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Protest in downtown Los Angeles over ICE raids blocks 101 Freeway



By [Iris Salem](#), [Dean Fiorese](#)

Updated on: February 3, 2025 / 4:22 AM PST / KCAL News

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Police declare unlawful assembly as thousands converge on downtown LA for anti-ICE protests

[Police declare unlawful assembly as thousands converge on downtown LA for anti-ICE protests 04:52](#)

A large crowd gathered in downtown Los Angeles on Sunday to protest the recent ICE raids and deportations. The gathering closed the 101 Freeway for hours. Police declared an unlawful assembly and forced demonstrators to disperse during the daylong event.

The protest began on Olvera Street and grew to a few thousand people, who marched to City Hall before walking onto the freeway.

Some protesters sat down in lanes, while many others held Mexican flags and signs with phrases such as, "Nobody is illegal," and "Viva Mexico," as they marched along the busy thoroughfare while being closely watched by law enforcement. Flags of several other nations were also seen.

At times, fireworks were heard bursting above the large crowd while demonstrators leaned out of car windows and flew their flags and shouted along with the crowd, "Si, se puede," which translates to "Yes, you can."



Protestors gathered in downtown Los Angeles. KCAL News

The California Highway Patrol's Transportation Management Center closed lanes in both directions.

As the freeway was blocked, the LAPD reported major gridlock along Spring Street, Main Street, Los Angeles Street, Arcadia Street, and both northbound and southbound lanes of the 101 Freeway.

Some videos purportedly from the scene showed demonstrators spray painting along the freeway walls, and SkyCal was overhead when a Metro bus was tagged with profanity directed toward ICE.

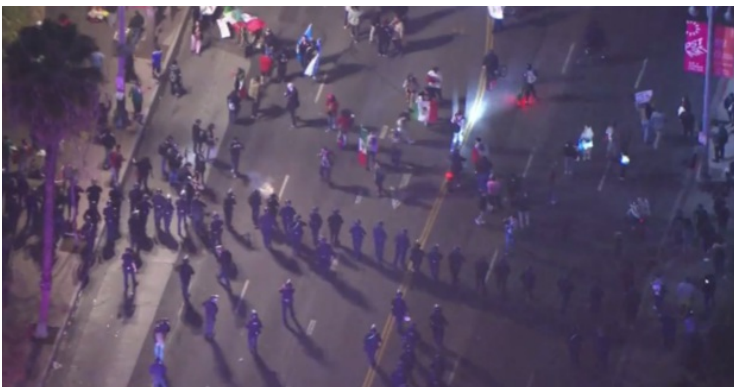
At around 4 p.m., Los Angeles Police Department Central Division officers reported that the protesters had converged on the steps of City Hall. Police, along with Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department deputies, worked on crowd control and continuing the flow of traffic in the area.

The demonstrators eventually made their way to the Main Street Bridge, blocking traffic and creating dense gridlock. Police moved the crowd from the area and blocked the road from both cars and pedestrians.

Many of the people said they gathered to provide a voice to their communities as they were impacted by the new administration's immigration policies.

"We're not criminals," said Sara Aguilar, one of the many in attendance. "We wanna work. A lot of people just wanna work, we all wanna provide. ... I'm out here to represent for my people. I'm out here to be the voice for the people that have been silenced out of fear."

Just after 8 p.m., two hours after declaring unlawful assembly, a large line of police began to move toward a large group of demonstrators.



A skirmish line of police moving towards protesters. KCAL News

By 8 p.m., protesters were cleared and the 101 Freeway was reopened, [according to the Los Angeles Times](#), citing the California Highway Patrol.

The protest came with traffic delays already impacting downtown streets near Crypto.com Arena, many of which were closed for the [Grammy Awards](#) on Sunday.

Later in the day, about 250 [people gathered in Pacoima](#) for another rally, where police claimed drivers were performing stunts and blocking traffic with their cars.

The LAPD reported at least one arrest but it was unclear where and on what charge or charges.

According to The Associated Press, there were similar large rallies in several other Southern California cities such as Riverside and San Diego on Sunday, as well as one in Dallas.

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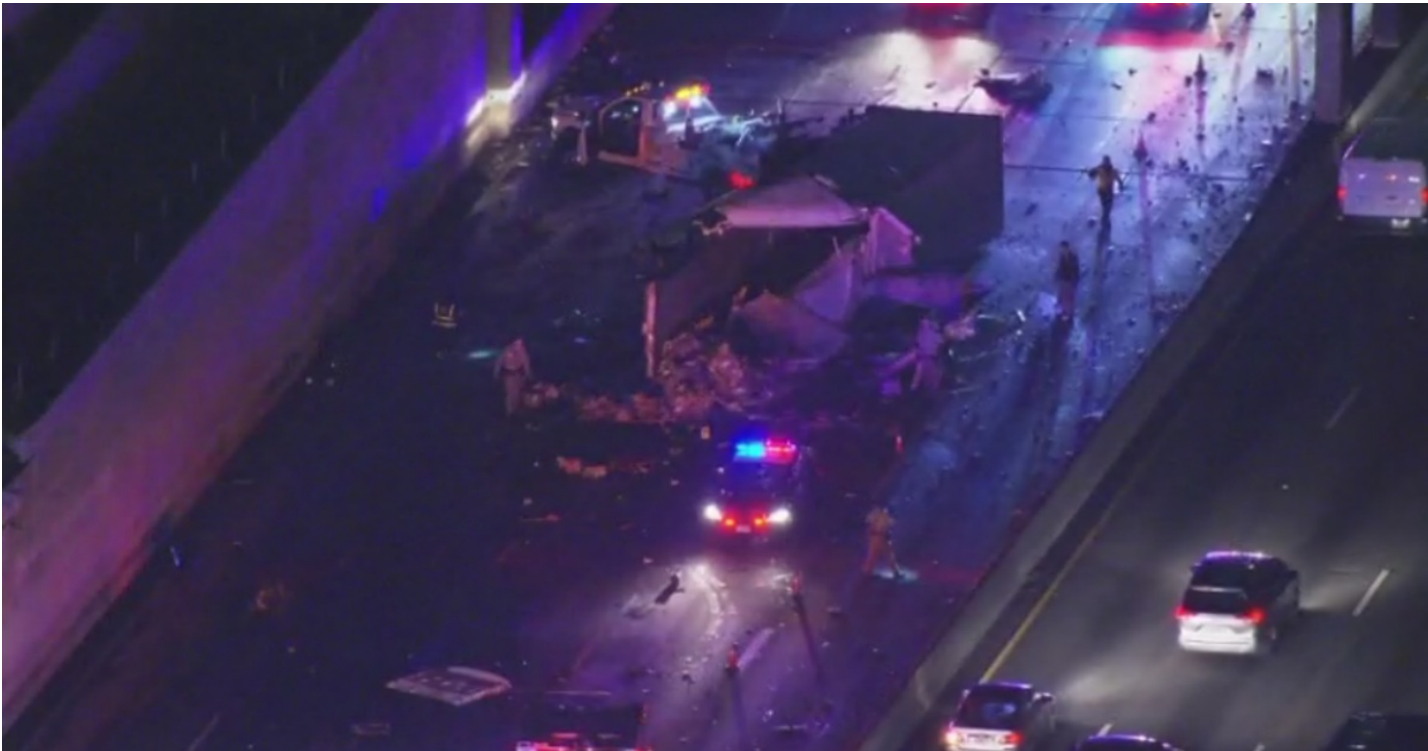


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Iris Salem is a digital producer at CBS Los Angeles. With tenure spanning more than 17 years at CBS News and Stations, Ms. Salem has been a devoted contributor, defining digital news and delivering impactful stories.

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