

ICE Accused of Entrapping Married Immigrants Seeking Green Cards

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Photo: AP

The Trump administration's immigration rhetoric is often framed as a pro-law and order campaign against undocumented immigration rather than a set of racist, inhumane policies against people of color. But that facade is laughable, as the administration proves every single day. The latest outrage: the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency is coordinating with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to target undocumented immigrants married to U.S. citizens, according to a [new lawsuit filed by the ACLU](#).

Undocumented people are legally allowed to stay in the U.S. with their citizen spouse while waiting for a green card, according to Obama-era regulations that are still in effect. But the ACLU says the federal government is using this process as a chance to prey on would-be citizens and deport them.

Some claims in the legal brief are based on emails between ICE agents that were obtained by the ACLU. These emails appear to blatantly admit to entrapping immigrants with innocent-seeming interviews, and purposefully obscuring the practice from the press. From the Associated Press [report on the suit](#):

Andrew Graham, a Boston-based ICE officer, said the agency generally receives from USCIS lists of immigrants seeking legal residency who have already been

ordered for deportation, had re-entered the country illegally or were considered “an egregious criminal alien.”

Graham said ICE then works with USCIS to schedule interviews so that ICE agents can be present to make an arrest. He noted ICE prefers to spread out the interviews to ease the workload on its agents and to prevent generating “negative media interest” from the arrests.

“At the end of the day we are in the removal business and it’s our job to locate and arrest them,” Graham wrote in part.

“The government created this path for [immigrants] to seek a green card,” Matthew Segal, the ACLU’s Massachusetts legal director, told AP. “The government can’t create that path and then arrest folks for following that path.”

“[Obama’s] regulation is still the law of the land,” Segal added. “So arresting these folks is not about law and order. These are people with a path to legalization and the government is trying to block that.”

ICE denied they are cooperating with USCIS in this manner, while USCIS wouldn’t comment to the AP:

ICE spokesman John Mohan responded that allegations of “inappropriate coordination” between the two agencies are “unfounded” and that coordination between the two Department of Homeland Security agencies is “lawful and legitimate.” He declined to elaborate, citing the pending litigation.

Sure doesn’t sound lawful or legitimate.

One of the five couples named in the case are Lilian Calderon and Luis Gordillo, whose story is heartbreaking, and underscores the cruelty of the illegal cooperation between agencies.

Gordillo is a U.S. citizen, but Calderon is a native of Guatemala who came to the country with her family at the age of 3. She was ordered to leave in 2002 after her father was denied asylum.

The 30-year-old mother of two was detained by ICE in January after she and her husband attended an interview at the USCIS office in Johnston, Rhode Island, to confirm their marriage.

Calderon was released in February after the ACLU challenged the detention.

This is some seriously evil shit.