

Voces de la Frontera: As Richard Schmidt collaborates with ICE, Milwaukee voters organize for Earnell Lucas for Sheriff to keep families together

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MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN — Voces de la Frontera Action is organizing to elect Earnell Lucas for Sheriff because he has committed to not collaborate with Trump in the separation of Milwaukee immigrant families. Voces de la Frontera Action has launched Spanish-language radio ads and mailers in support of Lucas and is phonebanking daily and canvassing on Saturdays. The next canvass is Saturday, August 4th, starting at 10am at Walker Square Park (1031 S 9th St) in Milwaukee. Voces de la Frontera Action members and supporters will canvass again Saturday, August 11th, starting at 10am.

According to recently released federal records, Acting Milwaukee County Sheriff Richard Schmidt received 84 requests from ICE to hand over Milwaukee residents for deportation and separation from their families from September 1, 2017, the day he took office, through April of this year. Schmidt has not stopped his mentor David Clarke's policy of complying with ICE detainer requests. These are the most recent records available. Federal courts have repeatedly found compliance with ICE detainer requests to be unconstitutional, and on Thursday the US 9th Circuit Court of Appeals found that compliance with detainer requests could violate the Fourth Amendment.

“Across the country, Trump is waging a war on immigrant families, and he’s relying on Sheriffs like Richard Schmidt to carry it out,” said Christine Neumann-Ortiz, Executive Director of Voces de la Frontera Action. “Electing Sheriffs who will put a stop to this collaboration is a frontline struggle, and a victory for Earnell Lucas in the Milwaukee County Sheriff’s election will be a victory for immigrant families across the country. Federal courts have found compliance with ICE detainer requests to be unconstitutional. If people have been ordered released, found not guilty, or paid bond, they have the constitutional right to return to their families and communities. Schmidt is violating that right and instead turning people over to ICE for deportation and separation from their families. Earnell Lucas has committed to stop this discriminatory practice. Electing Earnell Lucas as our next Sheriff will be a victory against the politics of white nationalism, against the separation of families, and against mass incarceration.”

This is not the first time Schmidt has been revealed to collaborate with Trump’s efforts to separate immigrant families. After Clarke’s resignation, Schmidt refused to withdraw Clarke’s application to turn Milwaukee County Sheriff’s deputies into immigration agents through the federal 287g program. The Department of Homeland Security ultimately rejected Schmidt’s 287g application in the face of overwhelming local opposition and revelations about human rights abuses in the Sheriff’s Office.

“It is very important that we elect Earnell Lucas as the next Milwaukee County Sheriff,” said José Boni, a member of Voces de la Frontera Action who will help canvass Saturday. “Acting Sheriff Schmidt is helping Trump to separate Milwaukee families. We did not force David Clarke out of office just for someone with the same ideas to take his place. We don’t want children separated from their parents. We want an end to the criminalization of our families. Earnell Lucas has committed to stop the department’s collaboration with ICE and work for the safety of all of our families.”