

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4309

June 4, 2026

Secretary Markwayne Mullin
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave., SE
Washington, D.C. 20528

Acting Director David Venturella
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
500 12th St SW
Washington, D.C. 20536

Re: Concerns Regarding the Detention of Jacob “Ya’akub” Ira Vijandre

Dear Secretary Mullin and Acting Director Venturella,

Based upon the following information presented to us from publicly available news reports and court records, as well as information provided by Mr. Vijandre’s attorneys, we write to express our serious concerns regarding the continued detention of Jacob “Ya’akub” Ira Vijandre. Mr. Vijandre, a Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipient, photojournalist, and Texas resident, is currently being held in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody following allegations related primarily to his social media activity and political expression.¹

According to the information provided to our office, Mr. Vijandre has lived in the United States since he was 14. He has no criminal record and has been an active member of the North Texas community for over twenty years. He spent a decade as a senior safety specialist for American Airlines, serving on a care team that supported families following aviation tragedies. His family has a storied history of service to this country; his great-grandfather and great-uncle were both awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for their service to the U.S. military during World War II. In his work as a photojournalist, he focused on documenting Muslim civic life and social justice demonstrations in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

According to publicly available court filings, Mr. Vijandre was taken into ICE custody at gunpoint on October 7, 2025, after federal authorities asserted that certain social media posts and online activity demonstrated support for terrorist ideology.² The cited activity reportedly included commentary regarding the prosecutions of the Holy Land Foundation Five, the Fort Dix Five, and Aafia Siddiqui, criticism of United States foreign policy, pro-Palestine expression, and engagement with religious Islamic content, including the Shahada, the declaration of faith for Muslims worldwide.³ His DACA status, which USCIS had renewed in May 2024 through May 2026, was subsequently revoked during these proceedings. We are further concerned by reports from Mr. Vijandre’s legal team that the FBI approached him in 2023 seeking his cooperation as a confidential informant, which he declined.⁴ The proximity of that interaction to the subsequent revocation of his DACA status and detention raises questions that warrant careful review.

¹ Aguilar, Julián. 2026. “How Social Media Posts Led to a Texas DACA Recipient’s Detention.” Houston Chronicle. January 6, 2026. <https://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/houston-texas/immigration/article/houston-daca-social-media-protest-21277896.php>.

² Pratt, Timothy. 2025. “‘They Attacked My Religion, My Faith’: Muslim Photojournalist Detained by ICE Speaks Out.” The Guardian. The Guardian. December 12, 2025. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/dec/12/photojournalist-detained-ice-social-media>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Romine, Taylor. 2025. “A DACA Recipient Objected to ICE’s Detention of a Community Member. He’s Now Facing Deportation.” CNN. October 28, 2025. <https://www.cnn.com/2025/10/28/us/texas-daca-recipient-ice-deportation>.

Court documents filed by Mr. Vijandre’s legal team contend that DHS relied on constitutionally protected political and religious expression to justify both the termination of his DACA status and his continued detention.⁵ We are particularly troubled by reports that immigration proceedings focused extensively on his social media activity, religious practices, political views, and journalistic work rather than any allegation of criminal conduct. According to court records, Mr. Vijandre has not been accused of planning or committing any act of violence.⁶ These allegations raise serious concerns regarding freedom of speech, freedom of religion, due process protections, and the treatment of noncitizens engaged in political advocacy and journalism. These circumstances warrant immediate congressional oversight and thorough accounting from the Department of Homeland Security.

Accordingly, we request answers to the following questions by June 12, 2026:

1. What specific conduct formed the basis for the Department of Homeland Security’s determination that Mr. Vijandre presented a threat to national security?
2. Did any federal agency determine that Mr. Vijandre provided material support, financial assistance, operational assistance, or direct coordination with a designated foreign terrorist organization? If so, please provide all supporting evidence.
3. What role did Mr. Vijandre’s social media activity, including “likes,” reposts, journalistic interviews, or attendance at political and religious events, play in the decision to terminate his DACA protections and detain him?
4. Did any official or representative of DHS, ICE, the FBI, or any Joint Terrorism Task Force request or pressure Mr. Vijandre to serve as an informant prior to his detention? If so, please provide details regarding those communications.
5. Did the FBI refer Mr. Vijandre’s case to DHS, ICE, or any Joint Terrorism Task Force for further investigation or immigration enforcement purposes? If so, please provide the basis for that referral, the date of the referral, and all related communications, memoranda, or investigative materials.
6. What policies or guidelines govern DHS’s review and monitoring of protected First Amendment activity conducted by DACA recipients or other noncitizens?
7. What legal standard did DHS apply in determining that Mr. Vijandre’s speech constituted support for, endorsement of, or advocacy related to terrorist activity?
8. Has DHS conducted any assessment regarding whether Mr. Vijandre’s detention violates First Amendment protections regarding political expression, religious expression, or freedom of the press?
9. Please provide all records, memoranda, intelligence assessments, investigative materials, and communications relating to the decision to terminate Mr. Vijandre’s DACA status or place him in immigration detention.
10. What steps has DHS taken to ensure that constitutionally protected political speech and journalistic activity are not improperly used as the basis for immigration enforcement actions?

⁵ Uddin, Marium, Chris Godshall-Bennett, and Maria Kari. 2025. Review of FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Mr. Jacob “Ya’akub” Ira Vijandre Files an Amended Habeas Petition Challenging His Unconstitutional Detention Based on His Protected Political Speech and Expression. Muslim Legal Fund of America. November 13, 2025. <https://mlfa.org/for-immediate-release-mr-jacob-yaakub-ira-vijandre-files-an-amended-habeas-petition-challenging-his-unconstitutional-detention-based-on-his-protected-political-speech-and-express/>.

⁶ Petitioner’s Reply and Brief in Opposition to Respondents’ Motion to Dismiss. *Vijandre v. Warden, Folkston ICE Processing Center et al.*, No. 5:25-cv-136 (S.D. Ga. Dec. 8, 2025). https://habeasdockets.org/media/documents/71784971/030_05705136313-d86b0df6ab01.pdf

11. Has DHS conducted any review regarding the broader use of immigration authorities against individuals engaged in advocacy relating to Palestine, U.S. foreign policy, or alleged wrongful terrorism convictions?
12. What safeguards exist to prevent immigration detention from being used in a retaliatory manner against individuals engaged in lawful political advocacy or dissent?
13. Please provide the current status of Mr. Vijandre's immigration proceedings, including the legal basis asserted for his continued detention.

We thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. We look forward to your prompt response. Should you require additional information, please contact Congressman Green's Acting Chief of Staff, Raphael Cohen-Fuentes, by email at Raphael.Cohen-Fuentes@mail.house.gov or phone at 202-225-7508.

Sincerely,

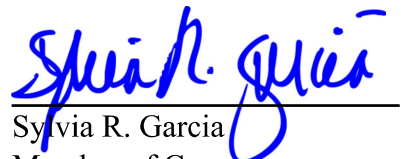


Al Green
Member of Congress
Scion of the Enslaved
Africans –
Sacrificed to Make America
Great

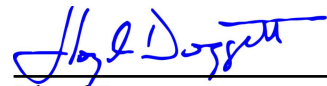
Progenitor of August and
August 20th as
Slavery Remembrance Month
and Day



Greg Casar
Member of Congress



Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress