

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
NYDIA M. VELAZQUEZ
7TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

August 13, 2018

Judge Mirlande Tadal
625 Evans Street, Room 148A
Elizabeth, NJ 07201
Tel: 908-787-1355

Re: BARROS, Edison

Hon. Judge Tadal:

As Mr. Edison Barros' representative in the U.S. Congress, I strongly urge you to grant his stay of deportation and reunite him with his family.

As you are aware, Mr. Barros was arrested in May for throwing his keys at a car to protect his dog. That is not the behavior of a menace to society, but a desperate action any of us would take under duress to protect those we love. In this regard, he cooperated with law enforcement during his arrest, was released, and dutifully reported to his court hearing on July 16, 2018. It was on that fateful day that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) waited outside the courtroom and detained him.

As we have seen in so many cases, separating this family has had dire consequences. Mr. Barros is his family's sole breadwinner. As such, his detention has forced his U.S. born daughter to abandon a promising academic career to return home and support her family in his absence. With a green card application pending, Mr. Barros is also unable to pursue this pathway to citizenship freely, and instead must contend with deportation despite having obeyed and cooperated with the law.

Moreover, Mr. Barros is being held at the Hudson County Correctional Facility, which recent reports demonstrate conclusively is an inhumane environment. Detainees are failing to receive necessary medical treatment; are being given food that is often raw, spoiled, or rotten; and are being subjected to verbal and psychological abuse that only magnifies the terror of their detention. Mr. Barros has reported witnessing such abuses and not receiving adequate medical care. This is totally unacceptable, and on its own should merit his release.

Ultimately, Mr. Barros is a cooperative and productive member of my district. He has helped to raise truly remarkable daughters and has never confronted the criminal justice system before this year. If Mr. Barros is deported, it will not only disrupt this family, but force more immigrants in my district into the shadows and deter them from seeking the pathways to citizenship open to them, as Mr. Barros is doing.

I ask you to be mindful of this context as you consider the facts of this case, which I believe merit a stay on his deportation and his release so that he can be reunited with his family to pursue his green card application to its completion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nydia Velazquez", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nydia Velazquez
Member of Congress