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November 26, 2024

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Increasing Support for Los Angeles County Immigrants

Los Angeles County (County) is home to more than 800,000 undocumented immigrants who are crucial to our economy, workforce, and cultural diversity¹. Undocumented residents contribute significantly to sectors such as agriculture, construction, hospitality, and healthcare, while paying an estimated \$8.5 billion annually in state and local taxes². In addition to their significant tax contributions, according to an analysis reported by Cal Lutheran, undocumented immigrants contribute more than \$151 billion to California’s economy which represents 4.9% of the State’s GDP³. In Los Angeles County, immigrants contribute significantly to nearly all aspects of County life, including spending over \$108.6 billion per year and contributing over \$38 billion in state,

¹ [L.A. County leaders discuss 2023 State of Immigrants report - Los Angeles Times](#)

² [California's Undocumented Residents Make Significant Tax Contributions - California Budget and Policy Center](#)

³ <https://www.fastcompany.com/91167118/californias-economy-depends-on-undocumented-immigrants-to-the-tune-of-151-billion>

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local, and federal taxes. According to a study by the University of Southern California's Equity Research Institute (USC-ERI), as of 2021 about 55 percent of the immigrant population in the County identified as Latino, 28 percent as Asian American, 14 percent as white, and two percent as Black ⁴.

The recent presidential election has raised concerns that shifts in federal immigration policy could severely impact the lives of undocumented immigrants in the County and throughout the nation. Promises of mass deportations have been made, creating a deep sense of fear and instability not only among undocumented residents, but also for those who have less than citizenship status and mixed immigration status households. Considering that nearly 60 percent of children born in the County have at least one parent who is an immigrant, mass deportations would greatly disrupt families and uproot individuals from communities that they have been a part of for years. Many undocumented residents have family members who are U.S. citizens, including children, who rely on them for support. Family separations because of mass deportations would lead to significant emotional and psychological trauma and possibly even more children in the custody of the Los Angeles County Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS).

In 2017, in response to then-President Trump's immigration policies, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors created the Office of Immigrant Affairs (OIA) in the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA) to support the County's immigrant communities. Additionally, the County swiftly added Section 3.175 to the County Code, which prohibits the County workforce from cooperating with immigration

⁴ [State of Immigrants in Los Angeles County - USC Equity Research Institute \(ERI\)](#)

officials or enforcing immigration laws in County sensitive locations that serve the public. Over the past two years, OIA has channeled almost \$37 million into programs and services to support immigrants and their families across the County. Its programs include RepresentLA, which provides immigration legal representation services and linkage to support services; capacity building and case management for immigrant-serving organizations; and strengthening language access Countywide. As the need for support services for the immigrant communities intensifies, the County must also bolster OIA's response capacity.

In addition to undocumented immigrants, Los Angeles County is also home to Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders, and asylum seekers. Each of these groups faces distinct challenges. DACA recipients, for example, are at risk of losing work authorization and protection from deportation, while TPS holders face uncertainties with temporary extensions and potential policy changes. Although DACA recipients, TPS holders, and asylum seekers have temporary protections against deportation, their protections are unfortunately at risk as a result of the presidential election.

During the first Trump term, the Board took decisive action to limit access to County sensitive locations by law enforcement officers engaged in immigration enforcement.⁵ The Board also prohibited the use of any County resources for immigration enforcement purposes absent a judicial warrant.⁶ In the current climate of

⁵ Los Angeles County Board motion "Countywide Sensitive Locations Policy" dated April 11, 2017. <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/112914.pdf>

⁶ Los Angeles County Board motion "Ending ICE Transfers Without a Judicial Warrant in LA County" dated September 1, 2020. <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/148413.pdf>

fear and uncertainty, the County must take action to ensure that we continue to support our immigrant communities. Resources like RepresentLA will play a vital role in helping immigrant residents navigate this period of uncertainty. By increasing support for these resources and adopting protective measures, the County can help reduce the devastating consequences that mass deportations would bring to our community.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Affirm that all County Departments will comply with the California Values Act (SB 54) which ensures that no local resources are used to assist federal immigration enforcement, and that sites like schools, hospitals, and courthouses are safe spaces for everyone in our community. Reaffirm the County's prohibition on the use of any County resources for immigration enforcement purposes absent a judicial warrant, and Board Policy 3.175 - Limiting Access to County Sensitive Locations by Law Enforcement Officers Engaged in Immigration Enforcement or Immigration Investigative Activities. Instruct the County Counsel, in consultation with the Office of Immigrant Affairs, to issue a letter to impacted County departments to ensure ongoing compliance with these policies.
2. Direct the Director of DCBA through its Office of Immigrant Affairs to:
 - a. Establish or identify a taskforce to monitor, assess, and respond to the impacts of federal immigration policies and actions. This taskforce should include representatives from Los Angeles County departments, state and municipal government agencies, and community organizations serving immigrant populations. Participating County departments could include but are not limited to the departments of Children and Family Services, Public

Social Services, Health Services, Mental Health, Public Defender, Alternate Public Defender, Sheriff, and Probation, as well as the Homeless Initiative and the Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion Initiative, and the Los Angeles County Office of Education. The taskforce should evaluate existing programming that can be leveraged and/or augmented to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated response to the evolving needs of our immigrant communities.

- b. Develop a proposal to support Los Angeles County residents who have temporary status and work authorization including DACA and TPS.
 - c. Develop, coordinate, and implement an internal and external facing “Know Your Rights” campaign in multiple languages and across ethnic media to educate County Departments and immigrants on their legal rights and link them to available support services and resources.
 - d. Partner with community-based organizations, labor, and impacted stakeholders to disseminate information on the County resources available.
 - e. Coordinate with the Los Angeles County Office of Education and the Los Angeles Community College District to support students in need of immigration services.
3. Direct the Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH) to partner with DCBA-OIA to offer a range of mental health services through its promotoras, psychologists, cognitive behavior therapists, and other clinicians to support immigrants who are experiencing psychological trauma.

4. Direct the Chief Executive Office to work with DCBA to identify and secure the appropriate number and level of staff to adequately respond to our immigrant communities need for outreach and education, linkage to services, and language access and/or consider the option of creating a County Department of Immigrant Affairs.
5. Direct the Chief Executive Office in partnership with the Office of Immigrant Affairs to:
 - a. Identify a minimum of \$5.5 million ongoing funding to continue supporting the existing RepresentLA program.
 - b. Engage the City of Los Angeles and philanthropic partners on continued partnership to fund RepresentLA.
6. Authorize the Department of Consumer & Business Affairs to apply for and accept additional funds and continue implementation of the Case Management Pilot Program (CMPP), administered by Church World Service.
7. Delegate authority to the Director of the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, or their designee, to apply for grants and to negotiate, execute, and amend (as necessary) agreements to implement and advance directives 2, 5, and 6. The Board shall waive the requirements of Board Policy No. 5.100 for these agreements. These agreements and any amendment(s) shall be approved as to form by County Counsel.
8. Direct the Director of DCBA, through its Office of Immigrant Affairs to report back in writing to the Board of Supervisors as needed with updates on directives 1-7.

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