

Milwaukee immigrant worker faces deportation after being framed up for threatening to kill Trump

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Ramon Morales Reyes, a 54-year-old immigrant from Mexico living in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was framed up for threatening to assassinate President Donald Trump and subsequently exonerated. However, he remains in detention and faces deportation, at the direction of the White House and Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem.

The chain of events began in September 2023, when Morales Reyes was the victim of a violent robbery and assault. Demetric D. Scott, the perpetrator, knocked Morales Reyes off his bicycle, cut him with a box cutter and stole his bike. Scott was arrested and charged with armed robbery and aggravated battery, with Morales Reyes set to testify against him at trial.

Attempting to avoid prosecution, Scott devised a plan to have Morales Reyes deported from the US. While in jail, Scott wrote multiple letters threatening to assassinate Donald Trump, signing them with Morales Reyes' name and return address. These letters were sent to state and federal officials, including the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in hopes that Morales Reyes would be arrested and removed from the country before he could testify.

DHS acted swiftly and arrested Morales Reyes on May 21, 2025, after he dropped his child off at school. Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem then publicly announced the arrest, claiming Morales Reyes had written the threatening letters and that he would "self-deport" to Mexico. The White House sought to vilify Morales Reyes as part of its anti-immigrant propaganda and amplified the narrative on social media, posting images of the letter and the worker.

However, the case unraveled as investigators realized that Morales Reyes spoke little English and could not

write in the language. Handwriting samples did not match, and Scott ultimately admitted to authoring the letters in recorded jail calls and to police. Milwaukee County prosecutors concluded that Morales Reyes was framed and that Scott's actions were intended to intimidate a witness and obstruct justice.

Morales Reyes immigrated from Mexico in the 1980s. He is married and the father of three US citizen children. For years he has worked as a dishwasher in Milwaukee, supporting his family and living a quiet life. Earlier in 2025, he applied for a U visa, which is available to undocumented immigrants who are victims of serious crimes and cooperate with law enforcement. His application remains pending, but the backlog for such visas is years long.

Scott's criminal record includes the September 2023 robbery and violent attack on Morales Reyes. According to court documents, after Scott cut him Morales Reyes was treated at a hospital for a laceration. Scott was arrested hours later and confessed to the attack, claiming he wanted his bike back.

On June 3, 2025, Scott was formally charged with felony witness intimidation, identity theft and two counts of bail jumping. His bail was set at \$30,000, and a preliminary hearing was scheduled for June 10. Scott remains in Milwaukee County Jail, awaiting trial for both the original armed robbery and the new charges related to the frame-up.

Three threatening letters, all signed with Morales Reyes' name, have been released to the press. The most widely quoted letter reads:

I will self deport myself back to Mexico but

not before I use my 30 yard 6 to shoot your precious president in his head. I will see him at one of his big rallies [sic].

The crude language and specific threats were intended to draw the attention of federal authorities and ensure Morales Reyes' swift removal. Morales Reyes' attorney, Kime Abduli, emphasized that her client "does not speak any English and definitely cannot write in it," making it clear he could not have authored the letters.

Noem, as Secretary of Homeland Security, played a central role in publicizing the arrest of Morales Reyes. Even after Scott's confession and the unraveling of the case, DHS did not publicly correct the record. Morales Reyes remains detained at Dodge Detention Center, 70 miles north of Milwaukee, and faces ongoing deportation proceedings.

Despite being cleared of the threat, DHS doubled down:

This criminal illegal alien is no longer under investigation for threats against the President, but will remain in ICE custody pending removal proceedings.

The treatment of Morales Reyes is of a piece with Donald Trump's criminalization of immigrant workers and DHS attacks on basic democratic rights. The rush to utilize the fraudulent charges against Morales Reyes as an example to justify the ongoing ICE raids, mass arrests, brutalization, intimidation and deportation of immigrants is a measure of the crisis-ridden nature of the Trump White House.

Noem's public shaming and refusal to correct the record even after Morales Reyes was exonerated shows that creating a climate where immigrants—documented or not—are scapegoated for political gain is the top priority of the administration.

In a statement, another of Morales Reyes' attorneys, Cain Oulahan, condemned the Trump administration's actions: "This administration has jumped quickly to make announcements that they think will play well to their narrative of immigrants being dangerous."

Attorney Abduli said that it had "been a painful and terrifying past few days for Ramon and his family" and that she was "relieved that Ramon's innocence in all of this has been made clear." She added: "He was first a victim of someone else's attempts to frame him and then a victim of the Department of Homeland Security, who chose to publish his name and face while perpetuating false accusations and a false narrative."



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