

From Clinics to Courts: Americans Protest Rights Violations

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— Categories: Human Rights



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Over 700 dialysis caregivers across California staged coordinated protests this week, raising concerns about unsafe working conditions and stalled contract negotiations. The demonstrations, which began Wednesday, took place at 31 dialysis clinics, including several in San Diego County.

Led by SEIU-United Healthcare Workers West, the protest involved registered nurses, technicians, social workers, and other frontline staff. Union representatives say the goal is to pressure major dialysis providers into addressing staffing issues and finalizing fair labor agreements.

In El Cajon, caregivers gathered outside the Fresenius Kidney Care Fletcher Parkway clinic, holding signs and voicing concerns about patient safety. According to union members, short staffing and high turnover have been placing patients at risk, particularly those requiring consistent dialysis sessions to manage chronic kidney failure.

Christine Delara, a registered nurse at U.S. Renal Care, criticized the ongoing delays in reaching a new contract. “These companies are dragging their feet and refusing to bargain in good faith,” she said in a public statement. “Dialysis continues to suffer because of short staffing. Every time a patient’s treatment is cut short for this reason, we put their life at risk.”

Fresenius Medical Care and DaVita, two of the largest dialysis companies in the United States, have not yet issued statements in response to the demonstrations. The union alleges both firms have stalled negotiations for years and failed to address long-standing concerns about staffing levels and workplace safety.

The walkout marks an escalation in the union’s strategy after years of contract talks. Workers are demanding stronger staffing standards, better wages, and more robust safety procedures. Dialysis patients typically undergo treatment multiple times a week, making timely and uninterrupted care essential for survival.

Union leaders argue that the current conditions are leading to rushed sessions and, in some cases, cancellations, raising concerns for both staff and patients. The SEIU-UHW says it will continue applying pressure until meaningful reforms are enacted.

Meanwhile, in New York City, immigration-related concerns also sparked protests this week following the detention of a 20-year-old South Korean national by federal authorities.

Yeonsoo Go, a graduate of Scarsdale High School and daughter of Episcopal priest Kyrie Kim, was arrested by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents minutes after a visa hearing at Federal Plaza Immigration Court in Lower Manhattan. Go, who moved to the U.S. in 2021, had an active application to renew her visa, which expires in December.

However, the Department of Homeland Security stated that she had overstayed a prior visa by over two years and was placed into expedited removal proceedings on July 31.

Go's arrest triggered protests outside the courthouse, where clergy and city leaders gathered in support. Advocates claim conditions at the Federal Plaza holding facility lack basic amenities, and are calling for her release while her case is reviewed.

As of Wednesday afternoon, both demonstrations in California and New York remained peaceful and without incident.