

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

February 17, 2021

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  
Secretary of Homeland Security  
Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

We are writing on behalf of Mr. Jean Montrevil, a longtime New York resident and co-founder of the New Sanctuary Coalition, a faith-based coalition that advocates for immigrant rights. In 2018, Mr. Montrevil was abruptly detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (“ICE”) outside of his home in Far Rockaway, Queens. Within days, ICE deported Mr. Montrevil to Haiti, separating him from his four U.S. citizen children, his congregation at Judson Memorial Church, and his community. We now ask you, consistent with all applicable rules and regulations, to exercise your discretion to grant humanitarian parole so that Mr. Montrevil may return home to the U.S.

We understand that Mr. Montrevil first came to the U.S. as a teenager from Haiti in 1986. He lost his lawful permanent resident status in 1994 due to drug convictions. After serving his time for his convictions, he returned to his community in New York where he became a husband and raised four children. It was here in New York that he joined Families for Freedom and eventually co-founded the New Sanctuary Coalition, which has its home at Judson Memorial Church. He raised his family, started a small business, and gave back to his community. He also spoke out about immigration policies that impacted families like his.<sup>1</sup>

We are told that as a result of his advocacy, ICE targeted Mr. Montrevil along with another prominent leader of the New Sanctuary Coalition for deportation in 2018. His then-14-year-old son Jahshiah started a petition to free his father that received nearly 40,000 signatures.<sup>2</sup> Despite these efforts, ICE deported Mr. Montrevil to Haiti, ignoring the calls of his family and community. Mr. Montrevil’s sudden deportation devastated his community, and particularly his four children, who struggle to adjust to live without their father.

As members of Congress, we condemned these actions at the time, observing an emerging pattern of retaliation against immigrant rights leaders.<sup>3</sup> Today, Mr. Montrevil’s family and congregation continue to advocate for his

---

<sup>1</sup> Maria Sacchetti and Maria Sacchetti, *ICE has detained or deported prominent immigration activists*, Washington Post (Jan. 19, 2021), [https://www.washingtonpost.com/powerpost/ice-has-detained-or-deported-foreigners-who-are-also-immigration-activists/2018/01/19/377af23a-fc95-11e7-a46b-a3614530bd87\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/powerpost/ice-has-detained-or-deported-foreigners-who-are-also-immigration-activists/2018/01/19/377af23a-fc95-11e7-a46b-a3614530bd87_story.html); Nick Pinto, *No Sanctuary*, The Intercept (Jan. 19, 2018), <https://theintercept.com/2018/01/19/ice-new-sanctuary-movement-ravi-ragbir-deportation/>; Nick Pinto, *Trump Banished Immigration Rights Activist for Speaking Out. He’s Suing ICE to Come Back*, The Intercept (Jan. 16, 2020), <https://theintercept.com/2020/01/16/jean-mBontrevil-deportation-first-amendment/>.

<sup>2</sup> *Free Jean Montrevil*, Change.org petition, <https://www.change.org/p/scott-mechkowski-free-jean-montrevil>.

<sup>3</sup> See Letter from 31 Congressmembers to Hon. Kirstjen M. Nielsen, Secretary Dep’t of Homeland Security (Jan. 26, 2018), [https://velazquez.house.gov/sites/velazquez.house.gov/files/Velazquez\\_Crowley\\_MOC\\_Letter\\_On\\_Immigration\\_Rights\\_Activists\\_PDf.pdf](https://velazquez.house.gov/sites/velazquez.house.gov/files/Velazquez_Crowley_MOC_Letter_On_Immigration_Rights_Activists_PDf.pdf); Letter from 1,800 Community Organizations to Hon. Kirstjen M. Nielsen, Secretary Dep’t of Homeland Security (Jan. 22, 2018), [https://ravidefense.files.wordpress.com/2018/01/ravi-jean-eliseo-maru\\_sign\\_on\\_letter\\_to\\_dhs\\_with\\_sigs.pdf](https://ravidefense.files.wordpress.com/2018/01/ravi-jean-eliseo-maru_sign_on_letter_to_dhs_with_sigs.pdf).

return to his home here in the U.S. They have not forgotten Mr. Montrevil, and we support their efforts to bring this treasured member of our community home, consistent with all applicable rules and regulations.<sup>4</sup>

Community organizations support these efforts and have urged the Biden Administration to ensure the return of Mr. Montrevil.<sup>5</sup> We understand that Mr. Montrevil does not fit within this Administration's immigration enforcement priorities. His deportation has served only to harm a Black U.S. citizen family in the U.S., and to stifle immigrant rights advocacy. We support efforts to return Mr. Montrevil home to the U.S. consistent with all applicable rules and regulations, and we ask that you give fair, full and prompt consideration to this case.

Sincerely,



---

Gregory W. Meeks  
Member of Congress

/s/  
Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress

/s/  
Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress

/s/  
Brian Higgins  
Member of Congress

/s/  
Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress

/s/  
Kathleen M. Rice  
Member of Congress

/s/  
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez  
Member of Congress

/s/  
Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D  
Member of Congress

/s/  
Ritchie Torres  
Member of Congress

---

<sup>4</sup> *Bring Jean Home*, [www.bringjeanhome.org](http://www.bringjeanhome.org); Tequila Minsky, *Bring Jean Home Campaign launched at Judson Memorial Church*, *The Villager* (Jan. 22, 2020), <https://www.amny.com/new-york/manhattan/neighborhoods/greenwich-village/bring-jean-home-campaign-launched-at-judson-memorial-church/>.

<sup>5</sup> *Five Things the Biden Administration Can Do Immediately to Address DHS Retaliation Against Protestors and Organizers*, <https://justfutureslaw.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/FINAL-Top-Biden-Admin-Demands-on-Retaliation-related-to-PD.pdf>.