For Immediate Release  
June 29, 2019  

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For Pride, API Chaya Demands Congress Abolish Immigration and Customs Enforcement  

This year marks fifty years since the Stonewall protests against police brutality. This June, New York Police Commissioner James O’Neill voiced a public apology for the violence and police actions during the Stonewall raid in 1969. In his words, “The actions taken by the N.Y.P.D. were wrong — plain and simple.” Today, our nation is bearing witness to the brutal actions of ICE, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and it is time to protest and fight back.  

Twenty four immigrants have died under ICE custody during the Trump administration.¹ This does not include the five children who have died under the watch of other offices.² Today’s nonsensical immigration policies, the reckless disregard for human life by ICE, and the inhumane conditions that immigrants are experiencing are part of the tragic American story of an ongoing colonial claim to indigenous land. This claim on American land has required and continues to require genocide and exploitation to uphold. Hand in hand with colonial violence, we recognize that state-sanctioned sexual violence is part of the experience of children and families in custody and that LGBTIQ immigrants, particularly trans and gender non-conforming people are more vulnerable to abuse. Indeed, over the past four years, there have been over 4,500 complaints regarding the sexual abuse of children in immigrant detention.³  

API Chaya is an organization that seeks to end systemic violence in our communities. We believe that ICE, a 6 billion dollar agency, should be demolished and that our communities should not live in fear of impending immigration raids and the development of a new era of American concentration camps. We call on U.S. citizens, especially allies, to work in solidarity with immigrant communities to take down ICE, release immigrant families, and work with children to reunite them with adults who they trust to care for them. We call on Congress to defund the agency and redirect resources to families and helping professionals to be ready to provide appropriate care, including legal representation, medical and mental health services, and connection with loved ones.  

The gross mistreatment and deaths of immigrants seeking a better life is wrong, plain and simple. API Chaya urges all people to contact Congress and to work in collaboration to seek an end to immigration detention. To get involved with API Chaya, visit https://www.apichaya.org/volunteer.  

¹ https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/immigration/24-immigrants-have-died-ice-custody-during-trump-administration-n1015291  