

CHICAGOLAND

CHICAGO MARATHON

Supporters turn out for runners despite fears

Immigration enforcement ‘blitz’ creates anxiety for some involved in race

By Cam’ron Hardy

As first-time Chicago Marathon runner Natalia Diaz passed through the Pilsen neighborhood that once was home to several of her Mexican American family members, she stopped to greet those who had returned to support her in the race. They briefly took pictures and reflected on the increase in federal immigration enforcement efforts in the city.

Residents of the city and nation are “living in a crazy time we wouldn’t have thought of in 2025,” said Consuelo Arguilles, Diaz’s aunt who was on 18th Street to support her niece.

Arguilles, said she was proud of Diaz, a freshman at Carthage College, explaining that it was important to represent their Mexican heritage.

Overall support for runners in the 47th annual Bank of America Chicago Marathon could be seen and heard throughout the race route, including as the runners headed east on 18th Street through Pilsen. Viewers yelled, celebrated and cheered on the sidewalks, marking a stark contrast to the more subdued than usual Mexican Independence Day Parade that rolled through the neighborhood in September.

Local immigration advocates said the presence of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

agents in Chicago, as part of President Donald Trump’s “Operation Midway Blitz” immigration enforcement, affected how some runners trained for the marathon and whether their families came out to support their efforts.

Krystal, who requested to be identified by only her first name for safety reasons, is a member of Pilsen Unidos por Nuestro Orgullo, a coalition that advocates for the protection of immigrant rights. She said PUÑO talked to members of local run clubs ahead of the race about how to stay safe during the marathon as immigration enforcement has ramped up.

“People kind of started reaching out to me or I started reaching out also to run clubs to be like ‘I think this is really important, this is impacting, not only the communities you run in, but your actual runners as well,’” Krystal said.

“ICE is terrorizing our city and sucking the joy out of everything. They shouldn’t be here,” she said. “They are causing a lot of fear and a lot of harm and that, of course, is impacting so many runners.”

Some of the tips she said she offered runners was to utilize the buddy system and memorize emergency contact information as well as the number for the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights. The coalition is a nonprofit advocacy organization.

Run clubs around Chicago



Natalia Diaz stops while running in the Bank of America Chicago Marathon on Sunday to get a hug from her grandmother Consuelo Herrera on 18th Street in the Pilsen neighborhood. EILEEN T. MESLAR/CHICAGO TRIBUNE PHOTOS



Aime Cabrera of Las Doñas Run Club cheers as runners in the Bank of America Chicago Marathon pass on 18th Street in Pilsen.

also posted tips ahead of the race about how to stay safe amid the increased ICE and U.S. Customs and Border

Protection agency presence, and what to do in if they are stopped by federal agents. Aime Cabrera, 46, a

member of the Las Doñas Run Club, cheered runners from sidewalks in Pilsen with other members of the

“We want people to feel safe when they run.”

— Edgar Rivera, co-founder of Raza Run Club

run club. She said the club expected to have more participants in the marathon, but some dropped out because of the increase in ICE agents. The club was originally started as a walking club for moms.

Edgar Rivera, the co-founder of Raza Run Club, said one of his club’s goals is for people to be comfortable.

“We want people to feel safe when they run, and run with the community,” Rivera said. “And whether they’re not training for a race, and they’re just looking for people to run with, and find that community, we’re here for them.”

Pritzker points to inconsistencies in Guard deployment

By Jeremy Gorner and Rick Pearson
Chicago Tribune

Gov. JB Pritzker called out the Trump administration on Sunday for defending its decision to deploy National Guard troops to Chicago as necessary to fight violent crime in the city, even though the federal government has emphasized in court and Pentagon memos that the mission is mainly to protect federal immigration enforcement agents and federal property.

Appearing on ABC’s “This Week,” Pritzker said President Donald Trump and Vice President JD Vance’s ultimate goal is to bring in the National Guard to cities like Chicago and Portland, Oregon, to militarize the country’s Democratic-controlled enclaves as a form of political payoff.

“They’re claiming in court that this is about protecting (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement) facilities and ICE agents and not about crime on the streets,” the governor told the program’s host, George Stephanopoulos. “But then you hear Vice President Vance and the president of the United States contravening that and saying exactly what they actually think. They just want troops on the ground because they want to militarize, especially blue cities and blue states.”

Appearing on the same program in advance of Pritzker, Vance maintained the theme of the National Guard fighting crime, saying: “Chicago has been given over to lawlessness and gangs for too long.”

“If you look at the murder rates in Chicago, the violent crime rates, you have women who have young families, they’re terrified their kids are going to get killed in a drive-by shooting. We have accepted this for far too long in the United States of America in some of our biggest cities, and Chicago unfortunately is the worst,” Vance told Stephanopoulos. “Why shouldn’t federal



Members of the Texas National Guard carry luggage after arriving Tuesday at the Army Reserve Training Center in Elwood. BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

troops empower the people in Chicago to live safe lives when the governor and the local mayor (Brandon Johnson) just simply refuse to do their job?”

While Chicago, the nation’s third-largest city by population, leads all U.S. cities in the sheer number of homicides every year, the city has far from the country’s highest homicide rate. Also, official Chicago police statistics show that through Oct. 5, the city had 331 homicides, down 49% from the same period in 2021 when the country was in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. Total shootings were also down 57% in Chicago over the same four-year period.

In court proceedings and federal deployment memos, the Trump administration has said the National Guard was needed because of threats and violence against federal agents enforcing immigration law.

Memos issued last weekend by U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth also said nothing specifically about whether troops would be used to help fight underlying violence in U.S. cities, unrelated to their assistance of

federal government personnel.

Instead, the memos said the troops, including 300 from the Illinois National Guard, would be used to protect the agents and other federal government personnel “performing Federal functions, including the enforcement of Federal law, and to protect Federal property, at locations where violent demonstrations against these functions are occurring or are likely to occur based on current threat assessments and planned operations.”

Under the federal Posse Comitatus Act, U.S. military assets, including the National Guard, are prohibited from conducting law enforcement on domestic soil. Additionally, various state Democratic officials, including Pritzker, have argued that guard troops would be ineffective at helping fight street crime because they’re not trained for it.

A federal judge in Chicago last week temporarily halted Trump’s plan to deploy the troops into Chicago-area streets to act as a security force during the administration’s controversial

immigration enforcement mission known as “Operation Midway Blitz.” An ICE processing center in west suburban Broadview has been the site of sometimes intense clashes between protesters and federal immigration enforcement officers as well as Illinois State Police in recent weeks.

As a result of the ruling by U.S. District Judge April Perry, an appointee of President Joe Biden, federalized guard members from Illinois, Texas and California would not be allowed onto the streets for the time being. Perry said she had no faith in the government’s claims of out-of-control violence and that it was federal agents who have stoked it by aggressively targeting protesters with tear gas and militaristic tactics.

On Saturday, the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals denied a Trump administration request for an emergency stay of Perry’s temporary restraining order pending a full appeal hearing. The appeals court did allow the troops to remain federalized but prohibited them from any on-the-street activities.

Trump has discussed the

potential of invoking the two-century-old Insurrection Act as a way to get around judicial orders blocking guard deployment. The Insurrection Act is an exception to the Posse Comitatus Act and would allow the U.S. military to be actively involved in law enforcement to put down a “rebellion” or when enforcing federal law becomes “impractical.”

Previous U.S. Supreme Court rulings have given the president broad deference to define the conditions for invoking it. But Pritzker said the state would try to fight such a move in court, acknowledging that dependence on the judiciary is sometimes “risky business.”

“Well, the Insurrection Act is called the Insurrection Act for a reason. There has to be a rebellion, there has to be an insurrection in order for him to be allowed to invoke it,” Pritzker said. “He can say anything he wants, but if the Constitution means anything, and I guess we all are questioning that right now, but the courts will make the determination, (and) if the Constitution means anything, the Insurrection Act cannot be invoked to send them in because they want to fight crime,” he said of Trump.

Trump last week used social media to call for Pritzker and Johnson to be jailed for failing to protect ICE officers, a dramatic rhetorical escalation in the battle of words between the Republican president and leading state Democrats.

Pressed repeatedly by Stephanopoulos on whether he thinks Pritzker has committed a crime, Vance refused to answer yes or no. Instead, Vance said Pritzker “failed to do his job” and “should suffer some consequences” because of the violence in Chicago, and that he’s “violated his fundamental oath of office,” which “seems pretty criminal to me.” But he deferred to a judge and jury to decide whether he’s broken the law.

Pritzker contended Trump’s call for him to be

jailed was part of a larger pattern of the president going after his political enemies as evidenced by his Justice Department’s recent indictments of former FBI Director James Comey, on charges that he lied to Congress, and New York Attorney General Letitia James, who is accused of mortgage fraud. Both led investigations of the president in the past.

“They’re making things up to go after people. We’re seeing it day in and day out, and the fact that he’s made a threat against me, I’m not afraid. I’m going to stand up for the people of my state, and we’ve got to all stand together, because there (are) truly unconstitutional actions that are coming out of this administration, coming at the states and the people of the United States,” Pritzker said.

“It’s true that the president says things and sometimes he follows through on those threats. And he certainly has the power of the presidency,” the governor said. “He does not have the power to overcome the Constitution. And so, am I afraid? I am not afraid. Do I think that he could do it? He might. But as I’ve said before, ‘Come and get me. You’re dead wrong.’”

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