



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

CC ICE Acting Director: Todd Lyons
Columbia University Interim President: Katrina Armstrong

Dear Secretary Noem,

On behalf of our communities, we urge you to immediately release Mahmoud Khalil, a former Columbia graduate student and lawful permanent U.S. resident, and return him to his home and family in New York City.

On the night of Saturday, March 8, Mahmoud Khalil was arrested and taken from his Columbia University apartment by DHS agents to an undisclosed location. In a [statement on X](#), the Department of Homeland Security announced that the administration would be detaining Khalil, a green card holder, in connection to his alleged participation in pro-Palestinian protests. Khalil has been denied his Constitutional right to due process, and is being held without legal justification or evidence that he has violated any laws.

Khalil's arrest is the latest act in a wider attack on free speech at institutions of higher learning, including the revocation of hundreds of millions of dollars in federal funding from Columbia

University and the University of California system in response to ongoing pro-Palestinian demonstrations. Withholding funding from research institutions limits public knowledge and establishes a hostile precedent that goes against our country's longstanding history of vibrant student activism.

The treatment of Mahmoud Khalil by the Department of Homeland Security is not only inhumane, it is a blatant violation of his legal rights. He has been separated illegally from his pregnant wife, who is a United States citizen, and detained without due process thousands of miles from home. We see these actions by the Trump administration for what they are—a flagrantly unconstitutional attempt to suppress free speech and incite fear.

The administration's pattern of targeting the rights of students and immigrants to speak against injustice undermines democracy and makes everyone less safe. We're writing to urge his immediate release back to his family in New York City. We also call on the administration to remove ICE and DHS from our campuses. Finally, we urge Columbia University to cease any and all cooperation with immigration officials who violate our sanctuary city protections and put their students at risk.

Sincerely, the undersigned:



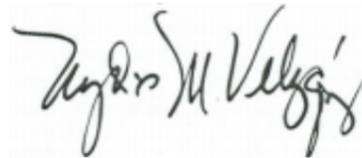
Assemblymember Claire Valdez, District 37



Council Member Alexa Avilés, District 38



U. S. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez,
Congressional District 14



U.S. Representative Nydia Velázquez,
Congressional District 7



NYC Public Advocate Jumaane D. Williams



New York City Comptroller Brad Lander



Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso



State Senator Jabari Brisport, District 25



State Senator Patricia Fahy, District 46



State Senator Kristen Gonzalez, District 59



State Senator Andrew Gounardes, District 26



State Senator Gustavo Rivera, District 33



State Senator Julia Salazar, District 18



Assemblymember Robert Carroll, District 44



Assemblymember Manny De Los Santos, District 72



Assemblymember Phara Forrest, District 57

Assemblymember Emily Gallagher, District 50

Assemblymember Jessica González-Rojas, District 34

Assemblymember Zohran Mamdani, District 36

Assemblymember Marcela Mitaynes, District 51

Assemblymember Gabriella Romero, District 109

Assemblymember Sarahana Shrestha, District 10

Assemblymember Tony Simone, District 75

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Council Speaker Adrienne Adams, District 28

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Council Member Jennifer Gutiérrez, District 34



Council Member Shahana Hanif, District 39



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Council Member Shekar Krishnan, District 25



Council Member Christopher Marte, District 1



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Council Member Lincoln Restler, District 33



Council Member Carlina Rivera, District 2



Council Member Yusef Salaam, District 9



Council Member Pierina Sanchez, District 14



Council Member Sandy Nurse, District 37



Council Member Julie Won, District