

ICE agent attempts to murder DoorDash driver in Austin, Texas, imprisons him with bullet still lodged near spine

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On Sunday, September 20, a still-unidentified Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) thug attempted to murder Wilber Rafael Garces Perez, a 28-year-old father and husband, while he was delivering food for DoorDash in Austin, Texas.

Social media video and accounts from Garces Perez establish that he was shot at least once in the upper back despite presenting no threat to ICE agents.

Speaking through interpreters at a press conference held Monday in Austin, Garces Perez recounted the harrowing events. Shortly before 12:30 p.m. he was driving on Anderson Lane when an unmarked black sport utility vehicle pulled alongside his dark blue Toyota Corolla and attempted to strike it. Garces Perez initially believed he had encountered an aggressive driver. The federal agents did not activate their emergency lights until after their vehicle had sideswiped his car, according to Garces Perez.

Garces Perez said that after realizing the men were ICE agents, he asked them to allow him to pull over so they could detain him. Instead, the agents struck his Corolla again. Garces Perez made a U-turn beneath the highway in an attempt to find a place to stop, but the unmarked vehicle continued pursuing him and rammed his car, causing extensive damage.

Video recorded immediately before the shooting shows the damaged Corolla stopped beneath the highway, facing the black SUV. An agent exits the SUV, circles behind it and walks toward the front of the Corolla before approaching the driver's side. Within seconds of leaving the SUV, the agent fires what sounds like at least three shots at Garces Perez.

At no point in the video is the agent in danger of being struck by the Corolla. Nor does the footage show Garces Perez attempting to attack the agent or flee on foot. After the shooting, the Corolla rolls forward only a few feet before stopping.

Garces Perez said that he had attempted to cooperate with the agents. According to attorney Kate Lincoln-Goldfinch, who translated his remarks, Garces Perez "asked the ICE officer if he could please at least pull over first so they could detain him." Instead, the agents sideswiped his car, pursued him as he attempted to find somewhere to stop and then shot him.

"After I was shot, one of the officers got into my car and forcibly turned it off," Garces Perez said through Lincoln-Goldfinch. "I told him I was in a lot of pain and I thought I was going to pass out."

Video recorded after the shooting shows Garces Perez wounded and surrounded by federal and local police officers. None of the ICE agents or police officers are seen providing him with medical

assistance. Video shows that Austin police officers handcuffed Garces Perez and cut off his shirt before emergency medical personnel transported him to Dell Seton Medical Center.

Garces Perez's wife learned of the shooting from her husband. Lincoln-Goldfinch said the 28-year-old had decided to work Sunday rather than spend the day at home because he wanted to earn additional money for his family.

"At 12:30 she received a call from him shouting he had been shot and he was in pain, and then the call cut off," Lincoln-Goldfinch said. "She knew nothing else."

His wife rushed to the hospital, but guards denied that Garces Perez was there. After obtaining confirmation from Austin officials that he had been taken to Dell Seton, she returned with Lincoln-Goldfinch.

"The guards told me, 'There is no one here by that name,'" the attorney recalled. "And I said, 'I didn't tell you his name.' And they said, 'Well, he was here earlier.'"

Lincoln-Goldfinch said hospital guards ordered the two women to leave the facility and forced them from the emergency-room parking lot. They waited across the street for hours while reports circulated that Garces Perez had died.

Approximately four hours after he arrived at the hospital, Garces Perez was discharged into federal custody. Neither the hospital nor ICE informed his wife or attorney of his condition or location. They did not locate him until approximately 10 a.m. Monday, when they learned that ICE had transported him roughly 130 miles southwest of Austin to the South Texas ICE Processing Center in Pearsall.

Garces Perez told his attorney that doctors had left the bullet lodged near his spine and that he had not received pain medication. He arrived at the Pearsall detention center at approximately 4 a.m., was placed in a frigid room without a bed and forced to sleep on the floor. ICE agents subsequently interrogated him.

"I am not doing well due to the gunshot wound," Garces Perez said during the press conference. "I have not received the medical care and attention that I require."

Lincoln-Goldfinch said Garces Perez remained in severe pain and was still bleeding when she spoke to him Monday morning.

"He told me this morning when I spoke to him he was actively bleeding," she said. "I don't know if he has a dressing, like a bandage. We know that the bullet is still lodged in his back."

As of this writing Garces Perez remains imprisoned at the South Texas ICE Processing Center in Pearsall. The for-profit detention center, like the rest of the sprawling US network of immigrant concentration camps, is notorious for medical neglect and the denial

of basic necessities.

Immigration attorney Eric Lee told the *World Socialist Web Site*:

The Pearsall internment camp in south Texas is a miserable place where detainees are routinely subject to medical neglect and lack of access to basic necessities. The clients that we have had who have been detained at that facility describe it in shocking terms.

In an Instagram post, Lincoln-Goldfinch explained that Garces Perez came to the United States “to work hard, so he could afford expensive tests and therapies for his disabled son back home in Venezuela.”

Garces Perez entered the United States through the CBP One program in 2024, received authorization to work and applied for asylum. According to Lincoln-Goldfinch, he notified the immigration court after changing his address, but officials sent notice of a subsequent hearing to his former residence. When Garces Perez failed to appear at a hearing he did not know had been scheduled, an immigration judge issued a removal order in absentia.

The Department of Homeland Security responded to the shooting by announcing its intention to deport Garces Perez, even as he remained wounded, actively bleeding and without adequate medical care.

In a statement posted Sunday night, the department referred to Garces Perez three times only as an “illegal alien,” claiming that he “illegally entered our country under the Biden administration and had a final order of removal.” It added, with extraordinary indifference: “The illegal alien’s condition is stable, and he is in federal custody pending removal.”

The statement omitted that Garces Perez entered the United States through the CBP One program, received authorization to work and applied for asylum.

The shooting of Garces Perez is at least the third shooting carried out by federal immigration agents in Texas since Trump returned to the White House. The previous two were fatal.

Seventy-five days before Garces Perez was shot, an ICE agent killed 52-year-old construction worker Lorenzo Salgado Araujo in Houston. Salgado Araujo, who had spent more than 35 years building homes in the Houston area, was driving members of his construction crew to a job site early on the morning of July 7 when ICE agents in unmarked vehicles surrounded his van and shot him.

More than a year earlier, on March 15, 2025, a Homeland Security Investigations agent shot and killed 23-year-old US citizen Ruben Ray Martinez in South Padre Island. Federal authorities concealed ICE’s involvement in the killing for nearly a year. It was not publicly reported until February 2026, after records obtained through the Freedom of Information Act exposed the agency’s role.

In that case, as in virtually every case involving a vehicle and a federal agent shooting, federal authorities claimed that Martinez had attempted to ram agents with his vehicle. Body-camera footage subsequently released to the public revealed this to be a lie.

The federal agents who killed Salgado Araujo and Martinez remain publicly unidentified and uncharged. No agent has been charged in connection with the shooting of Garces Perez.

The response of the Democratic Party politicians who appeared at Monday’s press conference was to channel the widespread anger over the latest ICE injustice behind another electoral appeal to “remember in November.”

Texas Democratic Representatives Lloyd Doggett and Greg Casar offered the same bankrupt prescription that has followed every previous killing by ICE and Border Patrol agents: vote for Democrats so the existing agencies can supposedly be subjected to greater oversight.

Doggett called for the creation of an “independent structure for some kind of accountability,” while making clear that the Democrats were seeking limited reforms to the immigration police, not their abolition. He said Democrats would “need reinforcement to achieve the reforms,” adding, “I think our most effective protest will be at the polls.”

Doggett also responded to the police assault on demonstrators Sunday night by admonishing protesters. Austin police arrested three people and used tear gas against some of the hundreds who gathered near the intersection where Garces Perez was shot. Doggett called for “peaceful” protests designed to “bring people to our side” and suggested that demonstrators wave American flags rather than Mexican flags.

Casar, a member of the Democratic Socialists of America, explicitly endorsed Doggett’s electoral appeal.

“And after this election, as Congressman Doggett mentioned, if the people who are enraged by this speak out, make their voices heard,” Casar said.

The perspective advanced by Doggett and Casar is politically bankrupt. By Doggett’s own admission, the Democrats seek to reform the immigration police, not abolish them.

The immigration police cannot be transformed into an institution that serves the working class through additional oversight and new regulations. Like the local, state, county and federal police, the military and the intelligence agencies, ICE is an instrument of class rule. It was created and is maintained to divide the working class, pitting native-born worker against immigrant, and to enforce the interests of the capitalist state through violence and repression.

The only way forward is a class-based strategy rooted in the understanding that police violence is not an aberration or the product of insufficient training and oversight. It arises from the capitalist system and the function of the police as defenders of private property and class rule. Ending it requires uniting workers across every division of nationality, race and immigration status in an independent political movement against both capitalist parties and the profit system they defend.



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