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PORTLAND

‘Do not fail Portland,’ city urges Trump DOJ in response to police probe

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Downtown Portland on Sept. 14, 2025. In a fiery letter on Monday, Portland city attorney Robert Taylor appealed to the nation's top law enforcement officials to prioritize Americans' constitutional rights, including the right to free speech, above "allegiance to a president who is 'untethered to the facts.'" Mark Graves/The Oregonian



By [Hillary Borrud](#) | [The Oregonian/OregonLive](#)

Portland officials fired back at the Trump administration on Monday, accusing the U.S. Department of Justice of attempting to punish their political foes and help their allies by launching an investigation of Portland police's arrest of a conservative journalist and influencer last week.

Police arrested 27-year-old Nick Sortor of Washington, D.C. along with two other people on allegations of disorderly conduct, after a fight broke out near the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement building in South Portland. The next day, Sortor announced on behalf of the U.S. Department of Justice that the agency would conduct a “full investigation” of the Portland Police Bureau stemming from his arrest.

Harmeet K. Dhillon, assistant attorney general for civil rights at the U.S. DOJ, announced the investigation would look at Portland police's alleged “viewpoint discrimination.”

In a fiery letter on Monday, the same day local prosecutors announced they were declining to charge Sortor, city attorney Robert Taylor appealed to the nation's top law enforcement officials to prioritize Americans' constitutional rights, including the right to free speech, above “allegiance to a president who is ‘untethered to the facts’ ...”

“Does the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice care about the Constitution anymore?” Taylor asked in his letter. “Many in Portland and across America have reason to be concerned about the answer to that question.”

Taylor went on to contrast the federal government's rough treatment of people demonstrating against Trump's immigration policies, who record federal law enforcement actions at street level, with federal agents' welcoming approach to conservative journalists and influencers. He noted that federal personnel have allowed people with pro-Trump viewpoints to film protests from the roof of the ICE facility.



People taking photos while wearing press jackets on the lower roof of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) building in South Portland on Oct. 5, 2025. Zaeem Shaikh

In recent days, Taylor added, federal law enforcement personnel have used unjustified force against people protesting Trump administration policies, including shoving peacefully demonstrating veterans and elderly people to the ground over the weekend and discharging pepper spray directly into the face of a vocal but nonviolent protester.

“It appears the federal government is engaging in prohibited viewpoint discrimination by targeting demonstrators based on the content of their speech, while favoring those with whom the federal government agrees,” Taylor wrote.

“Please do not fail Portland and please do not fail America,” Taylor continued. “Please investigate – and stop – the apparent First and Fourth Amendment violations occurring in Portland by the federal government.”

FEDS IN PORTLAND

Feds grant ICE building access to conservative media, influencers, ignore local Portland press

Unmarked convoy enters Portland ICE office as Kristi Noem visits city

Fight over National Guard in Portland could go before appeals court
Thursday

Kristi Noem visiting Portland today, city officials confirm

Illinois braces for arrival of National Guard troops

Hillary Borrud

Hillary Borrud is an investigative reporter who previously covered local and state government for more than 15 years. She has investigated topics ranging from sex trafficking of children in foster care, to the... more

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Do you think President Trump's actions regarding immigration have

- Not gone far enough
- Gone too far
- Been about right

Next

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