

**NATIONAL
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GUILD**
MASS CHAPTER



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**NLG-MASS CHAPTER CONDEMNS THE POLITICALLY-MOTIVATED
FEDERAL PROSECUTION OF JUDGE SHELLEY RICHMOND JOSEPH**

The Massachusetts Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild condemns the politically-motivated federal prosecution of Judge Shelley Richmond Joseph, a respected judge sitting in the district court division of the Massachusetts Trial Court, and trial court officer Wesley MacGregor. The two have been indicted on charges of obstruction of justice in a case involving an undocumented immigrant and an agent of Immigration & Customs Enforcement who was present in the courthouse.

The decision of the U.S. Attorney for Massachusetts to indict Judge Joseph is an abuse of discretion, in line with the Trump Administration's anti-immigrant policies. It is clearly intended to stifle challenges to their repressive tactics by spreading fear of criminal prosecution, and one more step in effectively barring the courthouse doors to immigrants.

ICE agents detain people facing charges certain to be dismissed but never return them to court; they scare non-citizen witnesses from testifying; and they deter abused persons from asking the court for help. The harm to justice is such that Suffolk County District Attorney Rachel Rollins and Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan, and others, are suing to bar ICE from detaining individuals appearing for matters before the state courts. We now know that ICE and Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) separated thousands of children from their parents. They allowed for the sexual abuse of hundreds of detained minors, and have deported to their death an unknown number of individuals seeking asylum who were later killed upon their return, a statistic which they do not track.

The NLG-Mass Chapter stands with Judge Joseph and Officer MacGregor, and against this attack on the ability of immigrants to access justice. We call on all in the legal community and in the grassroots communities we partner with to raise their voices in support of immigrants – and in support of true justice.

"... to the ends that human rights shall be regarded as more sacred than property interests."

- Preamble to the Constitution of the National Lawyers Guild, 1937