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[00:00:19] **Speaker 1** The immigration case of Morales Reyes isn't the only one in Milwaukee raising concerns. There's also Yesenia Ruano, a teacher's aide in the public schools and mother, who was told to self-deport to El Salvador even though she has a pending visa application for human trafficking victims and no criminal history. Her immediate removal from the U.S. Was put on hold for now. But local leaders have taken a stand over the federal immigration crackdown. Releasing public statements in solidarity. The Milwaukee Common Council declares ICE actions further fuel anti-immigrant sentiment being pushed at the national level. Council President Jose Perez joins us now and thanks very much for being here.

[00:01:04] **Speaker 2** Thank you for having me here and the opportunity to share the Common Council's view and the things we're doing here in Milwaukee.

[00:01:11] **Speaker 1** Tell us more about why you feel the council should weigh in on these cases, these people.

[00:01:18] **Speaker 2** Well, you know, I think Milwaukee has always been a welcoming place for immigrants. Our council cares about fairness, about process. Uh, and it's important that these things are held front and center. You have teachers aid who has been entrusted by the community to look after our Children been here 14 years, no criminal record. And we want a system that supports our Milwaukeeans that way and creates opportunities and a path for citizenship. Because that's what the American dream is about. And the council felt compelled to show some solidarity about what we consider as fairness in this broken system that we have.

[00:01:58] **Speaker 1** How in your mind have you seen a rush to judgment in these cases?

[00:02:05] **Speaker 2** You know, when we think about the impact of human trafficking, these things take time. These things we feel deserve a due process. And in this case, having to wait so long and then for the moment of having to deport, self-deport in a community where we want and need more teachers and people in education, there is a rush to the judgment and to be much more fair than that.

[00:02:33] **Speaker 1** Does it feel like immigrants in your city and across the state are not being given that due process or that that process is quick and can be too often flawed?

[00:02:44] **Speaker 2** Yeah, well, it feels that way, especially when it takes as long as it does. People petition, have to wait years. Even in Yesenia Rano's case, 14 years to come to a conclusion after applying for the visa, it just takes a long time. It disparages people from staying within the process continue to apply. It's expensive. So that That sense of it not being a fair process that is inclusive creates lots of animosity about the hope that if you do all the right things, in the end, this immigration process will make the right decision.

[00:03:29] **Speaker 1** How does the kind of ICE enforcement that we've seen recently tear at the fabric of your community?

[00:03:38] **Speaker 2** Well, we have Milwaukeeans that aren't sending their children to school, aren't showing up for work, that have done nothing wrong or are waiting on the system, feeling that it's coming after them. And the Latino community has been, the Latino and immigrant communities had a huge impact on the economics in Milwaukee, have stabilized the population growth. We're cranking out young people, educated, going to college. And yet. Doesn't feel like the sense the rate of return or the investment back in the Latino immigrant community is is making any sense. So it's created fear. It's created a sense of not wanting to participate. And we need we need public safety is very important. We need our immigrants to always contact the police to have all the confidence that the system is working. And when they're in fear or living in fear in the shadows, it's difficult to do that.

[00:04:36] **Speaker 1** Does the attention that you and others are putting on these cases, these people, force the Department of Homeland Security, do you think, to afford more thoughtful kind of enforcement and including due process?

[00:04:49] **Speaker 2** That's what we're hoping. We're hoping that the attention we're providing to it isn't one of agitation or being antagonistic, but when we see good people in our community that have invested time and energy, that are doing the right things, we're calling on the system to be fair. We are calling on system to really look at the folks and the fabric of our community, what makes it up and really. Being conscious about that. We don't always feel that that's the case.

[00:05:21] **Speaker 1** Have you or the council had communication with ICE or the Trump administration?

[00:05:27] **Speaker 2** Um, not directly. I know that, um, uh, that would be something for us to consider. I know that we've reached out to our congressional reps when we hear of things in the community, hoping that, since at that federal level, they can communicate with ice around, um the truth around either raids or why people are deported or figuring out this list. How does someone make this list of folks that are being either? We hear that they're They're following people in communities, they're pulling them over. And sometimes we wanna know what is the criteria to make this list? So we're educated about these stops, knowing why they're doing what they're doing but we haven't heard a word.

[00:06:08] **Speaker 1** Council President Jose Perez, thanks very much for joining us.

[00:06:11] **Speaker 2** Thank you for having me.

[00:06:17] **Speaker 1** Thank you. Good luck with all of that.

[00:06:26] **Speaker 2** We're working at it. We appreciate the opportunity to share that we're concerned about the situation.

[00:06:34] **Speaker 1** Well, again, thank you for your time. Thank you.

[00:06:40] **Speaker 2** You too, bye-bye.