

December 18, 2024

Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor of California  
California State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator Mike McGuire  
Senate President Pro Tempore  
1021 O Street, Suite 8518  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator Scott Wiener  
Chair, Senate Budget Committee

1021 O Street, Suite 8620  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Speaker of the Assembly Robert Rivas  
State Capitol  
PO Box 942849  
Sacramento, CA 94249

Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel  
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee  
1021 O Street, Suite 8230  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Defend and Protect Immigrant Families and Communities With Increased Investments for California's Immigration Programs**

Dear Honorable Members:

We, the undersigned legal service providers, advocacy and community organizations, write to respectfully request that you defend California's immigrant families and communities from the Trump administration's plan for mass arrests, raids, detentions and deportations. California's immigrant communities are in serious danger and we urgently need immediate support. Immigration legal services and programs are critical for the safety and security of Californian families and communities. SBX1-1, Budget Act of 2024, introduced in the Senate for the 2025-26 Extraordinary Session, proposes \$10 million to the One California program, \$10 million to the Equal Access Fund, and \$5 million to the California Access to Justice Commission. We applaud the California State Senate for a strong start to addressing this moment through this investment of \$25 million for immigration legal services and civil legal services.

Because of the devastating impact that the Trump administration's mass deportation agenda will have on California's immigrant communities, **we ask the Legislature to invest \$15 million in the One California program for urgent services and \$10 million in the California Access to Justice Commission's detention representation program.** This is our initial ask for immediate support to address what we anticipate will be unprecedented attacks on immigrant Californians.

On January 20, 2025, President-elect Donald Trump plans to launch the largest deportation program in history by deporting one million people a year, including deporting U.S. citizen children with their undocumented parents.<sup>1</sup> In California, one in every four Californians are immigrants, one in every three California workers are immigrants, and nearly one in every two children in California live in an

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<sup>1</sup> Avery Lotz, "Trump suggests deporting families with mixed immigration status," Axios, Dec. 8, 2024, <https://www.axios.com/2024/12/08/trump-immigration-deportation-us-citizens>

immigrant household.<sup>2</sup> California is home to the largest immigrant population in the country where nearly 11 million Californians are immigrants, 2.7 million Californians are undocumented, 146,000 children between ages 3 to 17 are undocumented and enrolled in California schools,<sup>3</sup> and 3.3 million Californians live in a mixed-status family with an undocumented family member.<sup>4</sup> Trump’s mass deportation agenda will be catastrophic and will disproportionately impact California by separating families, destabilizing our economy and workforce, and wreaking terror in communities. Millions of California families are at risk of arrest, detention, deportation and family separation on and after January 20, 2025.

Immigrant Californians are already living in fear of accessing vital services, driving their children to school, and going to work. The fear of family separation by federal immigration enforcement is present at K-12 schools, colleges, universities, workplaces, hospitals and health clinics where children, youth, parents, teachers, workers, community leaders, health care and direct service providers need urgent leadership from California elected officials to ensure state resources and funding are dedicated to educating, preparing and safeguarding families across California.

Therefore we are requesting a total of \$25 million for the following services:

- **\$15 million to the California Department of Social Services** for emergency efforts by organizations engaging in community education, outreach, workshops, collaboration with a range of stakeholders, and local and statewide infrastructure to respond to ICE activities such as deportations, as well as the provision of free legal services to thousands of unaccompanied undocumented minors, youth, students, individuals and families seeking immigration relief and facing deportation.
- **\$10 million to the Detention Representation Program** to establish an immigration detention representation and coordination program through the California Access to Justice Commission to provide critical legal resources and oversight to protect the rights of detained individuals.

**Additional investments are urgently needed** because thousands of California residents are currently turned away or waitlisted monthly due to capacity limitations of state-funded legal services providers. Over 2,000 individuals are on waitlists for legal services, with removal defense being the most pressing need.

California has been a leader nationwide in enacting numerous measures to defend California’s immigrant families and communities, and we view the Special Session budget proposals as a reflection of the state’s priorities. Publicly funded legal services programs promote the security and stability of California families by providing legal services and representation to immigrant Californians, while in government custody or within our communities, who face deportation and family separation. **This is a critical time for California to take bold action and expand its historic investments in immigrant communities,** particularly as millions of California families face the threat of family separation through mass arrests at

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<sup>2</sup> Marisol Cuellar Mejia, Cesar Alesi Perez, and Hans Johnson, “Immigrants in California,” Public Policy Institute of California, Jan. 2024, <https://www.ppic.org/publication/immigrants-in-california/>.

<sup>3</sup> Migration Policy Institute, “Profile of the Unauthorized Population: California,” <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/unauthorized-immigrant-population/state/CA>.

<sup>4</sup> USC Dornsife, California Immigrant Data Portal, <https://immigrantdataca.org/indicators/mixed-status-families>.

their homes, workplaces, and in their communities. We must ensure California's priorities continue to be anchored in protecting immigrants' rights, and promoting family unity sends a clear message that hate is never tolerated and that California will defend the freedom, safety, and dignity of all people.

If you have any questions, please contact Bruno Huizar of the California Immigrant Policy Center at [bhuizar@caimmigrant.org](mailto:bhuizar@caimmigrant.org). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A New PATH (Parents for Addiction Treatment & Healing)  
Acacia Center for Justice  
ACLU California Action  
Afghan Coalition  
Alianza Sacramento  
Alliance for a Better Community  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice Southern California (AJSOCAL)  
Asian Law Alliance  
Asian Law Caucus  
AVAN Immigrant Services  
Bridges of Hope Ca  
Buen Vecino  
CAIR California  
CAIR San Francisco Bay Area  
California Alliance for Youth and Community Justice (CAYCJ)  
California Coalition for Women Prisoners  
California Immigrant Policy Center  
California League of United Latin American Citizens  
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network  
Californians for Justice  
Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc. - Esperanza Immigrant Rights Project  
Center for Human Rights and Constitutional Law  
Center for Immigrant Protection- The LGBT Asylum Project & ParivarBayArea  
Center For Independent Living  
Central American Resource Center of Northern California - CARECEN SF  
Central American Resource Center- CARECEN- of California  
Central Valley Immigrant Integration Collaborative  
Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indigena Oaxaqueño (CBDIO)  
Centro La Familia Advocacy Services Inc.  
Centro Legal de la Raza  
Chinese for Affirmative Action  
CLEAN Carwash Worker Center  
Clinica Msr. Oscar A. Romero  
Coalition for Human Immigrant Rights, CHIRLA

Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice (CURYJ)  
Community Action Board of Santa Cruz County, Inc. (CAB)  
Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto (CLSEPA)  
Compass Family Services  
Comunidad de Apoyo San Diego  
Courage California  
CRLA Foundation  
Democracy Beyond Bars  
East Bay Sanctuary Covenant  
Education and Leadership Foundation  
Employee Rights Center  
Empowering Women Impacted by Incarceration  
End Child Poverty California  
Faith in the Valley  
FIRM - Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries  
First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego  
Friends Committee on Legislation of California  
Harbor Institute for Immigrant & Economic Justice  
HIAS  
Hispanos Unidos  
Human Impact Partners  
ICE Out of Marin  
Immigrant Defenders Law Center (ImmDef)  
Immigrant Defense Advocates  
Immigrant Legal Defense  
Immigrant Legal Resource Center  
Immigrants Rising  
Immigration Institute of the Bay Area  
Inclusive Action  
Indivisible CA: StateStrong  
Initiate Justice  
Initiate Justice Action  
Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice  
Inland Empire Immigrant Youth Collective  
Instituto de Educacion Popular del Sur de California (IDEPSCA)  
Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity  
IRIS (Interfaith Refugee and Immigration Service)  
Jesse's Place Organization  
JFCS East Bay  
Justice in Aging  
Kehilla Community Synagogue  
Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)  
Korean Resource Center  
La Raza Community Resource Center

LAANE  
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area  
Long Beach Forward  
Loyola Immigrant Justice Clinic  
Matlin Legal  
Mixteco/Indigena Community Organizing Project (MICOP)  
Moreno Institute  
Mujeres Unidas y Activas  
Multicultural Center of Marin  
National Compadres Network  
National Council of Jewish Women California  
Next Generation Action Network - NGAN  
Nourish California  
Oasis Legal Services  
Opening Doors, Inc.  
Orange County Equality Coalition  
Orange County Justice Fund  
Orange County Rapid Response Network  
Pars Equality Center  
Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans - PANA  
Pilgrim United Church of Christ, Carlsbad  
Pomona Economic Opportunity Center  
Pride In Truth  
Public Counsel  
Restoring Hope California  
Root & Rebound  
San Bernardino Community Service Center, Inc  
San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium (SDIRC)  
Santa Cruz Welcoming Network  
SBX Youth and Family Services  
Secure Families Collaborative  
Secure Justice  
Services, Immigrant Rights and Education Network (SIREN)  
Silicon Valley De-Bug  
Sister Warriors Freedom Coalition  
Smart Justice California  
Social Justice Collaborative  
South Bay People Power  
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)  
Southern California Immigration Project  
Starting Over Strong  
Street Level Health Project  
Survivor Justice Center (formerly known as Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice)  
Survivors of Torture, International

Tenemos Que Reclamar y Unidos Salvar la Tierra, T.R.U.S.T. South LA  
Thai Community Development Center (Thai CDC)  
The Change Parallel Project  
The Children's Partnership  
The Latina Center  
The Multicultural Institute  
The Place4Grace  
The TransLatin@ Coalition  
UFW Foundation  
UnCommon Law  
Unitarian Universalist Refugee & Immigrant Services & Education (UURISE)  
United We Dream  
Vera Institute of Justice  
VIDAS (Vital Immigrant Defense Advocacy and Services)  
Vietnamese American Community Center of the East Bay  
Vision y Compromiso  
Young Women's Freedom Center  
Youth Leadership Institute

CC:

*The Honorable Caroline Menjivar, Chair Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3*

*The Honorable Corey A. Jackson, Chair of Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2*

*Elizabeth Schmitt, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 3*

*Nicole Vazquez, Assembly Committee on Budget Subcommittee No. 2*