

Mayoral candidate Uballez says Keller-White spat over immigration misses the mark

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The increased presence of Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials [has caused alarm](#) for many in New Mexico. Now it's part of Albuquerque's mayoral race, with [two candidates sparring](#) over how the city should, or should not, work with ICE. A third candidate says there are more things the city can do that ensure public safety and protect civil rights.

Mayoral candidate and former U.S. Attorney Alex Uballez watched [the spectacle](#) unfold on social media over the weekend between current mayor Tim Keller and challenger Darren White.

Keller touted a new way to 'verify' if federal ICE agents are working in the city in a [post on Facebook](#). Keller has historically been an "immigrant friendly" mayor, like the city he represents.

White, who was the Bernalillo County Sheriff and former secretary of the New Mexico Public Safety Department, was not a fan of Keller's suggestion of making federal agents' whereabouts public information via calling APD. In response White [wrote a letter](#) to New Mexico's current U.S. Attorney calling for this tipline to be shut down.

Uballez says both of these responses are inadequate. "That's a little too little too late. Public safety is a thing that has to be done smart," he said.

Uballez proposed [11 policies of his own](#) via social media under the tag "there's more we can do," in opposition to both mayoral candidates.

"We don't have to choose between the cruel and the ineffective in this city," Uballez said.

His ideas include requiring ICE to identify themselves, training for companies that do business with the city and creating a policy around sensitive locations. He also suggests giving 911 and 311 operators tools to support families who have been impacted by ICE and are in crisis.

There are [7 candidates](#) for the upcoming mayoral race in November. Early voting begins October 18. [KOAT-TV](#) asked them for their positions on a 2018 ordinance restricting cooperation with federal immigration authorities. Uballez said he would not "sacrifice human lives for Washington D.C. statistics." White said he would end any city police that shields immigrants who committed crimes from ICE.

Mayling Armijo pledged to keep the ordinance. Eddie Varela said the city should cooperate with federal agencies. Patrick Sais only sent the answer "comply." Daniel Chavez and Louis Sanchez did not respond.

<https://www.kunm.org/local-news/2025-07-15/mayoral-candidate-uballez-keller-white-spat-over-immigration>

