



March 15, 2017

David Marin, Deputy Field Office Director
Enforcement and Removal Operations
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
United States Department of Homeland Security
300 N. Los Angeles Street, Room 7631
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Marin,

I write regarding Romulo Avelica Gonzalez, A 095 776 645, whose request for a stay of removal is pending before ICE. As I wrote to you last week, Mr. Avelica's arrest on February 28—in front of his wife and 13-year-old daughter, after having dropped off his 12-year-old daughter at school—raises a number of serious concerns. First and foremost, Mr. Avelica has lived in the United States for over 25 years, and is the father of four U.S. citizen children. Splitting apart this family would cause great suffering to his wife and children, and I have consistently expressed my opposition to an enforcement approach that expends limited resources on operations that divide families with little or no public safety benefit.

I am also troubled that Mr. Avelica was arrested while dropping his daughter off at school, apparently violating Department of Homeland Security policies protecting such sensitive locations from immigration enforcement operations. The sensitive locations policy is vital to ensuring that immigrant and mixed status families feel safe sending their children to school. The national attention drawn by Mr. Avelica's arrest—and potential deportation—heightens fears among immigrant communities that could prevent children from attending school.

Moreover, I am concerned that the ICE agents who arrested Mr. Avelica were wearing jackets labeled "POLICE" that did not indicate they were in fact ICE agents. As I and other City leaders have stressed to you, the representation of ICE agents as police threatens to undermine the vital relationship of trust and cooperation the Los Angeles Police Department has worked tirelessly to build with all of our City's residents.

Finally, it appears Mr. Avelica's relief options were limited previously due to inadequate and/or fraudulent representation. The City is committed to combating notary fraud and the exploitation of immigrants seeking legal assistance in dire circumstances. I understand Mr. Avelica's attorneys are pursuing different avenues of immigration relief, and I urge ICE to grant a stay so that he can pursue these options.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'E.G.' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

Eric Garcetti
Mayor