

IMMIGRANT LEGAL RESOURCE CENTER

# 2022

A N N U A L R E P O R T



## TEACHING, INTERPRETING, & CHANGING LAW SINCE 1979



The Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC) is one of the nation's premier sources for analysis of immigration law and policy, helping to improve access to American civic life for immigrant communities across the United States. In addition, we provide resources for practitioners working on complex issues in immigration law, and we advance immigrant rights through strategies such as policy analysis and advocacy, civic engagement, and capacity-building with legal service providers.

- **Policy Analysis & Advocacy:** We seek progressive reform of immigration policies, Department of Homeland Security policies, and local, state, and federal laws that affect immigrant families.
- **Naturalization & Civic Engagement:** We educate newcomers about their rights and responsibilities in a democratic society and promote the pathway to naturalization.
- **Education & Capacity Building:** We provide technical legal assistance, trainings, publications, and resources to pro bono and community-based immigration lawyers, paralegals, and advocates.
- **Shaping Public Opinion:** We support grassroots leadership to bring the voices of newcomers to the public dialogue and policy decisions that affect their lives.

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**Each year, the ILRC distributes thousands of copies of our 23 manuals and provides legal assistance on more than 8,100 issues to pro bono and nonprofit advocates, as well as public defenders, through our national Attorney of the Day service. In any given year, our staff attorneys conduct hundreds of trainings, community meetings, task forces, and workshops. In 2022, the ILRC held 286 in-person and online seminars and webinars for over 20,000 attendees and participants. The ILRC also leads meetings and workshops where thousands of immigrants are screened for legal options while learning about their rights and responsibilities in a democratic society. Since 2011, the ILRC, as the lead of the New Americans Campaign, has helped more than 580,000 immigrants complete their applications for naturalization.**

## AREAS OF EXPERTISE

*The ILRC's legal team holds expertise in:*

- Naturalization and citizenship, and the processes of granting or transmitting U.S. citizenship to foreign-born individuals.
- The complex intersection of criminal and immigration law and how the criminal legal system can affect immigration eligibility and status.
- Immigrant post-conviction relief, including clean slate and other record clearance remedies.
- Family-based immigration, which allows close relatives of U.S. citizens to unify with their loved ones.
- Public charge—a bar to certain forms of immigration status based on receipt of means-based public benefits, and how recent public charge rules and policies affect immigrants.
- Special challenges facing immigrant youth, including youth detention and policies regarding unaccompanied minors.
- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS), a form of legal relief for youth who have been abused, abandoned, or neglected.
- Defense of immigrants in removal proceedings who, unlike the criminal court system, are not provided an attorney, and special forms of relief, such as cancellation of removal, which are only available in immigration court.
- Immigration detention and bond eligibility.
- Asylum for people who come to the United States seeking protection from persecution due to race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a social group, and related forms of immigration relief such as withholding of removal.
- Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), temporary relief that provides access to education and employment for young immigrants who were brought to the United States as children.
- U Visas, a form of immigration status for survivors of serious crimes.
- T Visas, a form of immigration status for survivors of trafficking.
- Protections under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) which recognize that undocumented status is often used to trap victims of domestic violence in abusive relationships.
- Temporary Protected Status, which is a temporary protection for nationals of certain countries experiencing humanitarian crises.
- Parole and other temporary forms of immigration status that can be used to address humanitarian crises and achieve family reunification.
- Freedom of Information Act Requests for immigration cases.
- The grounds of inadmissibility and deportability, potential waivers, and how these all factor into eligibility for immigration relief and removal defense.
- Immigration enforcement that is prone to overreach and detains and departs immigrants and tears apart immigrant families.
- Policy and advocacy efforts throughout the United States with a particular focus on local policy work in Texas, local and state policy work in California, and policy advocacy at the federal level.
- Organizing, a critical component to how community-led change happens in social justice movements to maximize the effectiveness and impact on immigrant rights.



## MESSAGE FROM THE ILRC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In 2022, the ILRC used its platform to boldly challenge the status quo of local, state, and federal governments. The year began with the ILRC calling on the Biden-Harris Administration to make bold changes to immigration policies weaponized by the previous administration to torment immigrants and their families. We also continued to organize, train, and stand with communities in Texas to fight against the state's cruel and punitive policy, Operation Lone Star, that unfairly targeted migrants for arrest, jailing, and criminal prosecution for the state criminal offense of "trespassing." The 10-year anniversary of DACA was marked in June with a cry to find more permanent solutions as a part of comprehensive immigration reform. We also decried the sadistic strategies employed by states to terrorize immigrants and their families. Texas and Florida played to their conservative bases by using migrants as political pawns and bussing thousands all across the country.

Reflecting on the challenges of 2022, I see how committed the staff and board of the ILRC are to helping immigrants and their families stay together in

this country and thrive. The staff stepped up to meet the ever-evolving challenges in the immigration law and immigration policy fields, as they do each year. For example, in California, staff worked with partners to pass Assembly Bill 1766, "California IDs for All," which expanded access to state-issued identification cards to undocumented residents who do not drive. Also, in late 2022, the ILRC was notified that it was the recipient of a transformational donation by philanthropist MacKenzie Scott. The donation was made, in part, because of the ILRC's track record of successes and its commitment to uplifting partners in the field.

To all of our donors and partners, thank you for helping to fortify the ILRC's ability to address injustice and inequity on behalf of immigrants across the country in 2022. We couldn't do this work without you.



Eric Cohen



## 2022 POLICY HIGHLIGHT: CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLY BILL 1766

# “CALIFORNIA IDS FOR ALL”

The Immigrant Legal Resource Center, in partnership with California State lawmakers, Asian Americans Advancing Justice - California, California Immigrant Policy Center (CIPC), and the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA), worked tirelessly to advocate for the passage of California Assembly Bill 1766 (AB 1766), “California IDs for All” which would expand access to state-issued identification cards to undocumented nondriver residents.

Under AB 60, passed in 2013, more than one million undocumented residents in California have been able to obtain a driver’s license. However, AB 60 did not apply to those who did not have meaningful access to a car or the ability to take a driving test, creating a significant barrier for some Californians to fully participate in their communities. AB 1766 would provide state-issued IDs to those left out by AB 60, including women, elders, people with disabilities, and formerly incarcerated individuals. IDs are critical for many daily activities, such as cashing a check, renting an apartment, or volunteering at a child’s school.

On September 23, 2022, Governor Newsom signed AB 1766 into law. Right now, only people who can show their presence in the U.S. is “authorized under federal law” can apply for a standard (non-REAL ID) California identification card (CA ID). AB 1766 expands standard California ID eligibility to all Californians, regardless of their immigration status, by 2027.

Approximately 1.6 million people in California could benefit from AB 1766 based on the number of undocumented people over age 15 who have not yet obtained a driver’s license through AB 60 at this point. However, the number of people who could benefit from the expanded access to standard ID cards is likely higher, since ID cards -unlike driver’s licenses - are available to Californians of any age. So children will also be able to benefit from AB 1766.

ILRC Senior Staff Attorney Ariel Brown led the effort on behalf of the ILRC. The ILRC is committed to fighting for fair and just local, state, and national policies so that immigrants and their families can lead safer, healthier, and happier lives in this country.

## ILRC BY THE NUMBERS 2022

539,250

Know Your Rights  
RED CARDS  
Distributed

241

Trainings, Webinars,  
Community Meetings, Task  
Forces, Workshops, Media  
Reports, & CRISP Meetings

hosting

16,198

Participants

76

Community  
Meetings

hosting

1,695

Immigrant  
Community  
Members

8,153

Attorney of the Day

Issues Answered for Non-  
Profits, Service Providers,  
& Pro Bono Attorneys

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Join a community of funders who are committed to the ILRC's mission to work with and educate immigrants, community organizations, and the legal sector to continue to build a democratic society that values diversity and the rights of all people.

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- Visiting [www.ilrc.org/donate](http://www.ilrc.org/donate) to make a donation online
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**Questions?** Contact Cynthia Tirado Housel, Director of Leadership Giving, at (415) 321-8570.

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