



The Mexican American Bar Association's Statement on Eyvin Hernandez, Unlawful Detainee in Venezuela

December 8, 2022

Eyvin Hernandez, a vital member of the Los Angeles Latino community, has been unlawfully detained in a Venezuelan prison since March 31, 2022. The State Department has officially designated Eyvin as unlawfully detained. MABA urges President Biden and his Administration to act immediately to obtain the release of Eyvin Hernandez and bring him home.

Born in 1978, Eyvin Hernandez migrated to Los Angeles as a toddler with his parents, who were fleeing civil war in El Salvador. He obtained his bachelor's and law degrees from the University of California, Los Angeles, and has dedicated his 16-year career to public service as a Los Angeles County Deputy Public Defender.

While on vacation in Colombia, Eyvin accompanied a Venezuelan friend to Cucuta, Colombia so that she could obtain permission to travel to a Colombian resort town. During this seemingly benign errand, Eyvin's life was turned upside down. Eyvin and his friend were met by armed, masked men who demanded a bribe. When he did not, Eyvin was hooded, handcuffed, and forcefully crossed into Venezuela where he is currently being held at the General Directorate of Military Counterintelligence prison. The charges against him include criminal association and conspiracy, which together can result in a sentence of up to sixteen years.

Seven U.S. citizens wrongfully detained by Venezuela were recently released through Biden Administration's leadership and efforts. Today, Jorge Toledo, Tomeu Vadell, Alirio Zambrano, Jose Luis Zambrano, Jose Pereira, Matthew Heath, and Osman Khan, are now free and able to resume their lives with their friends and families. While we applaud those efforts, we respectfully request that they also be faithfully applied to Eyvin's plight. Eyvin, along with several other Americans, are still being held in Venezuela, and they should all be released.

We stand with Eyvin's family, friends, and colleagues in asking that President Biden negotiate for his immediate release. Eyvin has been imprisoned for almost nine months – nine months too long. We urge President Biden to make the necessary and courageous decisions – including the use of humanitarian hostage exchanges, if necessary, to bring Eyvin home.

About the Mexican American Bar Association of Los Angeles County

The Mexican American Bar Association of Los Angeles County (MABA) was founded in 1959 by a group of Mexican American attorneys who saw the need to create an organization committed to empowering and educating the Latino community. MABA is one of the largest associations of Latino lawyers in the United States. MABA's mission is dedicated to the advancement of Latinas/os in the legal profession and the empowerment of the Latino community through service and advocacy.

For more information about MABA, please visit our website at www.mabaattorneys.com

“Committed to the Empowerment of the Latino Community through Advocacy and Education”