

Voces de la Frontera: Waukesha joins Families Belong Together day of action to demand Sheriff Severson reject 287g

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Waukesha, WI — On Saturday, June 30th, Voces de la Frontera's Waukesha Chapter rallied at the Waukesha County Sheriff's Office in support of the Families Belong Together national day of action to demand an end to the Trump Administration's attacks on immigrants and refugees. Dozens of Waukesha residents demanded that Waukesha County Sheriff Eric Severson reverse his decision to aid Trump's efforts to separate immigrant families by turning his deputies into immigration agents through the federal 287g program.

The demonstrators delivered an open letter to Waukesha County Executive Paul Farrow and the Waukesha County Board demanding the board hold public hearings on Sheriff Severson's application to discuss community objections to 287g. Sheriff Severson and county leaders have so far refused to meet with community members to discuss the controversial program. Voces is collecting signatures in support of the letter. The Waukesha rally echoed the demands of the rallies nationwide for an end to Trump's cruel policy of imprisoning families in border internment camps, the reunification of families separated earlier, and for the abolition of ICE. Over 700 cities held rallies.

"Families are being separated at the border but in Waukesha as well," said Alysha

Ferreyra, whose ex-husband, Franco Ferreyra, 29, a Waukesha father-of-4 who has been imprisoned by ICE since June 11th. Franco qualifies for DACA. “My children need their father. Every day they cry for him. They want to talk to him, hug him, and kiss him. They can’t sleep. They throw temper tantrums. They don’t understand why they can’t see their dad. To take a child’s father away from them is child abuse. This is happening everywhere, and that is why we need to abolish ICE. Ricardo Wong, the Director of ICE in Chicago, has the power to reunite my children with their father. I urge people to sign the [online petition to free Franco.](#)”

“Today we are launching a petition for an official public hearing at the Waukesha County Board to discuss 287g,” said Veronica Esquivel, a member of Voces de la Frontera’s Waukesha Chapter. “We have been seeking a meeting with Sheriff Severson and county officials to discuss our objections to 287g since we learned of Sheriff Severson’s application. The Sheriff’s application is extremely controversial, but the community has not had any opportunity to provide input. Sheriff Severson hid what he was doing, publicly saying he was opposed to 287g while applying for it in secret. We urge the County Board to hold hearings on 287g. The public deserves an opportunity to be heard by their elected officials, who have been elected to serve all community residents in Waukesha County.”

“There are serious problems in the Waukesha County Sheriff’s Office,” said Christine Neumann-Ortiz, Executive Director of Voces de la Frontera. “A person recently [died in the jail](#) of an apparent suicide on Sheriff Severson’s watch. Earlier this year, [one of Sheriff Severson’s deputies was indicted](#) for illegally strip searching someone stopped for marijuana possession. And now Sheriff Severson wants to terrorize immigrant families through 287g? There needs to be an independent investigation into the death in the jail, and the County Board must hold an official public hearing so the community can be heard on 287g. We ask Waukesha residents to reach out to their County Supervisors and help us collect signatures on the petition demanding a public hearing on 287g.”