

Homeland Security Spying on Reddit Users

Leak show feds tracking anti-ICE Reddit users like "Budget-Chicken-2425"

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Homeland security field agents are scouring the social media site Reddit, monitoring the communications of law-abiding Americans critical of the agency.

The spying is revealed in a January intelligence bulletin produced by the Border Patrol and leaked to me. The subject of the report is Reddit user "[Budget-Chicken-2425](#)," who is not a narco-trafficker, gang member, or terrorist. Just someone concerned about federal overreach.

The report centers on Budget-Chicken's call for a protest near a Border Patrol facility in Edinburg, Texas. Though the report acknowledges that anti-ICE protests throughout Texas have been "generally lawful" and that there's no evidence of any threat posed by Budget-Chicken's call, any protest whatsoever near the border patrol facility is said to "warrant continued monitoring."

REPORT TITLE

Anti-ICE protest - Reddit Social Media Call for protest against ICE near US BP RGV Sector, Edinburg, TX

DATE OF INFORMATION

From: 01/24/2026 To: 01/26/2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(U//FOUO//LES//USPER) On Saturday January 24, 2026 a Reddit user (Budget-Chicken-2425) in Edinburg, TX issued a same-day online call for an anti-ICE protest at 1800 hours at the intersection of US 281 and Trenton Road, directly adjacent to the United States Border Patrol Rio Grande Valley Sector (US BP RGV) facilities. The post generated some engagement on the platform, including supporting comments, logistical concerns, and opposition, underscoring both local sensitivity to perceived immigration enforcement activity and the symbolic value of federal facilities as protest sites. This event occurs against the backdrop of ongoing anti-ICE demonstrations in Brownsville, Austin, Dallas, and other Texas cities, indicating a wider statewide trend of generally lawful but sometimes contentious protests related to immigration enforcement practices. At this time there is no specific reporting of planned violence targeting DHS Personnel or facilities linked to this protest call; however, any demonstrations in proximity to USBP RGV facilities may present operational, safety, and reputational risks that warrant continued monitoring. At the time of this assessment, there is no specific reporting indicating plans for violence against DHS personnel or facilities in connection with this call to protest; however, any protest activity near USBP RGV facilities may generate operational, safety, and reputational considerations.

KEY FINDINGS

1. (U//FOUO) **REDDIT USER: BUDGET-CHICKEN-2425:** A Reddit user named “Budget-Chicken-2425” has recently posted regarding topics in the Rio Grande Valley, Texas.
2. (U//FOUO) Social media continues to function as a primary rapid mobilization tool for anti-ICE and immigration-related protests in Texas, enabling same-day calls for action near sensitive federal facilities with limited formal organization.
3. (U//FOUO) The proposed protest near USBP RGV facilities appears motivated by perceived civil rights and community safety concerns rather than specific, verifiable enforcement incidents, indicating that perception-driven narratives can trigger real-world demonstrations even when underlying details are unspecified or unclear.
4. (U//FOUO) Recent protests in Brownsville, Austin, Dallas, and other Texas locations indicates a pattern of largely peaceful but occasionally contentious demonstrations, suggesting a persistent baseline of community mobilization potential on immigration enforcement issues across the state.
5. (U//FOUO) Online discourse reveals both support and opposition to such protests, reflecting local polarization on immigration enforcement; this division may contribute to tense but not necessarily violent interactions in physical protest environments, particularly near symbolic federal sites.

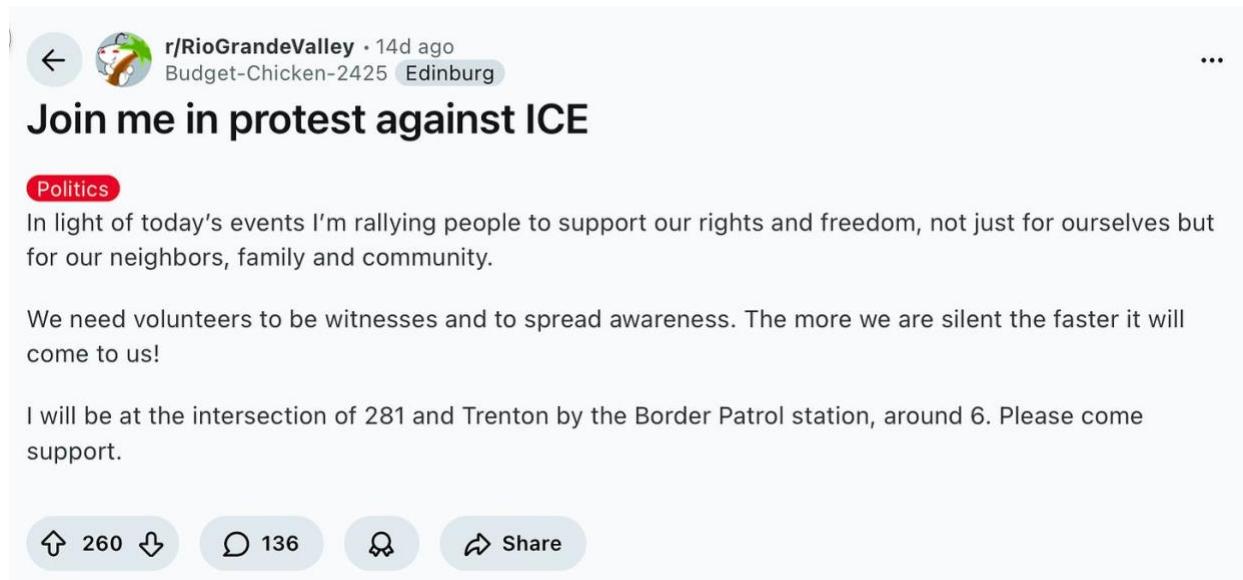
Screenshot of leaked Border Patrol intelligence bulletin

To quote directly from the intelligence bulletin:

“At this time, there is no specific reporting of planned violence targeting DHS personnel or facilities linked to this protest call; however, any demonstration in proximity to USBP [United States Border Patrol] RGV [Rio Grande Valley]

facilities may present operational, safety, and reputational risks that warrant continued monitoring.”

Budget-Chicken’s offending Reddit post was on the r/RioGrandeValley channel. Titled “Join me in protest against ICE,” the post is just a few sentences long, calling on “neighbors, family and community” to “be witnesses and to spread awareness” by protesting a Border Patrol station.



Innocuous as this may seem, it is what the intelligence bulletin regards as a threat.

At one point the bulletin inadvertently reveals the “intelligence collection requirements” driving this surveillance—a window into how the federal government justifies this kind of social media snooping on Americans. According to these requirements, much of the work is sanctioned under so-called “Force Protection,” a military term for safeguarding troops from enemy attack. By repurposing this battlefield concept, homeland security is treating a Reddit thread like a hostile environment.

But the homeland security spies are interested in more than just Budget-Chicken. They are using Reddit to gauge the vibe of the country at large and what they think of immigration authorities like themselves. (They could simply consult [public polling](#), which most recently suggests that almost two-thirds of Americans believe immigration enforcement has “gone too far.”)

In a section titled “Pattern, Trend, and Relationship Analysis,” the bulletin gives a sense of the sheer volume of data homeland security collects to generate a big-picture view of what’s going on in the country. One specific priority asks: “What groups or individuals are responsible for, or are associated with, border violence and what is the intended impact to CBP [Customs and Border Protection] personnel and operations?” (That ultimately feeds into the creation of databases and watchlists of offending Americans.)

The bulletin says homeland security is tracking three social trends in particular:

- Social Media-Driven Mobilization
- Symbolic Targeting of Government Facilities
- A Statewide Baseline of Mobilization Potential

(U//FOUO) PATTERN, TREND, AND RELATIONSHIP ANALYSIS

(U//FOUO) Pattern 1 – Social Media-Driven, Short-Notice Mobilization: The Edinburg call mirrors a broader pattern in which individuals use social media platforms to rapidly organize or attempt to organize protests around federal enforcement issues. The same-day timeline suggests:

(U//FOUO) Low organizational overhead and minimal advance planning.

(U//FOUO) Reduced ability for formal group to coordinate logistics, permits, or safety measures.

(U//FOUO) Potentially lower turnout but higher spontaneity and uncertainty for law enforcement situational awareness.

(U//FOUO) Pattern 2 – Symbolic Targeting of Government Facilities: The selected location – an intersection adjacent to USBP RGV facilities—indicates the symbolic value of federal enforcement sites as protest focal points. This aligns with prior demonstrations at or near city halls, law enforcement offices, and other visible government buildings in Austin and Dallas.^[2]

(U//FOUO) Pattern 3 – Statewide Baseline of Mobilization Potential: Multiple cities across Texas have recently hosted anti-ICE or immigration-focused demonstrations. While each event is locally driven, their clustering in time suggests:

(U//FOUO) A heightened statewide attentiveness to immigration enforcement issues.

(U//FOUO) Potential for rapid diffusion of protest themes and tactics via social and traditional media.

Leaked intelligence bulletin

In other words, the government is building a sociological profile of political discontent. The bulletin notes that these protests are “perception-driven”—meaning they are motivated by “generalized concerns about rights” rather than specific incidents. In the logic of national security, a lack of a specific trigger makes the public more unpredictable and therefore calls for “situational awareness.”

But it's the granularity of the monitoring that is most absurd. To determine the "threat" posed by Budget-Chicken-2425, analysts didn't just look at the protest call; they scoured the user's entire digital footprint.

The bulletin notes that Chicken "frequently participates in various community discussions," listing their interests in r/Texans (comparing the team to the Cleveland Browns), r/movies (discussing the film *Almost Famous*), r/stephenking (sharing book collections), and r/FuckImOld (reminiscing about 1970s television production logos).

(U//FOUO) REDDIT USER: BUDGET-CHICKEN-2425: A Reddit user named "Budget-Chicken-2425" has recently posted regarding topics in the Rio Grande Valley, Texas.

(U//FOUO) As of January 26, 2026, "**Budget-Chicken-2425**" is an active Reddit user who frequently participates in various community discussions, including:

(U//FOUO) **r/Texans**: Commenting on the team's performance and comparisons to the Cleveland Browns.

(U//FOUO) **r/Movies**: Discussing films like *Almost Famous*.

(U//FOUO) **r/stephenking**: Engaging with community posts about book collections.

(U//FOUO) **r/FuckImOld**: Reminiscing about classic television production logos like Ubu Productions and Gracie Films.

Leaked intelligence bulletin

The disconnect between the "lawful" reality of the protest and the agency's internal panic is most visible in a "BOLO" (Be On The Look Out) alert included in the appendix. Despite the bulletin's own admission that there is "no specific reporting of planned violence," the Rio Grande Valley Sector Operations Center issued the following warning to its agents: "It is recommended that all agents wear their ballistic armor, utilize long arms, and if possible, work in groups."

National security brain has so infected the immigration authorities that they now treat a four-sentence Reddit post about "spreading awareness" as though it were the secret messages of al Qaeda. It is a system designed to find threats everywhere, even if it has to look for them in a subreddit about Stephen King novels.