

## **WATCH: Minneapolis resident and U.S. citizen Aliya Rahman describes being detained by ICE**

Thank you, members, for taking time to be here today and thank you staff for making this happen. My name is Aliya Rahman and I am a resident of South Minneapolis. I'm a Bangladeshi American born in northern Wisconsin and I'm a disabled person with autism and a traumatic brain injury.

Not all autistic brains do this but mine fixates on sounds, numbers, and patterns. And while what the world saw happened to me exactly three weeks ago today on video was a terrible violation, it is still nothing compared to the horrific practices I saw inside the Whipple Center. So, I am here today with a duty to the people who have not had the privilege of coming home and I offer this data because these practices must end now.

On January 13th on the way to my 39th appointment at Hennepin County's Traumatic Brain Injury Center, I encountered a traffic jam caused by ICE vehicles and no signs indicating how to get around it. I had not wanted to pull into a blocked chaotic intersection but verbally agreed to do so and rolled down my window after an agent yelled, move, I will break your fucking window. His first instruction.

Agents on all sides of my vehicle yelled conflicting threats and instructions that I could not process while watching for pedestrians. Then, the glass of the passenger side window flew across my face. I yelled, I'm disabled at the hands grabbing at me and an agent said, too late.

I felt immersed in a pattern, and I thought of Jenoah Donald, an autistic Black man killed by police during a traffic stop in 2021. I remembered Mr. Silverio Villegas González who was killed by ICE in his vehicle last year. An agent pulled a large combat knife in front of my face which I thought was for cutting me and later learned was used to cut off my seat belt.

Shooting pain went through my head, neck, and wrists when I hit the ground face first and people leaned on my back. I felt the pattern and I thought of George Floyd who was killed four blocks away. I was carried face down through the street by my cuffed arms and legs while yelling that I had a brain injury and was disabled.

I now cannot lift my arms normally. I was never asked for ID, never told I was under arrest, never read my rights, and never charged with a crime. Approaching the Whipple Center, I saw Black and Brown bodies shackled together, chained together, being marched by yelling agents outdoors.

I continue to hear the word bodies because that is how agents refer to us. We're bringing in a body. They're bringing in bodies, seven, eight at a time.

Where do I put them? We can't use that room. There's already a body in there. You have no reason to believe you will make it out alive if you are already being called a body.

Agents repeatedly had to stop and ask how to do tasks. I received no medical screening, phone call, or access to a lawyer. I was denied a communication navigator when my speech began to slur.

Agents laughed as I tried to immobilize my own neck. I asked for my cane and was told no, pulled up my arms and prodded forward in leg irons by agents laughing and saying, walk, you can do it, walk. Agents did not know if the facility had a wheelchair.

When I was finally placed in one to be taken to interrogation, an agent taunted, you are driving, right? So, your legs do work. I pleaded for emergency medical care for over an hour after my vision had become blurry, my heart rate went through the roof, and the pain in my neck and head became unbearable. It was denied.

When I became unable to speak, my cellmate pleaded for me. The last sounds I remember before I blacked out on the cell floor were my cellmate banging on the door, pleading for a medic and a voice outside saying, we don't want to step on ICE's toes. When I opened my eyes at Hennepin County's emergency room, I learned I was brought there to be treated for assault.

The impacts of DHS detention on my physical, mental, and financial well-being and safety have been very severe, but I do not deserve more humane treatment than anyone else, U.S. citizen or not. And I am here today with a strong spirit and a duty to the many people who haven't had the privilege to tell their stories or see their loved ones come home. I am extremely distressed by the pattern that violence from law enforcement has been happening to Black and Indigenous communities for centuries and to DHS survivors for over 20 years.

We call ourselves a civilized nation, but we lack rules and accountability around what a person claiming to be law enforcement is permitted to do to another human being. I am not afraid, and I'm not afraid to keep working on this problem even after ICE is gone. Thank you for your time.

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