



## COURT GIVES GREEN LIGHT TO IMMIGRANT GROUPS CLAIMING RETALIATION BY ICE FOR EXERCISING FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS

**For immediate release**  
**October 8, 2020**

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Earlier today, in a victory for the plaintiffs, the U.S. District Court of the Western District of Washington [denied the Trump administration's motion to dismiss](#) in *NWDC Resistance et al. v. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement et al.*, a case brought in federal court by Washington State community groups [La Resistencia](#) and the [Coalition of Anti-Racist Whites](#). The plaintiffs contend that ICE has a nationwide pattern and practice of retaliatory enforcement actions against immigrant activists engaging in protected political speech.

Sejal Zota, legal director of [Just Futures Law](#) and co-counsel in the case, explained the impact of the court's decision. "We are very pleased that the court saw through the government's empty arguments and explicitly recognized as plausible our clients' claims about ICE's retaliation against immigrant organizers."

Maru Mora Villalpando leads [La Resistencia](#), a grassroots organization based in Washington State working to end the detention of immigrants and stop deportations, and is one of a number of activists targeted by ICE nationwide described in the [underlying lawsuit](#).

"The U.S. is facing a pervasive threat to First Amendment rights nationwide, especially for immigrant, Black, indigenous, and people of color communities," Mora Villalpando said. "The court's decision is important to protect everyone's fundamental rights to free speech and political protest."

Peter Strand, an organizer at the [Coalition of Anti-Racist Whites](#), said "ICE's targeting and intimidation of anti-detention activists is a blatant attempt to thwart our work. We're glad to see the latest decision on this case, which keeps us on the path toward holding ICE accountable."

In April, Just Futures Law and co-counsel [Davis Wright Tremaine](#) made public [unsettling emails](#) revealing that senior ICE officials in the Seattle area discussed potential removal proceedings for Maru Mora Villalpando as a way to "[take away some of her clout](#)." Despite the government's attempts to evade these disturbing allegations with a motion to dismiss, today's decision from the court made clear that it has jurisdiction over the case, allowing it to proceed.

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