



## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

# **ICE Responds to the Increasing Violence Against Mexican Journalists Seeking Asylum With Inhumane Incarceration**

**When:** Tuesday, April 4, 2017 at 2:30 p.m.

**Where:** Law Office of Carlos Spector, 1430 E. Yandell Drive, El Paso, Texas 79902

**Who:** Carlos Spector, *Mexicanos en Exilio*; Dylan Corbett, *Hope Border Institute*

On February 5, 2017, Martin Mendez Pineda, a 25 year old journalist from Acapulco, Guerrero fled Mexico seeking asylum at the El Paso Port of Entry. Martin had written news articles in the Acapulco daily, *Novedades*, critical of the federal police which resulted in him receiving a series of death threats and beatings by 8 officers.

ICE's denial of Martin's parole request signals an inhumane, criminalization of the asylum process as well as a blanket policy of imprisoning Mexican refugees fleeing state violence. Of particular concern is the alarmingly increasing violence against Mexican journalists which has resulted in the recent murder of Miroslava Breach Velducea, a well-known Chihuahua journalist as well as the closure of the *El Norte de Cd. Juarez* daily newspaper.

On March 1, 2017, Martin passed his credible fear exam. Thereafter, he sought to be released by ICE from their prison which was denied on March 28, 2017 due to him being considered a flight risk as well as for having insufficient community ties.

According to the highly reported Paris based *Reporters Without Borders*, "during 2016 itself, 11 journalists were murdered in Mexico, as of 2010, 35 have been murdered, which places this country as one of the most dangerous of the world for the journalism profession."

It is important to note that Martin initially sought assistance from Mexican human rights organizations, such as National Commission for Human Rights and *Reporters Without Borders*. *Reporters Without Borders* determined his life was at risk and counseled him to seek asylum in



the US, referring him to the Law Office of Carlos Spector.

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.borderlandimmigrationcouncil.org/>