
Immigration Activists Arrested in Front of White House

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The arrests were made at the culmination of a peaceful march that began at the headquarters of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The executive director of the Casa Maryland organization, Gustavo Torres, told Efe that the president “can and must” stop the deportations.

“We’re asking Obama for fair and necessary relief for the immigrant communities in the country,” emphasized Torres before a crowd of about 500 people.

Given the inability of lawmakers in Congress to agree on immigration reform, which has been blocked in the House of Representatives, immigrants have their hopes set on the president’s ability to take executive action.

In late June, Obama said that he would take executive action before the summer was out to fix – as much as possible – the immigration system, but on Thursday he did not repeat his promise to act by that time.

“And it continues to be my belief that, if I can’t see the congressional action, that I need to do at least what I can in order to make the system work better,” said Obama at a White House press conference.

Nevertheless, he went on to say that there have been some crises in recent months that “affect time lines” and he avoided setting even an approximate date by which he would announce any

executive action.

The demonstrators staged a sit-in before the fence surrounding the presidential residence and did not resist as police arrested them one by one amid the applause of the other marchers.

"I'm ready to let myself be arrested because I've already been for (immigration) reform for a decade, visiting the offices of congressmen, fasting in tents, registering voters," Susana Sandoval, with the group We Belong Together, who traveled to Washington from Chicago to take part in the protest, told Efe.
