

Immigrant Day of Action 2023 Policy Platform Backgrounder

These materials will provide you with information on the IDA legislative and budget priorities that you can use to ensure a successful meeting with your state legislator.

WE NEED A CALIFORNIA FOR ALL. We need a California that works for everyone—especially those who have been historically excluded from critical safety net programs, been othered, and who have experienced racism at the hands of white supremacist structures and systems. We will never achieve a California for all unless we center the full inclusion of our immigrant friends, family, and neighbors.

Legislative Priorities

Safety Net 4 All: SB 227 (Durazo)

Sponsored by the Safety Net for All Coalition

What does the proposal do? The #SafetyNet4All campaign seeks to create the first-ever state Excluded Workers Program to provide unemployment benefits for undocumented workers who have been systemically left out of unemployment insurance, which almost all other Californians have relied on to weather temporary job loss.

Background: This bill creates a state Excluded Workers Program, modeled off of successful programs in other states, to provide eligible workers with \$300 per week for up to 20 weeks of unemployment. It will ensure that over one million workers do not fall into financial ruin when they lose their job, by providing unemployment benefits to Californians who are excluded from regular unemployment insurance solely due to their immigration status. California employers pay hundreds of millions of dollars annually in Unemployment Insurance taxes on behalf of undocumented workers, even though those workers do not see a cent of that money.


How much does this cost? *[Only if directly asked about cost, say:]* “Our cost estimate is based on average rates of unemployment over the past several years, estimates of what workers would receive if they were eligible for unemployment insurance, and estimates from the Employment Development Department on the potential cost of creating a new program. Our total budget ask is currently \$356 million for one year. We believe the actual cost would be much, much lower given the cost of other similar and successful programs in other states, and the fact that unemployment is currently at a historic low.”

Talking Points for SB 227

Ask for Legislative Visits:

Pass a #SafetyNetforAll by supporting SB 227 and our corresponding budget request, so that one million of California’s workers are no longer excluded from unemployment benefits when they temporarily lose their job.



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- **IT'S ABOUT CLIMATE JUSTICE.** As climate change disasters continue to impact the state, California cannot continue to rely on piecemeal, one-time relief. The majority of workers who do the crucial work of cleaning up and rebuilding after floods, fires and earthquakes are immigrants, but when these disasters impact their own communities and prevent them from working, many do not have a safety net to fall back on. All Californians, regardless of where they were born, deserve access to a safety net when they are displaced and out of work.
 - **IT'S ABOUT WORKER JUSTICE.** Being denied unemployment benefits hurts workers and their families' well-being when they lose their job, forcing them to exhaust their savings and take on debt to pay for basic expenses like housing, childcare, and food. Access to unemployment benefits prevents the sort of desperation among workers that allows employers to commit wage theft and other forms of harassment or mistreatment on the job.
 - **IT'S ABOUT ECONOMIC EQUITY AND RESILIENCE.** Unemployment benefits are a key part of economic stability for employers and workers, because they help stabilize the economy and help people get back to work. Our state, our local businesses, and our communities bounce back faster when all Californians are supported to withstand changes in our climate and our economy.


Food4All: SB 245 (Hurtado) / AB 311 (Santiago)

Sponsored by CIPC and Nourish California

What does the proposal do? The #Food4All campaign seeks to improve food access by removing the arbitrary exclusion of income-eligible Californians from the California Food Assistance Program (CFAP) due to their immigration status. Currently, undocumented immigrants, DACA recipients, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders, and certain visa holders are excluded from CalFresh and CFAP. When every person has the nutrition they need, California can be a more resilient, thriving state.

Background: Food4All addresses longstanding discrimination in our state's most powerful anti-hunger program to ensure all Californians have access to food, regardless of their immigration status. Food not only fuels healthy bodies—it fuels healthy communities and our local economies. By removing immigrant exclusions from CFAP, these Food4All bills will reduce hunger, improve health outcomes, and mitigate poverty, resulting in a strengthened safety net for all. In last year's budget, California committed to expanding CFAP to all immigrants regardless of status over the age of 55 (with a 2027 implementation currently being proposed). But without additional investments for all age groups, hundreds of thousands will continue to remain excluded.

How much does this cost? *[Only if directly asked about cost, say:]* "Using population and cost estimates from the Legislative Analyst's Office, we are requesting \$358 million in general funds in fiscal year 2023-24 and \$715.5 million in general funds in FY 2024-25 and ongoing. These investments will build on the allocations made in the 2021-22 and 2022-23 state budgets and ensure access to CFAP for California immigrants of all ages who are currently ineligible for CalFresh solely due to their immigration status. Furthermore, the Senate has included Food4All for all ages as a top priority in its key values for the 2023-2024 budget."



Talking Points for Food4All

Ask for Legislative Visits:

Pass #Food4All by supporting SB 245 and AB 311 to ensure that all Californians, regardless of immigration status or age, can get the nutrition assistance they need.

- **NO CALIFORNIAN SHOULD BE EXCLUDED FROM FOOD BENEFITS.** Undocumented Californians are unjustly excluded from CalFresh (SNAP), the California Food Assistance Program (CFAP), and other crucial benefits programs. These exclusions contribute to painfully high rates of hunger, which have serious consequences for health, financial security, and children's long-term success. Nearly half (45%) of undocumented Californians are affected by food insecurity according to recent data from UCLA's California Health Interview Survey (CHIS).
- **IMMIGRANT JUSTICE IS FOOD JUSTICE.** Californians who are immigrants face discrimination and other barriers to meeting their basic needs. In 2019, the median hourly wage for undocumented immigrants in California was \$13, which is below the living wage for the state. No matter where they are born, every Californian should have the opportunity to earn a fair wage and have food on the table.
- **CALIFORNIANS NEED FOOD4ALL TODAY.** Food4All is an urgent issue. Delaying solutions will further harm California immigrants who continue to be left out of the state's safety net. Putting off the expansion of CalFresh for immigrants 55 and older to 2027 will only push people further into devastating poverty and hunger. We cannot ask them to wait any longer. **No exceptions! No exclusions! No delays!**

Health4All: AB 4 (Arambula)

Sponsored by CIPC and Health Access California


What does the proposal do? Building on recent state progress in making Medi-Cal more inclusive, AB 4 (Arambula) will take the first procedural step toward removing immigration status as an eligibility barrier to Covered California, CA's health insurance marketplace. By ensuring that everyone is able to access the care they need, we move closer to our vision of a more equitable health care system for all.

Background: The Affordable Care Act explicitly and unjustly excludes undocumented immigrants, including Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients, from receiving health coverage through federally funded programs including Covered California. Though California recently made the investment to extend comprehensive full-scope Medi-Cal to all, regardless of where they were born, this does not provide a solution for those whose household incomes are above the eligibility threshold for Medi-Cal. The current goal of the Health4All campaign is to allow all Californians regardless of immigration status to purchase affordable health insurance through Covered California. AB 4 (Arambula) takes the necessary first step toward this goal.

Talking Points for AB 4

Ask for Legislative Visits:

Pass AB 4 to direct Covered California to develop health plan options and financial assistance for immigrants who are currently excluded from marketplace coverage.

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- **IT'S ABOUT OUR COLLECTIVE HEALTH.** While the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing inequities, it has also made it clear that each of our health is deeply interconnected with that of every other Californian. We must recognize our shared humanity and care for each other, especially those with the greatest barriers to accessing our social safety net. Viruses don't discriminate based on immigration status, and our health care system shouldn't either.
 - **IT'S ABOUT JUSTICE.** Even with recent state progress in making Medi-Cal available to all regardless of immigration status, many undocumented Californians remain excluded from comprehensive health care coverage and are suffering from preventable and treatable conditions. As a result, undocumented and uninsured Californians live sicker, die younger, and are one emergency away from financial ruin.
 - **IT'S ABOUT LEADERSHIP.** California led the way by being the first state to make Medi-Cal available to all, regardless of age or immigration status. By doing the same for Covered California, California can once again cement its role as a leader in advancing groundbreaking health care solutions for ALL Californians.

The Harmonizing Our Measures for Equality Act (HOME Act): AB 1306 (Carrillo) **Sponsored by the ICE out of California Coalition; CIPC is one of 20 co-sponsors**

What does the proposal do? The ICE out of CA coalition seeks to disentangle and end state and local collusion with ICE. The HOME Act would prevent the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) from transferring community members to ICE who are eligible for release under broadly supported criminal legal reforms, including those who qualify for youth, elderly, and medical parole, re-sentencing or vacatur of one's conviction under various laws that address racial bias, harsh sentencing, and considerations if one was a survivor of domestic violence or trafficking.


Background: In recent years, the California Legislature, California voters, and Governors have demonstrated a strong commitment to reforming our criminal legal system, and addressing racism and mass incarceration by enacting landmark reforms. Tragically, solely because of their place of birth, immigrants and refugees who would otherwise benefit from these reforms are instead subjected to the double punishment of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention, deportation, and family separation. The goal of the HOME Act is to harmonize broadly-supported reforms already in place in CA to ensure equal application to immigrants and refugees that will reunite families, strengthen communities, and fulfill the state's commitment to addressing racial injustice.

Talking Points for AB 1306

Ask for Legislative Visits:

Pass AB 1306, the HOME Act, to ensure that immigrant Californians who have earned their release from state prison and qualify for criminal legal reforms can reunite with their families and rebuild their lives like any other Californian.



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- **IT'S ABOUT EQUAL TREATMENT.** When immigrants and refugees are eligible for release from our state prison system (CDCR) – meaning they've finished their sentences, have been found suitable for parole, or their sentences have been commuted – they are treated differently from everybody else. CDCR makes arrangements with ICE so that immigrant Californians are arrested inside our state prisons by ICE and funneled into ICE detention. This unjust practice of “double punishment” perpetuates a system that treats individuals unequally simply because of where they were born. No one should be excluded from a chance to reunite with loved ones just based on where they were born.
 - **IT'S ABOUT REDUCING CALIFORNIA'S ROLE IN COLLUDING WITH ICE.** Incarceration and deportation disproportionately target Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and AAPI immigrant communities. California's role in voluntarily sending Californians to ICE custody undercuts our progress towards a more equitable society. We need to protect the safety and well-being of all Californians by ensuring that state resources are not used to fuel mass deportations and detention.
 - **IT'S ABOUT INVESTING IN COMMUNITY SAFETY AND DIVESTING FROM DETENTION and DEPORTATION.** California must take the necessary strides toward ensuring that our local and state tax dollars are not used to funnel immigrants into inhumane conditions in immigration detention, violate Constitutional protections, and separate families and communities. By passing the HOME Act, California stands to save state resources that can be invested in health, housing, youth development, and access to living wages – all of which have been proven to reduce crime and stabilize communities.

Budget Priorities

Budget 2 Save Lives: the HEAL Budget Proposal

Sponsored by The Budget 2 Save Lives (B2SL) coalition

Californians United for a Responsible Budget (CURB), Dignity not Detention Coalition, Justice LA– and more than 150 grassroots organizations.

What does the proposal do? The Healthy Economies Adapting for Longevity (HEAL) budget proposal recommends a reallocation of \$15 million to high roads jobs funding in order to transition local economies from relying on the harmful immigration detention industry into long-lasting, and environmentally healthy industries, and create 1,800 quality jobs. The HEAL proposal incentivizes cities and counties to divest from immigration detention services and invest in high road jobs. In exchange for closing a detention center, cities and counties will have access to funding for high road jobs, clean infrastructure, or other community needs as California invests in real climate solutions.

Background: The unprecedented events of 2020 have revealed to all Californians what marginalized communities have known for decades: incarceration, family separation and deportations are public health crises. ICE detention centers continue to operate in California, imprisoning our community members, separating them from their families, and harming the entire state. California should prioritize long-term workforce development and green infrastructure funding for localities that end their toxic reliance on ICE detention facilities.



Talking Points for Budget 2 Save Lives

Ask for Legislative Visits:

Incorporate the Healthy Economies Adapting for Longevity (HEAL) budget proposal into the California state budget by including HEAL in the Governor's May Revise State Budget Proposal.

- **IT'S ABOUT HEALING CALIFORNIANS AND OUR COMMUNITIES.** There are 1,787 people currently detained inside six detention facilities across California. Aside from the suffering these facilities cause to the people held inside them and those who love them, these huge facilities are environmentally harmful to the localities they sit in. California can help these communities HEAL by investing in sustainable, healthy jobs.
- **IT'S ABOUT INVESTING IN JOBS AND DIVESTING FROM DETENTION.** If a locality declines to renew a permit for a detention center, it should receive support to replace those unsustainable jobs with good jobs that will contribute to the growth of a healthy and robust economy. The HEAL proposal would provide retraining support through the California Workforce Development Board to workers in those localities in order to transition them away from jobs in the detention industry to jobs that will build a sustainable future for all Californians. Our tax dollars need to be used to strengthen our families and communities by investing in green infrastructure and sustainable jobs, not for the targeting, detention and deportation of our immigrant friends, neighbors and coworkers.
- **IT'S ABOUT KEEPING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES TOGETHER AND HEALTHY.** California already attempted to address the dangers ICE detention facilities pose to the public's welfare by passing AB 32 (Bonta), which would have required the closure of ICE detention facilities in the state. People are uniting to protect immigrant family members, friends, coworkers, and neighbors by calling to shut down existing detention centers and blocking ICE proposals to build new ones. The HEAL proposal would give cities like Adelanto the much needed capacity to train workers in jobs for a sustainable, regenerative economy that will support future generations of Californians.