



[Good piece in the Grey Lady on Wednesday](#) about Trump voters suddenly deciding that some of his policies aren't so great after all.

ICE is trying to build huge detention facilities in order to drag legal immigrants off the streets — specifically, those who are waiting for asylum decisions and those waiting to receive their green cards. It's a way to build the new US concentration camps.

And that has some of Donald Trump's voters not so happy, including this soon-to-be classic statement:

Joshua Breese, a business owner in Surprise [AZ] who voted for Mr. Trump in 2024, said he supported the administration's crackdown on illegal immigration. But he worried that the new facility would bring protests to the area, similar to the clashes in Minneapolis he had watched on the news.

"I was so sick and tired of turning on the TV and seeing millions of people flood across the border. I'm so happy with what they're doing," Mr. Breese said about the Trump administration. "Do I want it to touch my neighborhood? No."

I'm so happy with what they are doing, but **just not here**. Other residents of

Sunrise, a suburb of Phoenix that relies heavily on migrant labor and voted heavily for Donald Trump, complain about what could happen if detainees escape. I can see it now:

*He wants to abuse immigrants, but he doesn't want anyone to protest the abuse.

*He hires people to do manual labor, but he doesn't want them in his country.

*He demands imprisonment, but wants to be nowhere near any problems if they escape.

He is: The Most NIMBY Man In The World.

Not to mention traffic and parking.

The obvious answer is no answer at all: as the article makes clear, the federal government can generally ignore local laws. It's straight out of the Supremacy Clause, and that's a good thing, too: otherwise, one could easily imagine local governments zoning out things like wind power facilities (which they try to do anyway). But it means that here, any zoning ordinance that forbids detention centers would do little to stop ICE using a facility in any way it wants.

Still, I am not sure that local governments are completely without legal avenues of resistance here — using many of the tools of local government and environmental law.

First, big detention facilities require lots of energy and water. That means utility hookups. And you know, that could take quite a while. In [Los Angeles, getting new connections can take months](#). That's just the way it goes. This is trench warfare: local officials might not be able to *deny* hookups, but they really have other things to do. It's one thing to say that the feds don't have to abide by local regs: it's quite another to say that they can jump the queue, or grab water connections over others. And if they say that they can, well, that can be litigated. Which of course takes time.

Second, it isn't obvious to me that NEPA lawsuits might not be in order here. There

will be environmental impacts of some kind. The Trump Administration has, of course, destroyed the Council on Environmental Quality's longstanding NEPA regs and introduced chaos. But that chaos could work well here: [agencies now must come up with the own NEPA regs](#), which can be challenged, and then lawsuits over whether they followed their own regs can be brought, and then they can be appealed, and then a cert petition. Will they win? No. But that isn't the point: the point is to delay. ICE will probably say that NEPA isn't applicable. Great: sue over *that* determination.

Third, who is going to run these centers? Maybe ICE itself, but far more likely are private contractors. And they might well find government contracts drying up or lawsuits harassing them in many ways. If there are government contracts, that means firms that don't get those contracts can challenge them. And that takes more time. Last year, [local governments threw sand in the gears of private contractors trying to reopen facilities](#).

As a developer, Donald Trump was notorious for suing everybody and anybody for everything — using the legal process to harass his enemies and competitors. It's time to learn from the master.

Stay petty, my friends.