



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on February 21, 2025

Bakery Owners Arrested for Harboring; Illegals Arrested Outside Immigration Hearings

As border czar Tom Homan has promised on myriad occasions, one of the laws Immigration and Customs Enforcement will now enforce is the statute that forbids harboring illegal aliens.

ICE agents arrested two bakery owners in Los Fresnos, Texas, for doing just that.

The arrest should signal other employers not to hire illegals. Others might be advised to seek legal counsel.

And aside from beginning workplace arrests, ICE is also arresting illegals when they show up for immigration hearings.



**U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement**

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NEW: ICE & HSI in the RGV conducted a worksite operation at a bakery in Los Fresnos, TX, arresting 8 illegal alien employees and charging the owners with federal felonies for harboring & aiding the illegal aliens via 8 USC 1324. This is the law Tom Homan has been repeatedly... pic.twitter.com/GZNgikx672

— Bill Melugin (@BillMelugin_) [February 21, 2025](#)

The Statute

The statute under which Homan arrested the owners of Abby's Bakery, Leonardo Baez and Nora Alicia Avila-Guel, is [8 U.S. Code 1324](#), "Bringing in and harboring certain aliens."

The law text is clear; anyone can understand it, including immigrants such as Baez and Avila-Guel, who are lawful permanent residents.

The statute applies to "any person" who helps an illegal into the country, and "knowing or in reckless disregard of the fact that an alien has come to, entered, or remains in the United States in violation of law, conceals, harbors, or shields from detection, or attempts to conceal, harbor, or shield from detection, such alien in any place, including any building or any means of transportation."

It also punishes anyone who "encourages or induces an alien to come to, enter, or reside in the United States, knowing or in reckless disregard of the fact that such coming to, entry, or residence is or will be in violation of law."

The crime is a felony punishable by fines and as much as 10 years in prison.

Criminal Complaint

Baez and Avila-Guel confessed that they knew the eight illegals they employed were in the country unlawfully and that they "harbored the aliens in their personally owned property."

One of the illegals, Roberto Ibarra Otero, "is a citizen and national of Mexico with no documents to



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remain in the United States,” the complaint says:

[He] stated that the owners of Abby’s Bakery were aware of his unlawful status in the country and willfully harbored [him and the others] on the property.

Otero also fingered Baez and Avila-Guel as the owners of the bakery.

A second illegal-alien witness told investigators the same thing.

[federal-complaint-amys-bakeryDownload](#)

“The apprehension of the aliens was the result of a worksite enforcement action,” the complaint says. “Post event, the facts of the event were presented to the duty AUSA [assistant U.S. attorney], who agreed there was sufficient cause for a complaint for harboring and accepted prosecution.”

The mayor of Los Fresnos, a town about 16 miles north of border town Brownsville, commented on Facebook.

“I acknowledges [sic] the concerns regarding the presence of ICE agents at Abby’s Bakery,” [Alejandro Flores wrote](#):

However, we recommend reaching out directly to ICE for any updates on this matter. As this is an ongoing issue, we are unable to speculate at this time. I do agree that this doesn’t look good and since ICE is not putting out any statements, we are left to speculate. My prayers are with Mr Leonardo Baez and his family during this difficult time. This is very frustrating.

Also frustrating is the hundreds of billions of dollars that tracking down illegals will cost the taxpayers.

Arrested Outside Hearing

ICE is also arresting illegals when they appear for immigration proceedings, news reports say.

The far-left *Nashville Banner* [reported](#) that at least three people have been arrested. An ICE official told the website that ICE is advising illegals that they could be detained.

A top judge in New York state [told the Times-Union](#) of Albany that ICE is collaring illegals at courthouses:

Courtrooms are off limits for those arrests under state law. Federal immigration officers have instead been conducting those arrests in hallways of courthouses or outside the buildings, [Chief Administrative Judge Joseph] Zayas said. ...

Gov. Kathy Hochul has said the state will cooperate with federal immigration authorities when they’re seeking someone who’s been convicted of a crime. Otherwise, state agencies are barred from asking about or sharing someone’s immigration status.

Like the two bakers in Texas, Hochul might find herself charged with harboring if she’s not careful. [Federal law prohibits](#) state and local officials from hiding information about illegals from immigration authorities. Homan [has repeatedly warned](#) state and local officials that they face arrest for harboring if they refuse to cooperate with ICE on arrests and deportations of illegals.



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In Florida, an ICE official denied that illegals there are being “tricked” into checking in as they are required to do.

Anyone Here Illegally Is “Not Off the Table”

Asked by a reporter about illegals arrested at hearings, Homan asked and answered a simple question: “Are they in the country illegally? Then they should be arrested.”

While ICE prioritizes public safety and national security threats, he said, “if you’re in the country illegally, you’re not off the table. It’s not OK to be in this country illegally.”

Reporter: “New reporting that some people are getting arrested outside of their immigration hearings. They're showing up as required by law to these hearings, and then there's people waiting for them”

Tom Homan: “Are they in the country illegally? Then they should be arrested”
pic.twitter.com/YZDnOgADnS

— Wall Street Apes (@WallStreetApes) [February 20, 2025](#)

Asked about those making asylum claims, Homan explained that court data show that 90 percent of claims are bogus.

“These people don’t qualify for asylum,” he said:

They’re making a false asylum claim and nine out of ten will be ordered removed. That is a fact.

Meanwhile, he said, others with valid asylum claims — those who really do fear persecution by a government — are waiting in line.

And “just because we prioritize public safety threats and national security threats don’t mean that everyone else is off the table. ... If you’re in the country illegally, you’re not off the table,” concluded Homan:

If we run across somebody that’s illegally in the United States, we are not going to instruct ICE not to enforce the law. That’s what the last administration did.

As *The New American* [has repeatedly reported](#), 90 percent of asylum claims [are bogus](#), and so-called asylees come to the United States [for jobs and free stuff](#). A study from UCLA found that 99 percent of asylum claims [are bogus](#).

H/T: [Fox News](#), [The Independent](#), [The Texas Tribune](#)



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