Flushing, stated, "Both sets of my grandparents, a century ago, arrived at the shores of New York City and were processed through Ellis Island. They left what was then called 'Poland-Russia' and Lithuania for a better life in the land of the free and the home of the brave. The Free Synagogue of Flushing strives to keep the promises made to my grandparents. That is, for immigrants to this wonderful country, to find a home, feel welcomed, not threatened, and be able to raise their families in peace and be able to contribute to the fabric of our society. We are all created in God's image. Let's protect and defend all of God's creations."

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