



Billy Walsh <bwalsh@natickma.org>

Welcoming Community Policy

1 message

Hilding Hedberg <hilding.h@gmail.com>
To: Selectboard@natickma.org

Tue, Nov 19, 2024 at 12:38 PM

Dear Members of the Board,

I write to urge you to support the draft Welcoming Community Policy up for discussion at your next meeting. Natick should be a welcoming community that celebrates the contributions of its immigrant community.

Town employees should not be co-opted into enforcing federal immigration law to the detriment of their ability to successfully carry out their responsibilities as town employees, especially at a time when Natick's resources are already limited. Members of Natick's immigrant community must be confident that they can utilize town resources, including reporting crimes to law enforcement, without fear of immigration repercussions.

The proposed policy is a thoughtfully crafted compromise that protects town employees and immigrant community members while ensuring Natick's compliance with state and federal law. It is also very similar to other policies in many other municipalities in Massachusetts.

Any upcoming program of mass deportation will target some of the most marginalized in our community, and lean heavily on local law enforcement for support. As you consider how to respond to that potential eventuality, I hope you will bear in mind the reflection on the rise of the nazis in Germany, attributed to Martin Niemoeller:

First they came for the Communists

And I did not speak out

Because I was not a Communist

Then they came for the Socialists

And I did not speak out

Because I was not a Socialist

Then they came for the trade unionists

And I did not speak out

Because I was not a trade unionist

Then they came for the Jews

And I did not speak out

Because I was not a Jew

Then they came for me

And there was no one left

To speak out for me

Now is the time for Natick to speak out.

We must adopt policies now that reflect Natick's inclusive values. Therefore, I strongly encourage you not to give in to any calls to water down the policy with additional exceptions that could be used to undercut the policy's goals—the town simply should not be in the business of enforcing federal immigration law.

I strongly urge you to vote yes on the draft policy.

Sincerely,
Hilding Hedberg