

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 11, 2025

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

Dear Secretary Noem,

We are horrified by the recent illegal abduction and now indefinite detention of Mahmoud Khalil—a U.S. legal permanent resident—by Department of Homeland Security (DHS) agents, and we unequivocally demand his immediate release from DHS custody.

On Saturday evening, March 8th, two plainclothes DHS agents entered Columbia University student housing in New York City and detained Khalil without the physical demonstration of a warrant or any officially filed charges. Khalil is a Legal Permanent Resident and married to a U.S. citizen who is eight months pregnant.

The Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents who arrested him at his home first stated that the State Department had revoked his student visa. After being informed by Khalil's attorney during the arrest that they were mistaken and that Khalil was a permanent resident with a green card, the ICE agents stated that his green card was being revoked instead. The agents also threatened to arrest Khalil's pregnant wife.

Khalil has not been allowed to see his counsel or his wife, and until the morning of March 10th his whereabouts were unknown. DHS initially informed them he was being held in Elizabeth, New Jersey, but his wife attempted to visit the facility on Sunday only to learn that he was not there. DHS refused to provide additional information on his location to his attorney or spouse and until Monday, March 10th, he was effectively disappeared by DHS. We now know that, following the filing of a habeas corpus petition on his behalf in New York shortly after his arrest, Khalil was transferred over thirteen hundred miles away from his home to an ICE facility in central Louisiana. Based on these facts, Khalil's constitutional rights have been violated. He has been denied meaningful access to counsel and any visitation from his family. This is absolutely unacceptable—and illegal. Their access to him must be immediately restored.

Khalil has not been charged or convicted of any crime. As the Trump administration proudly admits, he was targeted solely for his activism and organizing as a student leader and negotiator for the Gaza Solidarity Encampment on Columbia University campus, protesting the Israeli government's brutal assault on the Palestinian people in Gaza and his university's complicity in this oppression. This illegal political justification has been stated clearly by figures throughout the administration, including the president himself.

We must be extremely clear: this is an attempt to criminalize political protest and is a direct assault on the freedom of speech of everyone in this country. Khalil's arrest is an act of anti-

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

Palestinian racism intended to silence the Palestine solidarity movement in this country, but this lawless abuse of power and political repression is a threat to all Americans. President Trump has threatened that "this is the first arrest of many to come," and, if unchecked, this authoritarian playbook will be applied to any and all opposition to his undemocratic agenda.

Mahmoud Khalil must be freed from DHS custody immediately. He is a political prisoner, wrongfully and unlawfully detained, who deserves to be at home in New York preparing for the birth of his first child. Universities throughout the country must protect their students from this vile assault on free thought and expression, and DHS must immediately refrain from any further illegal arrests targeting constitutionally protected speech and activity.

Sincerely,



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



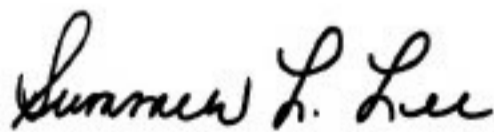
Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress



Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



Jasmine Crockett
Member of Congress



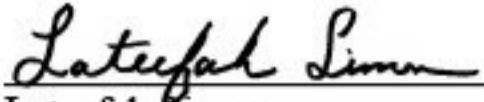
Summer L. Lee
Member of Congress



Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515



Lateefah Simon
Member of Congress



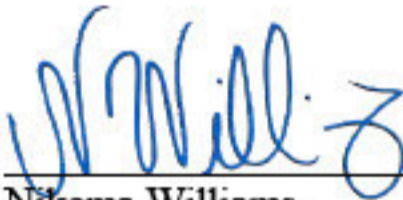
Al Green
Member of Congress



Gwen S. Moore
Member of Congress



André Carson
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress