

**Written Statement of Ed Gonzalez**

**Nominee for Assistant Secretary for Immigration and Customs Enforcement  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security**

**Before the  
U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**

**July 15, 2021**

Chairman Peters, Ranking Member Portman, distinguished Members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you to discuss my nomination to lead U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). I want to thank President Biden for nominating me, Secretary Mayorkas for his confidence in me, and this Committee for considering my nomination.

I also want to express my love and gratitude to my parents, both hard-working children of immigrants. My father was a self-taught welder. He never finished school or learned to read or write. He made up for it by outworking his competition, and he raised me to value education and hard work as the keys to achieving the American Dream. My mother owned a modest beauty shop, where she showed me the power of community, service to others, personal responsibility, and strong relationships. My parents taught me to love our country not only for the land of opportunity that it is today, but also for all that it aspires to be.

My wife, Dr. Melissa Gonzalez, is a lifelong educator. Her love and support have been my foundation throughout my career, and together we have built a family that includes our smart, strong, and talented daughters.

America has shown the world that it's not only possible to survive, but thrive, as a nation that welcomes those seeking a new home and a better life through hard, honest work. We have proven that people from varied backgrounds cannot just co-exist, but rally around common values and a shared dream of always doing better.

With that said, the American dream relies upon the rule of law and a functioning legal immigration system. I have been proud throughout my career as a law enforcement professional to uphold our nation's laws. If confirmed as ICE Director, I will be responsible for 20,000 dedicated men and women who work every day to guard against threats to our national security, public safety, and safeguard the integrity of our borders. This includes ICE's critical investigative mission through HSI, as well as enforcement and removal operations carried out by ICE ERO. There is a difficult and often thankless job—but leading such a team would be the honor of a lifetime.

I chose a law enforcement career because I cared deeply about the neighborhoods I grew up in: their people, businesses, schools and houses of worship. When you have such a love for your home, your community, and your country, you want to give back, and so I chose to protect and serve. I first started out as a patrolman in the Houston Police Department, working my way up to

the roles of homicide detective and hostage negotiator over nearly two decades. In each of these roles, I have been privileged to keep our community safe from harm.

In 2009, I took my next step in public service. I ran for the Houston City Council and went on to serve three terms representing my neighborhood. I also served as Houston's mayor pro tempore, a role that gave me the opportunity to help manage the operations of the country's fourth-largest city. I championed proposals to equip our peace officers with the tools, training, and resources they needed to keep the community safe, while working to improve social services to address the root causes of many police calls.

In 2016, the people of Harris County elected me as their Sheriff. The Harris County Sheriff's Office is the largest in Texas and the third largest nationwide, with over 5,000 employees protecting 4.5 million residents within a 1,700-square-mile area. In that role, I have been no stranger to serious challenges, leading our agency's Hurricane Harvey rescue operations in 2017 and leading our office's efforts to manage the COVID-19 pandemic in our community, and in our jail system, since 2020.

As Sheriff, I have partnered with ICE, the FBI, DEA, U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Attorney's Office, and other federal agencies in order to investigate and prosecute crimes that spanned multiple jurisdictions and countries. If confirmed as ICE Director, I look forward to building on these partnerships to make our communities safer, while working closely with communities to ensure ICE is able to carry out its mission.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with this Committee, under the direction of Secretary Mayorkas, in pursuit of these missions, while upholding the highest principles of law enforcement public service. I pledge to keep communication open and to respect your oversight and guidance.

Thank you again for considering my nomination. I look forward to your questions.