

To: Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Ave NW, Washington, DC 20016

June 10, 2021

Dear Secretary Mayorkas,

As organizations that believe in the livelihood, safety, health, and overall well-being of transgender immigrants, we would like to express our urgent concerns regarding the ongoing detention of **Maura Martinez (A# 077 891 963)**. As of today, she has been held in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention at the Otay Mesa Detention Center for over two years, where she is suffering from abuse and a lack of adequate medical care.

We are deeply concerned about Maura's well-being and safety. We have received consistent, credible and concerning reports that Maura has faced abuse and lack of adequate medical care over the more than two years she has been detained. Furthermore, Maura experiences mental health struggles from the persistent and severe abuse she suffered throughout her childhood and adolescence, and her continued detention has taken – and continues to take – a heavy toll on her safety, mental health and well-being.

We call upon you to exercise your authority and discretion to release Maura from detention so she can continue to pursue her claim for humanitarian protection in safety and reunite with her community of friends and loved ones, and to not deport her back to conditions that are not safe for her because of her identity as a transgender woman.

ICE should not expose transgender immigrants to harm by placing them in detention facilities that restrict their access to healthcare and mental health services. The detention of asylum-seekers or other immigrants solely on the basis of their migration status constitutes arbitrary detention under U.S. and international law. As organizations who believe in supporting the safety and lives of those fleeing persecution and seeking protection, we condemn the detention of transgender immigrants. ICE continues to criminalize immigrants for seeking safety, without taking into consideration the specific needs of these communities, especially transgender Latinx immigrants.

As a trans woman who has strong community support in the U.S., there is no reason for ICE to continue to detain Maura. We call on you to use your discretion to release Maura right away and allow her to continue to build her life without violating her human rights, being criminalized, traumatized and caged. Maura deserves to be with people who care for her.

We request a prompt response from you. Please send it to The Translatin@ Coalition President and CEO Bamby Salcedo, bambys@translatinacoalition.org.

Sincerely,

Aldea - The People's Justice Center
Al Otro Lado
American Friends Service Committee Colorado
Amnesty International USA
Church World Service
Decriminalize Sex Work
Desert Support for Asylum Seekers
DSA-LA
Esperanza Immigrant Rights Project
Familia: Trans Queer Liberation Movement
Fordham Law School Feerick Center for Social Justice
Government Accountability Project
Haitian Bridge Alliance
Immigration Equality
Louisiana Advocates for Immigrants in Detention (LA-Aid)
El Refugio
Mississippi Center for Justice
National Immigrant Justice Center
Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala
New Mexico Dream Team
RAICES
RCHP-AHC Still Waters Anti-trafficking Program
Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network
Santa Fe Dreamers Project
Time for Change Foundation
The Translatin@ Coalition
Trans Lifeline
Tucson SURJ
UndocuBlack Network
UnLocal
United We Dream
Witness at the Border
Youth OUTright WNC

Cc: Gregory J. Archambeault
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