

Fact Sheet

Advocating for the Return and Release of Afilene de la Cruz Hernandez Guzman

Updated as of 13:30 pm EST, 26 Jan 2024

Situation and Advocacy Actions:

Current Situation: Afilene de la Cruz Hernandez Guzman, Alien# is #A096332185, known as Avi, is currently facing indefinite detention and potential deportation, separating him from his wife and 6 children in the U.S. He is currently being held at Broward Transitional Center at 3900 Powerline Rd. Room#239 Pompano Beach, FL 33073: tel. (+1) 954-973-4485

Desired Actions: Our goal is to advocate for the return and release of Avi, highlighting the family's unique circumstances and the impact of the situation on their well-being. The involvement of legal, political, and community support is crucial in addressing this challenging situation.

- **Legal Support:** Seeking assistance from legal professionals to challenge the detention and potential deportation.
- **Congressional Advocacy:** Contacting congressional representatives and government agencies to seek intervention.
- **Public Awareness:** Raising awareness about the case to garner public support and potentially influence decision-makers.
- **Support Networks:** Exploring resources and support systems for the family, including those offered by organizations supporting military families.
- **Letters of Support:** Seeking letters that attest to Avi's character, contributions to the community and good citizenship.

Key Dates and Information

- **Circumstances Leading to Detention:** Avi was detained at St. Thomas USVI airport while returning from a trip to St. John, a US territory on Saturday, January 20, 2024
- **Detention Location:** Currently being held by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) at the Broward Transitional Center in Miami, Florida. Room#239.
- **Current Family Situation:** Avi has been living in the United States since 2004 and is married to a U.S. citizen since 2005. They have 6 children, 5 of whom are U.S. citizens and 1 that is a permanent resident. The family is facing significant emotional, financial, and logistical hardship due to the detention.
- **Legal Status Efforts:** Avi and his spouse Aubrey have been working with attorneys and advocacy groups to legalize the individual's status. Including organizations such as American Families United.
- **Previous Challenges:** Avi faced deportation attempts in the past due to circumstances stemming from a family tragedy in their home country.

Background Narrative

- **Afilene's Journey to the U.S.:** Avi faced a harrowing situation in his home country of Honduras. In 2002, his life took a tragic turn when the mother of his 3 oldest children caught on fire in a tragic cooking accident and suffered in agony for almost a week with no

treatment at the hospital until she died of pneumonia, all while Afilene stood by her side and ran the halls of the hospital pleading for them to at least do something to clean or dress her wounds or ease the pain. In that fire their entire home burned down with all of their belongings. This left him traumatized and desperate to care for his three children ages 3 months, 4 years, and 5 years old. And his children likewise were left traumatized as they were in the fire with their mother and the two older girls watched their mother essentially burn to death. Avi had no choice but to go try and find a way to provide for his girls and extricate them from violence and danger like sexual abuse in addition to the food insecurity and other impacts of growing up in an impoverished country. His journey was fraught with challenges because when he initially fled Honduras, he was returned at the border. He stayed a short while in Mexico and returned to the border to try again due to his desperate circumstances and was caught inside the US, detained for a period and deported.

- **Building a New Life in the U.S.:** Despite these setbacks, Avi made it to the U.S. in 2004, where he met and married his wife, Aubrey, in 2005. Together, they have been tirelessly working to legalize his status, engaging with attorneys and advocacy groups. Avi has integrated into the community – serving others, working, and paying taxes under a legal tax ID, while also facing the ongoing struggle to secure his legal status.
- **The Children:** After they were married, Aubrey was able to petition to bring Avi's 3 girls to the US on resident visas. The 3, now adults and legal US citizens and residents, were joined by 3 younger siblings born in 2006, 2008, and 2010, giving them 6 children. The older children have faced many hurdles to overcome the trauma they experienced and are now adults contributing to society: one was just accepted as a master's degree candidate in education, another is in France completing a master's in data science. Of the three younger children, one will graduate high school without her father if we can't find a way to bring Avi home by the spring. Another, their youngest son will have to go through his teen years without his father.
- **Additional Context:** Avi married into a family with a strong military and service tradition who has lost a member in non-combat military service (Sgt. Levi David Cowley, Army Chaplain's Assistant, Korea DMZ BIRTH 3 Aug 1980 DEATH 18 Aug 2001 (aged 21) and have been indirectly associated with military support organizations. Father-in-law served in the Vietnam Era, Grandfather in law served WW2 Era earning both a bronze star and purple heart. Avi's extended family in the US are also serving in important roles in the Fire Service, Education, Clinical Research/Medicine, and Technology. In short, they are a family that value and have fought for the ideals of the American dream, one that immigrants like Avi desperately seek when under the threat of violence or poverty in their country of origin.

Key Contact Information

Aubrey Hernandez (spouse), resident of the state of Maryland
5724 East Pine Dr. Riverdale, MD 20737 Cell# 301-379-3469 email: Baubs84@gmail.com
Angela Radcliffe (sister-in-law), resident of the state of Pennsylvania
2015 Terwood Rd. Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006 Cell# 301-922-0844 email:
Radcliffe.angela@gmail.com

Fact Sheet

Advocating for the Return and Release of Afilene de la Cruz Hernandez Guzman

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

Q: Why was Afilene not granted a green card if married to a U.S. citizen?

A: Despite being married to a U.S. citizen, Afilene's path to a green card has been complicated by his previous deportations and the 20-year bar. These factors have made it challenging to navigate the legal system and secure his status.

Q: Is Honduras a dangerous country?

A: Yes. In fact, on June 21, 2023, DHS published Federal Register notices (FRNs) announcing the rescission of the 2017 and 2018 terminations of the **Temporary Protected Status (TPS)** designations of Honduras for 18 months, from Jan. 6, 2024, through July 5, 2025 (60-day re-registration period from Nov. 6, 2023, through Jan. 5, 2024) and according to Amnesty International: "Human rights defenders faced high levels of violence. Authorities failed to provide sufficient funding for public health... and more" Honduras has long been grappling with significant challenges related to violence and poverty. It is one of the most violent countries in the world, primarily due to gang activity, drug trafficking, and a high rate of firearms possession. Poverty is pervasive, with a significant portion of the population living below the poverty line, leading to limited access to basic services and opportunities. This environment of insecurity and economic hardship drives many Hondurans to seek better lives elsewhere, often resulting in perilous journeys and complex immigration situations. These factors contribute to the context in which individuals like Afilene Hernandez Guzman make the difficult decision to leave their homeland.

Q: Why did Afilene take the risk of travel in the current political climate?

A: Afilene has no criminal record and a legal driver's license in the state of Maryland. Avi and Aubrey have always been open and honest about his undocumented status even as they sought to advocate for his citizenship and always limited travel to US states and territories. He and his wife were on a brief getaway, in part to celebrate their wedding anniversary, one of the few liberties he has taken given the tremendous limitations on his life as an undocumented person.

Q: Are finances a concern for the family?

A: This will be a long battle. A GoFundMe Campaign has been set up here <https://gofund.me/54bee5c1> please share this and donate if you have means. No amount is too small.

Q: What are the chances that Avi will be returned home versus deported?

A: It is hard to predict as many forces are at play. We currently have a glimmer of hope as the information on hand suggests that he will be given a hearing to please his case for asylum, however a date has not yet been set.

Q: Can't his family's military service help his case?

A: While his family's military service is honorable, it does not directly impact immigration proceedings. Immigration cases are assessed based on individual circumstances and legal criteria.

Q: What are the chances of stopping his deportation?

A: The chances depend on various factors, including legal interventions, advocacy efforts, and potential changes in immigration policies. Continuous legal support and public advocacy are crucial in these cases.

Q: How can the public help?

A: Public support can be expressed through raising awareness, sharing the social media post below, contacting congressional representatives, and supporting advocacy groups working on similar cases. Public opinion can sometimes influence policy decisions and individual cases. You can also write letters to Avi to keep his spirits up in detention. Be sure to include his A# and Room # on the envelope #AviBelongsToUS #BringAviHome #FacesofImmigration #AviStoryUSStory

Q: Is a privacy and disclosure waiver in place with the Department of Homeland Security Immigration and Customs Enforcement Office?

A: One has been filed however each department or office often requests one to be tailored. As such you can request a copy by contacting Aubrey Hernandez or Angela Radcliffe, who will work with Avi to obtain his signature.

SOCIAL MEDIA POST



#BringAviHome

#AVIBELONGSTOUS ##FACESOFIMMIGRATION
#AVISTORYUSSTORY

