



# Speak Out Now

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## We Are the Ones We've Been Waiting For

Week after week, more federal workers are being fired and more federal funding is stripped away from public services by the Trump/Musk regime. And now the “Trump budget” has begun to take shape.

Musk's DOGE (Department of Government Efficiency) cut funds and fired hundreds of workers at the Federal Aviation Administration. Soon after, Musk's company, Starlink, was given a contract to manage U.S. airspace. Our tax dollars are going into his pocket.

Mass firings at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration, the National Institutes of Health, the Social Security Administration, and other agencies will have long-lasting effects on the health and well-being of millions of people. Crucial disease prevention, bird flu research, cancer treatments, food programs, and other projects are being dismantled.

In addition, the new budget being proposed by Republicans in the House of Representatives would cut \$880 billion from Medicaid and reduce SNAP funding (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) by 20 percent. SNAP provides low-income people access to nutritious food.

This chaos is happening throughout the federal government. Some people say, “we should watch and see if all this makes things better.” But they wouldn't want to take drugs that are unregulated; or have their infant or young child exposed to people who are carrying measles or other infectious diseases; or fly on planes with no guidance from weather experts. That's what's coming. Nothing good will happen in this hot mess.

The Democratic Party's solution is to get ready for the next elections in two years. That can't be our solution.

The reality is that no one is going to save us, except ourselves. So, it's us against Trump and his band of billionaires and the system they represent. And what do we have? It could seem like we have nothing compared to their money and power. But together we are not powerless. Quite the opposite. We outnumber them. It is our work and activity that makes this society function. There are tens of millions of us in the same situation and many are thinking the same way.

Where do we start? We all know people at our jobs, schools and in our neighborhoods. We interact with friends

and family and people we share interests and activities with. A lot of people are talking about this. They too are waiting and uncertain, about what to do.

A few people or a small group can begin to do something. We can invite people we know to get together to talk about what is happening and what we can do in response. This can break our sense of isolation. We can go to an event or a protest together, and next time, bring more people. One gathering or protest can turn into a weekly event or into a larger action.

People are organizing now. Federal workers have organized rallies and protests around the country, and we can turn out and support them. Many of us belong to unions. Unions don't have to be just about our own bread-and-butter issues. They should respond to situations that all workers are facing. And we can go with our co-workers to their protests and other actions.

Members of our communities who are recent immigrants and people who are racially profiled as being immigrants are being targeted by ICE, arrested, imprisoned, and deported. People have organized Know Your Rights Trainings. We can get “Know Your Rights” red cards and get them to people who may be targeted by ICE (available at [ilrc.org/red-cards](http://ilrc.org/red-cards)). Some people are organizing to respond to ICE raids. There are weekly demonstrations at Tesla dealers against Musk. These actions and boycotts bring people together, sometimes on a weekly basis and that can lead to larger actions which can have more of an impact.

In 2006, weeks of small demonstrations across the country, in defense of immigrant rights, led to millions of people taking to the streets on May 1, for “Day Without an Immigrant” demonstrations. In South Africa, during the struggle against the brutal apartheid regime, workers across the country organized stay at home strikes which crippled the economy and avoided direct confrontation with the racist military. The Civil Rights Movement was made up of thousands of small actions.

That has been the history of movements large and small. What seems impossible or improbable happens because people decide to act on what they know is right. What each of us is willing to do today shapes what is possible tomorrow. We can make this our time, not theirs! We don't have to wait for a leader to emerge.

We are the ones that we've been waiting for.

## ***Baltimore, Maryland:***

### **Stop the Attacks on Federal Workers**

Since the Trump administration has taken office, federal workers are facing a full-scale attack. Maryland is home to the headquarters for the Social Security Administration, Medicare & Medicaid, and National Institutes of Health.

Workers have received threatening emails from Elon Musk, have had to hand over sensitive information to people who have no right to look at it, and/or have been fired after years of service. Workforces that serve large parts of the population, like Social Security, could be decimated!

These attacks affect all workers and our families. These attacks could further affect our ability to get healthcare, retirement we've paid into, and disabilities benefits. Vital disease research that saves millions of lives could end.

Workers across the country must stand up, organize, and fight back against the attacks on federal workers and our social services!

## ***Bay Area, California:***

### **Oakland Teachers: Bargaining and Possible Strikes**

Oakland public school teachers kicked off their campaign for contract negotiations with a rally at city hall. If a deal for a new three-year contract isn't reached and approved, teachers could strike next year.

Teachers want adequately staffed schools, smaller class sizes, and more access to school counselors and mental health supports for students. In addition, many teachers are outraged by budget cuts and mass layoffs of educators happening across California. These issues impact our entire community. When the schools are safe, staffed, and resourced, our children are better able to thrive.

Workers at Oakland schools are in three different unions, with all three contracts set to expire in June of 2025. If all three unions strike together, that could have a powerful impact on negotiations in favor of the workers and students. But let's not get ahead of ourselves. If teachers and other education workers are going to make a fight, we must get organized.

We live in the wealthiest country in the world, and it is our labor that has created all of this wealth. We aren't the ones who benefit from this. The super rich — the bosses of the big corporations and banks — keep the wealth and make all the decisions. Working people do the work that makes society run, and we can organize to unite our forces. When we do, we have enormous power to change things and make a better world.

## ***The Triangle, North Carolina:***

### **Department of Government Efficiency Increases Inefficiency**

In the Research Triangle, there is a scramble to understand shifting government policies. For research universities and companies, hundreds of millions of dollars in grants are now uncertain. This could disrupt or ruin years-long studies, wasting millions already spent. Meanwhile, labs won't be able to plan for the future without knowing if their work can continue.

By pausing federal funds, including USAID's, hundreds have lost jobs, and projects have been cut or totally disrupted. Resettlement programs for thousands of refugees in NC and elsewhere cannot keep services functioning.

Amid cleanup efforts after Hurricane Helene, national park workers have been laid off. The ripple effects of one "pause" spread chaos and inefficiency for thousands, their families, and our communities. DOGE is lying to us that they care about efficiency—they are only ripping us off, creating chaos, and making things much less efficient.

## ***Newark, New Jersey:***

### **ICE Expansion in Jersey?**

As the Trump administration ramps up its deportation machine, reports indicate that New Jersey sites may be used to hold detained immigrants. Despite a 2021 law banning all New Jersey prisons from contracting with ICE, several detainees have recently been routed through a detention center in Elizabeth. There are also reports that a 600-bed facility in Newark run by GEO group, a for-profit prison company, may be reactivated. And in south and central Jersey, ICE may open detention facilities in Trenton and at Joint Base McGuire-Dix, a U.S. military facility.

We must resist these deportation actions. Immigrant workers are members of the working class and our communities, not our enemies. This is an opportunity for us to begin a fight against the inhuman immigration policies of the U.S. government.

You have constitutional rights:

- **DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR** if an immigration agent is knocking. If you are inside of your house, show the card through the window or slide it under the door.
- **DO NOT ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS** from an immigration agent if they try to talk to you. You have the right to remain silent.
- **DO NOT SIGN ANYTHING** without first speaking to a lawyer. You have the right to speak with a lawyer.
- If you are outside of your house, **SHOW THIS CARD TO THE AGENT**. Ask the agent if you are free to leave and if they say you can, leave calmly.

[www.ilrc.org/red-cards](http://www.ilrc.org/red-cards)