



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

207 STATE HOUSE
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62706

JB PRITZKER
GOVERNOR

October 29, 2025

Hon. Kristi Noem
Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20528

Todd M. Lyons
Acting Director, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
101 W. Ida B. Wells Drive, Suite 4000
Chicago, Illinois 60605

Hon. Rodney S. Scott
Commissioner, U.S. Customs and Border Protection
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20229

Dear Secretary Noem, Acting Director Lyons, and Commissioner Scott:

This past weekend, federal agents reportedly interrupted a [children's Halloween parade](#) and deployed tear gas without warning on residents peacefully celebrating the holiday on the northwest side of Chicago.

If this happened as reported, it would have been in direct violation of statements and directives from your administration:

"Children's safety and security is nonnegotiable" (June 5, 2025 [News Release](#))

"ICE personnel should remain cognizant of the impact enforcement actions may have on a minor child." (July 2, 2025: [ICE Directive 11064.4](#))

Ignoring their duty to protect the public and uphold the Constitution, federal agents have conducted aggressive operations in residential neighborhoods and near schools, parks, and places of worship – reportedly deploying chemical agents and detaining individuals indiscriminately. These operations have not targeted the “worst of the worst” criminals who we all want to be held accountable but rather have targeted Black and Brown people, including U.S. citizens and those who have not been charged with crimes.

There is now a clear record that these activities have endangered the lives of innocent community members and traumatized children. These tactics do not make our neighborhoods safer. Instead, they force families, including children, to live in fear. It's unacceptable and un-American.

I am respectfully requesting you suspend enforcement operations from Friday, October 31 to Sunday, November 2 in and around homes, schools, hospitals, parks, houses of worship, and other community gatherings where Halloween celebrations are taking place.

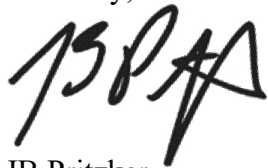
Illinois families deserve to spend Halloween weekend without fear. No child should be forced to inhale tear gas or other chemical agents while trick or treating in their own neighborhood.

My request is based on a desire to protect communities throughout Chicago and also upon the long-standing guidance from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security regarding enforcement actions at sensitive locations, which was unfortunately rescinded under this administration. That guidance should be reinstated to help protect children and others from enforcement action while accessing basic needs like education and healthcare.

People of good faith statewide will continue to vigorously and peacefully advocate for the rights, dignity, and safety of every Illinois community. I would appreciate your cooperation and confirmation that federal agents will stand down from any actions that could endanger or harm perfectly innocent children in our communities during this Halloween weekend. We have heard from teachers, parents, and other caregivers that children are anxious. Even in these difficult times, they should be able to trust that they are safe – if only for one weekend.

Illinois children should not be robbed of their innocence. Let them enjoy a time-honored American tradition safely and peacefully. Please let children be children for one holiday, free from intimidation and fear.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JB Pritzker', with a stylized, overlapping 'A' at the end.

JB Pritzker
Governor of Illinois