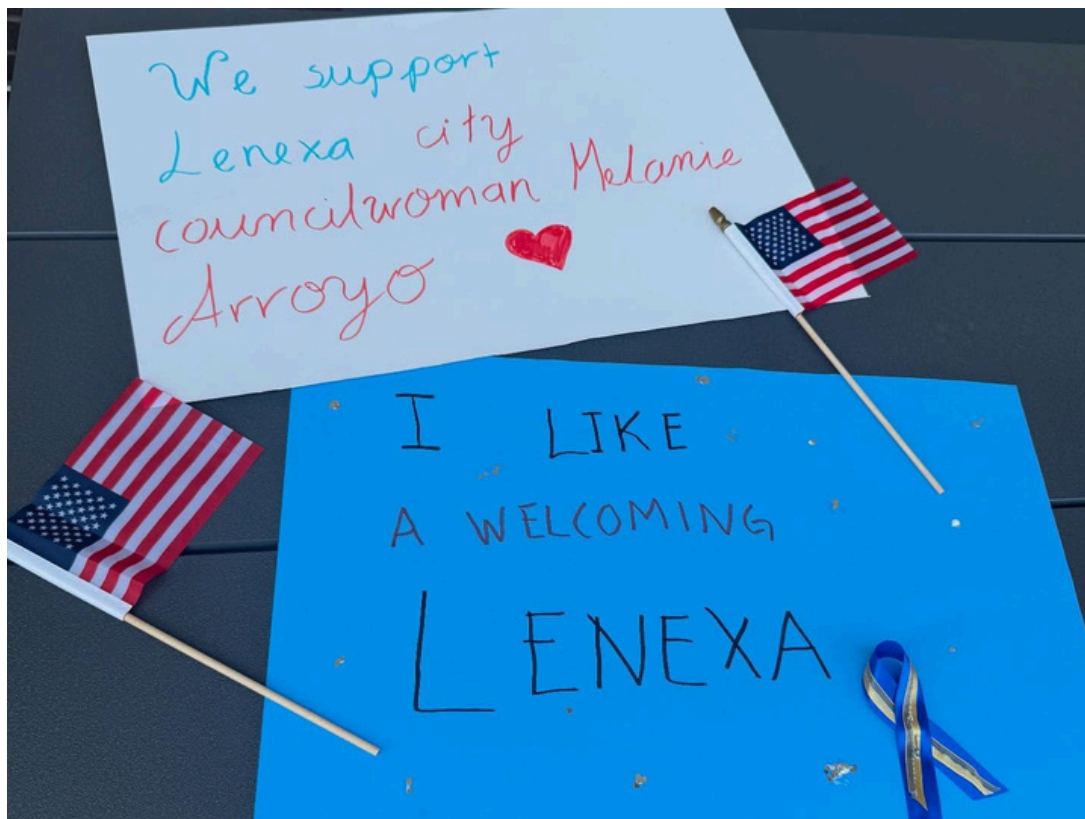

{FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE} Lenexa Residents Rally Behind Councilwoman Arroyo and Immigrant Community After ICE Raid



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 5, 2025

Lenexa Residents Rally Behind Councilwoman Arroyo and Immigrant Community After ICE Raid

Lenexa, KS — On Tuesday, August 5th, residents, elected officials, and community advocates gathered at Lenexa City Hall to show strong support for Councilwoman Melanie Arroyo, local immigrant families, and the Latino community following a troubling ICE raid and a politically motivated attack on Councilwoman Arroyo's citizenship. "Tonight, our Lenexa community came together in support of Councilwoman Melanie Arroyo after she was unfairly targeted in a racially motivated attack. It was truly refreshing to see our Lenexa neighbors speak out against the injustices that threaten our immigrant communities," said Lenexa resident and teacher Dr. Marta Silva.

On July 31st, ICE detained 11 individuals during a raid on local restaurants, leaving businesses abandoned and families in crisis. One restaurant was left completely unattended, posing serious safety concerns. Several people detained have already been released—an outcome that raises further questions about the evidence used to target individuals and businesses. The community is still awaiting answers.

At the same time, Councilwoman Arroyo—a Latina local elected official —has been the target of a baseless complaint questioning her citizenship, which the Lenexa Police Department inexplicably chose to investigate. Residents are outraged.

"Councilwoman Arroyo is a public servant, elected by her neighbors. She is not only deserving of dignity, she is due the same respect and protection as any other elected official in this chamber," said Rev. Jacquie Fernández, Lenexa resident and Senior Minister at Unity Church of Overland Park. "The complaint lodged should have been handled as a complaint against the system that qualifies council candidates. Handled appropriately, a question about eligibility of one sitting council member would call into questions the eligibility of all members. I would like to see the council commit to reviewing police protocols for how complaints are vetted and followed, particularly those that could undermine public trust and democratic processes. Lenexa can still be a model—a city where different beliefs and backgrounds don't divide us but deepen our strength."

Key Concerns Raised at the Meeting:

Waste of Tax Dollars: Residents condemned the use of police resources on xenophobic complaints rather than real public safety issues.

Disrespect to Voters: The investigation undermines the will of Lenexa voters who chose Councilwoman Arroyo to represent them.

Racial Profiling & Harassment: Targeting a sitting councilmember from an immigrant family sends a dangerous, discriminatory message to the entire community.

Immigrants Are Essential

Supporters emphasized that immigrants are core to Lenexa's economy and community—and deserve protection, not persecution. "This isn't just wrong," said a community organizer. "It's unAmerican."

Call to Action - Last night is just the beginning

Organizers are calling for accountability from city leadership and urging the community to continue showing up, speaking out, and standing together.

But we can't stop here.

We're urging residents to **keep the pressure on** by contacting their council members and city leadership.

- We are deeply concerned that **valuable city resources were used to investigate a baseless, xenophobic complaint.**
- We want a **public apology** for the harm caused to Councilwoman Arroyo and the immigrant community.
- We expect **accountability**—including a review of how complaints are handled and how racial bias is addressed.
- We demand that **city leadership focus on real threats to public safety**, not manufactured political distractions.

Call. Email. Follow up. Make it clear this isn't just a flash of outrage—it's a movement for justice, safety, and good governance in Lenexa.

Because our city deserves leadership that protects **all** of us—not just some of us.

To our Neighbors in other cities: we invite you to look closely at what's happening here. Use this moment to start conversations and push for proactive protections in your own communities—so that what's happening in Lenexa doesn't happen to you.

After the city council meeting Lenexa city councilwoman Melanie Arroyo said “ I want to thank everyone who showed up in support of our immigrant friends and neighbors, and for the outpour of love extended to me personally. It means everything to me that people from all walks of life and different backgrounds, people who knew me personally and others who didn't, showed up and spoke to the council. I don't take your presence and advocacy for granted. This meeting was also a beautiful example of what it looks like to collaborate with members of the community to create a vision for a better Lenexa. When we said we didn't have answers or solutions, everyone pitched in and gave us somewhere to start. We will continue to work together to bring the best of our city, because this is what democracy in action looks like.”

Because our cities deserve leadership that protects *all* of us—not just *some* of us.

Media Contact:

Aude Negrete

Kansas Latino Community Network

aude.negrete@latinocommunitynetwork.org | info@latinocommunitynetwork.org

Karla Juarez Advocates for Immigrant Rights and Reconciliation

karla@airrk.org | info@airrk.org

Together, we send a clear message: Lenexa stands for dignity, inclusion, and justice for all.



Kansas Latino Community Network
P.O. Box 2304 Mission, KS 66201
United States