First ICE raids under Trump arrest nearly 700 immigrants in five days

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Over 680 people were arrested in a five-day-long campaign of raids by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency last week, according to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). A quarter of those arrested had no criminal records.

The first immigration sweep by the Trump administration also marks the first arrest of a DACA recipient, 23-year-old Daniel Ramirez Medina.

Ramirez, who arrived in the United States at the age of seven, was granted a temporary stay of leave and a work permit under the Obama administration's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. Ramirez was arrested at his father's house in Seattle, Washington on the morning of February 10, in a raid targeting his father.

ICE is seeking to deport Ramirez in spite of his DACA status, which he renewed last year. Ramirez has no criminal record. ICE claims that Ramirez has admitted to being a gang member, but his attorneys assert that the agents "repeatedly pressured [him] to falsely admit affiliation."

"The agents who arrested and questioned Mr. Ramirez were aware that he was a DACA recipient, yet they informed him that he would be arrested, detained, and deported anyway, because he was not 'born in this country,'" according to the complaint filed by his attorneys.

Ramirez is being held in an ICE detention center in Tacoma, Washington ahead of deportation proceedings before an immigration judge. His attorneys are arguing that his detention is unconstitutional, and are seeking an injunction against further arrests. Federal magistrate judge James Donohue has ordered DHS to justify Ramirez's detention by today.

More than two dozen demonstrators gathered outside the Northwest Detention Center on Tuesday to protest Ramirez's detention. "All his life is here, he has his family here, he has his dreams here," Wendy Pantoja, one of the protesters, told the *News Tribune*. "But now he's *here*," she said motioning toward the detention center. In the past few days, tens of thousands of workers and young people have rallied in the defense of immigrant rights and in opposition to the recent ICE raids.

Ramirez is one of 750,000 young "DREAMers" who were brought to the United States as children and granted a two-year, renewable reprieve from deportation under the DACA program. The Trump administration is now in possession of the fingerprints and addresses of all 750,000 DREAMers. Up to 8 million people are potential targets for deportation under Trump's January executive orders, including immigrants only *accused* of committing a crime.

"The crackdown on illegal criminals is merely the keeping of my campaign promise," Trump tweeted Sunday morning. "Gang members, drug dealers & others are being removed!"

A majority of last week's raids were conducted near or around homes, in the early hours of the morning. Immigrant advocacy groups report ICE agents posing as other branches of law enforcement and arresting immigrants heading out to work.

Retired Marine general John Kelly, Secretary of Homeland Security, applauded "the heroic efforts" of the ICE agents in a Monday press statement, asserting that they had arrested convicted child molesters.

Executive orders signed by President Trump in the first week of his administration set the groundwork for a massive escalation of the assault on immigrants in the US, ordering the construction of "the wall" along the Mexican border incessantly promoted in his election campaign, the establishment of new DHS detention

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camps, and the hiring of 10,000 additional ICE agents. Prior to his election, Trump vowed to overturn all of the Obama administration's executive orders, including the DACA program.

In an interview with *ABC News* last month, he said that DACA recipients had nothing to fear because he had "a big heart."

"The level of terror and fear in the community is very real," Cristina Jimenez, executive director of United We Dream, an immigrant advocacy organization, told the *Intercept*. In an open letter sent to the Obama administration in November, congressional representatives from California and Illinois reported that DREAMers had committed suicide in fear of deportation under the Trump administration.

The Obama administration, which was responsible for the deportation of 2.7 million immigrants, more than any previous administration, had rejected numerous appeals to grant a blanket pardon to shield both DREAMers and legal permanent residents from deportation.

David Ward, Director of the National Association of Former Border Patrol Agents, speaking on *Fox and Friends* on Monday, said that last week's ICE raids were "probably planned at least three or four months ago, under the Obama administration, and finally launched under the Trump administration."

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