

August 14, 2025

Sent via email

Kristi Noem
Secretary of Homeland Security
Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Noem,

We, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), Free Press, and a coalition of civil society and media freedom organizations, write to express our deep concern over the continued detention of journalist Mario Guevara by United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and to urge ICE to quickly move to release him.

Today, we have reached a grim milestone in Guevara's case: He has been in detention for two months since he was initially arrested while covering a protest in the Atlanta metro area. We are alarmed that Guevara has remained in detention despite the fact that he is not facing any charges and was legally in the United States at the time of his arrest.

The case of Mario Guevara, an Emmy-winning reporter with thousands of subscribers, represents an erosion of democratic norms in the United States and a curtailment in journalists' ability to do their jobs, as guaranteed by the First Amendment, without fear of prolonged detention. Originally from El Salvador, Guevara had been in the United States legally for 20 years and has become a part of the Atlanta metro community.

Public [outrage](#), concern from [civil society](#), and pressure from [officials](#) is growing around Mr. Guevara's prolonged detention. As we outlined in our [previous letter](#) to your office, Guevara's initial arrest occurred on June 14, and he was charged with three misdemeanors, which were later dropped. He was then transferred to immigration detention, at which time other misdemeanor charges were brought in relation to incidents that allegedly occurred about a month prior. Guevara was granted release on bond by an immigration court judge, and the remaining misdemeanor charges were dropped. Shortly after this, ICE was granted a stay by the Bureau of Immigration Appeals blocking bond for Guevara, and preventing his release. Throughout this time, Guevara was shuffled between five different local and federal detention facilities across Georgia. At several points, his whereabouts were unknown and impossible to confirm by his lawyers and family.

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Committee to Protect Journalists

With Guevara's ongoing detention, the Atlanta community has also lost a critical source of information on issues often not tackled by other media outlets: Guevara has doggedly covered issues relating to immigration in the area, frequently serving as the only reporter to cover stories of some of the city's most vulnerable communities. His continued detention sends a chilling message in its attempt to silence these narratives and prevent coverage of essential stories.

Guevara's continued detention seems to violate core constitutional principles protected by Georgia law and the First Amendment, undermining a pluralistic, free press. We urge you to release him on bond without delay as a necessary step toward correcting this injustice.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)
Free Press

The Atlanta Press Club
Common Cause Georgia
First Amendment Coalition
Freedom of the Press Foundation
Georgia First Amendment Foundation
Georgia Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ Georgia)
National Association of Hispanic Journalists
PEN America
Reporters Without Borders (RSF)
Society of Professional Journalists

CC:

Todd M. Lyons, Acting Director, U.S. Immigration and Customs
Enforcement
Steven Schrank, Special Agent in Charge of HSI Atlanta
Brock Nicholson, Special Agent in Charge of HSI Georgia and the Carolinas

Rep. Mark Edward Green, Chair, U.S. House Committee on Homeland
Security
Rep. Bennie G. Thompson, Ranking Member, U.S. House Committee on
Homeland Security
Sen. Rand Paul, Chair, U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security &
Governmental Affairs
Sen. Gary C. Peters, Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland
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