



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

ZOE LOFGREN
19TH DISTRICT
CALIFORNIA

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Statement of Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren
Chairperson, House Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship

I am closely following the case of She'yaa Bin Abraham-Joseph (professionally known as "21 Savage").

I understand that She'yaa legally moved to the U.S. with his family as a young child, that his visa expired while he was still a minor and that he has been in the process of procuring a U-visa since 2017. He has considerable ties to the U.S. where he has lived since his family moved to Atlanta when he was young. His entire family still resides, legally, in the Atlanta area, including his mother, sisters, brothers and three young children.

As a successful artist in the music industry, it appears that She'yaa has shown through his career and philanthropic activities that he is a responsible member of our society and is a positive contributor to our country, especially the local Atlanta community.

His detainment in an Atlanta ICE detention center raises a number of questions.

First, that he continues to be held there even though he apparently has been undergoing immigration processes to become a legal resident brings into questions once again the Trump Administration's policies to initiate drastic enforcement actions that actually interfere with the ability of individuals to follow the law and to obtain legal status as provided by our immigration laws.

Secondly, as it appears he poses no danger to society nor does he appear to pose a flight risk, questions arise as to why this individual remains in custody rather than released on bond while his immigration case proceeds.

Finally, as a successful artist, he is able to give voice to the views of so many Americans who are critical of Trump Administration policies, activity that is protected by the First Amendment. His presence in the United States has been known to the Department of Homeland Security for some time, certainly since his application for a U visa. Recently he released a song criticizing the activities of the DHS in its treatment of immigrant children at the border. It was just a few days later that ICE chose to arrest him. Was his arrest in response to his Constitutionally protected speech? It looks like that. If so, that cannot be tolerated in a free society.

Often individuals arrested by ICE while pursuing lawful status, individuals who are held without bond who pose no threat nor flight risk, are not well known. I hope that because of his status as a public figure that we can shed further light on the policies and procedures of the Department of Homeland Security and that She' yaa (21 Savage) can appear as a witness before our Subcommittee to help draw attention to these issues.