

Letter from WAICC to Citizenship and Immigration Canada

April 19, 2007

The Honourable Diane Finley, P.C., M.P.
Citizenship and Immigration Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 1L1

Re: Juan Ramirez (deported to Columbia in 2006)

Madam:

The Wolfville Area Inter-Church Council (“WAICC”) was founded in 1970 and now comprises 8 churches and faith communities located in and around Wolfville, Nova Scotia.

At the time of his deportation, Mr. Juan Ramirez was a resident of Wolfville where he had lived for many years. Mr. Ramirez and his wife, Dara, a Canadian, are co-owners of a business in Wolfville, Juandaro’s Soccer Boutique which Dara now manages alone. Since the deportation of their father, Dara is also raising their three children: Orlando, Milena and Juan Pablo, aged, respectively, 6, 4, and 1½ years.

Over many years, I have come to know Mr. Ramirez. I have come to respect him and to appreciate his important contribution to the phenomenal growth of amateur soccer in the Annapolis Valley. His example as an athlete and his leadership have made a real difference in the lives of local soccer enthusiasts of all ages but most especially in the lives of hundreds of school-aged boys and girls. Furthermore, through his active participation in a number of non-sport related organizations, Mr. Ramirez promoted local business and philanthropy in Wolfville. To say that his absence is keenly felt by a wide segment of this community, while being truthful, does not do full justice to Mr. Ramirez: a person of special talent and energy, a caring family man, a creative entrepreneur, and beneficial member of society who often reached out to help the young and those less fortunate. It is noteworthy that Mr. Ramirez was a member of the Wolfville branch of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, an international organization whose sole purpose is to provide material and spiritual support to the poor.

The unfortunate circumstances surrounding Mr. Ramirez’s deportation to Columbia are known to WAICC. Indeed, the local paper, *The Advertiser* and *The Chronicle-Herald* in Halifax have ensured that his story is well-known throughout Nova Scotia. We, who have worked with and lived beside Mr. Ramirez, while naturally admitting that deportation is a necessary tool that must be used to preserve our society from those who would harm it, do not believe that Mr. Ramirez is a person who falls into that category.

Therefore, in the interests of furthering justice, we, the members and executive of WAICC, respectfully urge you, Madam, to act now with a view to re-uniting Mr. Juan Ramirez with his wife and children. In addition, we request that you grant his self-evident wish to permanently remain with them in Canada in peace and harmony with our community that would gladly celebrate his return.

Thank you, Madam, for giving this matter your consideration.

Yours very truly,

Neil P. Cloghesy
President

NPC/

cc Mrs. Dara Ramirez
Hon. Scott Brison, M.P,