

Rally held in solidarity with children of immigrant parents arrested by US Border Patrol in San Diego

By our reporters
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Two weeks after the arrest of Francisco Duarte and Rosenda Perez outside their home in National City, a suburb south of San Diego, support for their release continues to grow.

A rally of 100 supporters was held Tuesday evening at Kimble Park in National City, where the four children and their lawyer, Mark Lane, called for the immediate release of their parents.

After the rally, supporters attended a City Council meeting to support legislation that would make National City a sanctuary city. Many were not able to sit in the meeting as the room was overfilled and many had to sit in the lobby or in an adjacent room.

Border Patrol initially claimed the parents were arrested for alleged involvement in “human smuggling.” The couple was later found to have no such involvement but are still being detained and denied any request to see their children.

While the family spoke eloquently at the rally and at the City Council, Democratic city council member, Mona Rios, and Christina Sotelo Vence, president of the National City Teachers Association, used the events as an opportunity to push SB 54, known as the California Values Act, which is being touted as a progressive bill which will protect immigrants. This is far from the truth.

The bill will put into place areas such as school and hospitals as “safe places” for immigrants, although Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) can circumvent safe space laws by simply waiting outside schools and hospitals and arresting them there.

It will also continue to require local police to submit names of peoples arrested to federal databases and to notify ICE of any pending release of persons with a

violent felony.

In an email interview with *theaggie.org*, Police Chief Darren Pytel in Davis stressed that the bill is not a radical change nor will it make California a “sanctuary state,” stating “This proposed legislation does not represent a significant change in current law or how California agencies currently handle undocumented immigrants...It does not make California a Sanctuary State as defined by federal law nor does it prohibit communication with federal immigration officials. It does further codify constitutional prohibitions/limitations already in place.”

World Socialist Web Site reporters spoke to friends and supporters of the family at the rally.

Oscar, a San Diego State University student, came to show his support for the family. He mentioned that he was from National City, and coming from a family of immigrants he believed that the detention of the parents was wrong and unjust.

When asked about the current issues regarding immigration, Oscar noted that Mexican workers are stuck between having to immigrate to the US for jobs and living in fear of ICE agents once they arrive. He also supported the position that Mexican and American workers deserve to live and move freely across the border, which itself is a man-made construction.

Lauren, a teacher for the Sweetwater Union High School District in Chula Vista, a suburb south of San Diego, spoke out against the Trump administration: “This is a result of the Trump administration, he speaks about terrorism and deporting those who committed crimes but this is completely contradictory to what he has said. We now have children who are forced to fend for themselves.” WSWs reporters noted that in fact the

Trump administration is a continuation of Obama's policies, a wholesale assault on immigrants and the working class.

The City Council meeting concluded without resolving the matter, they will take a vote on whether to support the state bill later this month.

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