

U. S. House Committee on

THE JUDICIARY

C/o CHAIRMAN JERROLD NADER
2141 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Committee Members.

My name is Mario Antonio Martinez. I am an honorably discharged U.S Army Veteran who ascended to the rank of Sergeant. I served from 1980-1986 during the Cold war in West Germany. I was stationed there to help protect the United States and Europe against a foreign invasion. After my tour there, I returned to the United States. I was stationed at Fort Bragg North Carolina 82nd Airborne Division for the remainder of my active duty enlistment. During my Army career my primary military occupation (MOS) was 52D-20: Power Generation Technician. I studied at the Fort Belvoir Virginia Army Corps of Engineers Academy. I have been in the engineering field most of my life, since the age of 18 or so. I have worked for 2 large corporations; Air Products and Chemicals and C.B. Richard Ellis (CBRE) through the Local 501 International Operating Engineers Union. I am currently still employed with them.

I have lived in the U.S. legally for nearly 52 years, since 1968. I became a legal permanent resident on April 14th, 1971. The United States is the only place I have ever known as my home. This is where I have raised my children, now 30 and 28. I am a grandfather to a little girl, Maddison. I am also a proud homeowner since February 2017. My entire extended family has their citizenship and live here in the United States, mostly in California and Arizona. I have no family ties in Mexico.

I served four years and three months of a five-year prison sentence for a domestic conviction. I also spent six months in ICE/DHS immigration custody. While there, I fought for the right to a bond hearing, and won my limited and temporary freedom to the cost of \$10,000. I have, in all respects, turned my life around. I am gainfully employed building engineer; a position I secured within 3 weeks of being released from ICE custody. In fact, it is with the same company that I worked for prior my conviction, CBRE.

On May 10th, 2019 I submitted an application for a Gubernatorial Pardon from Gov. Gavin Newsom (D-CA). I am asking for the opportunity to stay in the U.S.—the ONLY country I call home. Like so many of my brothers and sisters in arms, I struggled. My conviction occurred over ten years ago. I have built a life and stable home in every way possible. It is unfair that I have to beg for the opportunity to stay in this country while other veterans exactly like me are released to their homes after serving their time.

The deportation of U.S. Veterans must end. It is immoral and unpatriotic. We, noncitizen veterans did not turn their back on America in her many times of need. The U.S. cannot continue to turn its back on us.

Sincerely,

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