

NORTH CAROLINA

CHARLOTTE IMMIGRATION CRACKDOWN BEGINS



ERIK VERDUZCO, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Willy Aceituno, left, makes a police report Saturday with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department Officer N. Sherill, after U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents broke his vehicle window during an enforcement operation in Charlotte, N.C.

Federal government didn’t previously announce enforcement push

ERIK VERDUZCO
Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Federal officials confirmed Saturday that a surge of immigration enforcement in North Carolina’s largest city began, as agents were seen making arrests in multiple locations.

“Americans should be able to live without fear of violent criminal illegal aliens hurting them, their families, or their neighbors,” Assistant Homeland Security Secretary Tricia McLaughlin said in a statement. “We are surging DHS law enforcement to Charlotte to ensure Americans are safe and public safety threats are removed.”

Area officials, including Mayor Vi Lyles, released a statement criticizing such actions as “causing unnecessary fear and uncertainty.”

“We want people in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County to know we stand with all residents who simply want to go about their lives,” it said.

Crime is down in the city this year through August, compared with the same

months in 2024. Homicides, rapes, robberies and motor vehicle thefts fell by over 20%, according to AH Datalytics.

Still, President Donald Trump’s administration seized on the stabbing death of Ukrainian refugee Iryna Zarutskaha on a Charlotte light-rail train to argue that Democratic-led cities fail to protect residents. A man with a lengthy criminal record was charged with her murder.

The federal government didn’t previously announce the push but County Sheriff Garry McFadden said this past week that two federal officials told him Customs agents would arrive soon.

Charlotte is a racially diverse city of more than 900,000 residents, including more than 150,000 who are foreign-born, according to officials there.

Willy Aceituno, a Honduran-born U.S. citizen, was on his way to work Saturday when he saw “a lot of Latinos running,” chased by “a lot of Border Patrol agents.”

Aceituno, 46, said he was stopped twice by Border Patrol agents. During the second encounter, they forced him from his vehi-

cle after breaking the window and threw him to the ground.

“I told them, ‘I’m an American citizen,’” he said. “They wanted to know where I was born, or they didn’t believe I was an American citizen.”

After being forcibly taken into a Border Patrol vehicle, Aceituno said, he was finally released after showing documents proving his citizenship. He had to walk some distance back to his vehicle and later filed a police report over the broken glass.

Spokesperson Paola Garcia of Camino, a bilingual nonprofit serving families in Charlotte, said she and her colleagues observed an increase in stops by U.S. Customs and Border Protection and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents since Friday.

Greg Ascitutto, executive director of the community development group CharlotteEast, said via email that the “significant border patrol activity” was seen Saturday.

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J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE, ASSOCIATED PRESS

House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, D-N.Y., and fellow Democrats speak Wednesday about the health care fight on the steps of the House before votes to end the government shutdown at the Capitol in Washington.

Dems wary of GOP promise on health care subsidies vote

Some Republicans want to extend credits, while others aim to overhaul ‘Obamacare’

MARY CLARE JALONICK
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Now that the government shutdown is over, House and Senate Republicans say they will negotiate with Democrats on whether to extend COVID-era tax credits that help tens of millions of Americans afford their health care premiums.

But finding bipartisan agreement could be difficult, if not impossible, before the subsidies expire at the end of the year.

The shutdown ended this week after a small group of Democrats made a deal

with Republicans senators who promised a vote by mid-December on extending the Affordable Care Act subsidies. But there is no guaranteed outcome, and many Republicans have made clear they want the credits to expire.

House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., called the subsidies a “boondoggle” immediately after the House voted Wednesday to end the shutdown, and President Donald Trump said the Obama-era health overhaul was a “disaster” as he signed the reopening bill into law.

It is far from the outcome that Democrats hoped for as they kept the government closed for 43 days, demanding that Republicans negotiate with them on an extension before premiums sharply increase.

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