U.E. Local 896
Campaign to Organize
Graduate Students

STATEMENT ON THE ABDUCTION AND DEPORTATION OF FATOU TRAORE

The graduate worker's labor union at the University of Iowa, UE Local 896, stands in solidarity with AFSCME and demands the release and return of our neighbor and fellow worker, Fatou Traore. Traore, who has no criminal record, was abducted by two ICE agents who failed to identify themselves. She was then deported to a country to which she has no connection. All of this happened without due process. It is inhumane, depraved, and demands immediate corrective action.

At the time of her abduction, Traore was on her way to work at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, where she is a bargaining unit member of AFSCME, Council 61, Local 12. Instead of joining her colleagues, she was incarcerated and deported. Traore's husband and four young children were blindsided. Her son shared that they, "thought she was kidnapped, or taken by a bad person." She was. Though her kidnappers were agents of the state, they must be held accountable.

As a worker's union we recognize that an attack against one is an attack against all of us. We also know that our strength comes from standing together against people and forces that seem all too happy to destroy our communities.

We will continue to explore all options until those with power repair this harm. The University of Iowa only functions because of our work. The University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics could not function without AFSCME workers.

Our best chance to make change–to bring Fatou home and make sure this never happens again–is to work together, to remind those in positions of power what true collective strength looks like. We pledge to work with AFSCME and other workers' unions, community members, and organizations of conscience to do whatever we can to ensure Traore's safe return home.

We demand our employer, the University of Iowa, do everything in its power to act on behalf of our fellow workers. We demand our elected officials take bold action to ensure the safety of Traore and everyone threatened by this lawless regime and inhumane immigration agents. If they do not act, we will.