



League of United Latin American Citizens

August 14, 2017

Elaine C. Duke
Acting Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
800 K Street NW #1000
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Acting Secretary Elaine C. Duke:

On behalf of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), the country's oldest and largest Latino civil rights organization, I urge you to take immediate action to stop the deportation of Miguel Perez, Jr., a decorated army veteran and legal permanent resident.

After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Miguel heroically enlisted in the army and served two tours of duty in Afghanistan. During his time in combat, Miguel suffered traumatic brain injuries from a horrific explosion and developed PTSD and other enduring traumas as a result of the incident. Once Miguel returned home, he struggled repeatedly with his PTSD and sought treatment from the VA. However, Miguel encountered an extensive waitlist for appointments. Long wait times coupled with the severity of his condition caused Miguel to self-medicate with drug and alcohol abuse. His downward spiral ultimately resulted in a conviction of a petty, nonviolent drug offense and was sentenced to time in prison.

It is the duty of the United States to honor and respect our veterans and provide them with the appropriate resources for their rehabilitation. Veterans like Miguel should have better access to the resources they need to successfully transition into civilian life. If Miguel had received the proper resources upon returning home, he would not have turned down the dark road of drug abuse to solve his problems. Furthermore, if he had been granted his citizenship before he was convicted, Miguel would not be facing deportation proceedings.

During his time in prison, Miguel completed his associate's degree and conquered his addictions through counseling. Miguel has maintained a high level of discipline and commitment to his own rehabilitation. For these reasons; and because he served with honor in our U.S. military, we urge you to stop the deportation of Miguel Perez, Jr. As someone who put his life on the line for this country, he has every right to be spared deportation so that he can live in safety with his family.

For more information, or should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Luis Torres, LULAC National Director of Policy, by email at latorres@lulac.org or by phone at 202-833-6130.

Sincerely,

Roger C. Rocha, Jr.
LULAC National President