

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Sean O'Hearn, a former South Burlington resident now living in Ferrisburgh, Vermont. I was present as a witness and participant during the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) action at 337 Dorset St. in South Burlington, VT, on March 11, 2026.

Arrival and Initial Observation

I became aware of the situation at approximately 8:30 AM and arrived on site around 9:00 AM. What I observed was a peaceful, community-led demonstration intended to protect members of the community. The narrative alleging that protesters initiated the violence is entirely false, video from both sides will confirm this. The violence I witnessed and personally received was perpetrated by the Vermont State Police, the Burlington Police Department, and Federal ICE agents.

Chronology of Events

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3. Initial Altercation 5-530pm:

4. A group of Vermont State Troopers, many wearing masks and lacking visible identification, approached the peaceful

5. demonstration. I was forcibly handled by three of these troopers, who tossed me into an ICE agent. This agent then violently threw me to the ground.

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9. The Strangling Incident:

10. I was able to regain my footing and move to the side of the porch. While holding onto the railing for support,

11. I was violently choked from behind. Video evidence confirms that one of the masked State Troopers was pulling my hood tight around my neck, strangling me. The force used was so severe that the metal railing was pulled out of the concrete foundation. I have

12. lateral bruising to my trachea.

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16. Second Instance of Force (A short time later):

17. A short time later, when ICE officers were attempting to depart with the individuals they had detained, two

18. officers threw me against the side of the house. Video evidence to support.

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22. Deployment of Crowd Control (7:00 PM):

23. At approximately 7:00 PM, without any prior warning or dispersal order, law enforcement deployed crowd control

24. measures including pepper spray (mace), flashbang devices, and non-lethal projectiles. I was personally struck on the arm by a projectile and experienced the effects of tear gas.

25.

Conclusion

ICE would not have been able to conduct this operation without the active assistance of Vermont law enforcement agencies. Furthermore, if the goal of the State and local police was truly to protect the public, it is concerning that first responders were absent and the public road was immediately reopened only after the ICE agents had cleared the scene. This suggests that the priority was facilitating the ICE operation, not ensuring public safety.

Sean O'Hearn of Ferrisburgh