

Sender:

Staatsanwalt Polk County
John P. Sarcone, Polk County Attorney's Office
Polk County Justice Center
222 Fifth Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50309
USA

Place / Date:

Andrea Sahouri

Dear Mr. Sarcone:

I write to urge your office to take immediate action to dismiss all charges with prejudice in State of Iowa v. Andrea M. Sahouri, SMAC 388817.

On the evening of 31 May 2020, Ms. Sahouri was covering a protest on assignment for the Des Moines Register. Despite identifying herself as a journalist, she was pepper sprayed, arrested, and detained for several hours.

To ensure the right to freedom of expression and the right to freedom of peaceful assembly, members of the media have a right to attend and report on peaceful assemblies, and law enforcement officials have a responsibility not to prevent or obstruct their work.

I urge you not to move forward with the prosecution of Ms. Sahouri and to dismiss immediately all charges against her with prejudice. Reporting at a protest scene as a working member of the media is not a crime.

Yours sincerely

Copy:
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