



# IMMIGRANT DAY OF ACTION 2024

POLICY PLATFORM **BACKGROUND**ER



# Immigrant Day of Action 2024 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.

## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

---

**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. Due to the wins by the Food4All campaign, California committed to expanding CFAP to all Californians ages 55 and over, regardless of their status. The expansion will be implemented by October 2025. But without additional investments for all age groups, hundreds of thousands will continue to remain excluded.

**How much does this cost?** *[If asked:]* This year, the Food4All coalition sent a budget request letter to the governor and legislature requesting the necessary funding to expand CFAP to all ages regardless of their immigration status.

Using population and cost estimates from the Legislative Analyst's Office, we are requesting an investment of \$60 million for fiscal year 2024-25, \$543 million for 2025-26, and \$697 million annually for FY 2026-27 and ongoing years.

### **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 and its state-funded counterpart, CFAP. The Legislative Analyst’s Office (LAO) estimates that up to 770,000 low-income Californians are shut out of critical food assistance due to their immigration status. *These exclusions contribute to painfully high rates of hunger, which have serious consequences for health, financial security, and children’s long-term success.*
- **FOOD INSECURITY IS GETTING WORSE.** A 2023 statewide survey found that Californians are feeling the impacts of food insecurity more acutely now than they have in the past 3 years. This was especially true for immigrant Californians with families – *more than 4 out of 5 (81%) immigrants with children worried about running out of food in the past 12 months – and 63% did run out of food before they could afford to buy more.*
- **CALIFORNIANS NEED FOOD4ALL TODAY.** Food4All is an urgent issue. *Nearly half (45%) of undocumented Californians and 2 out of 3 undocumented children* are affected by food insecurity according to recent data from UCLA. California’s immigrant communities need relief now. No exceptions! No exclusions! No delays!

**Health4All Covered California: AB 4 (Arambula)**  
**Sponsored by CIPC and Health Access California**

**What does the proposal do?** Building on recent state progress in making Medi-Cal available to all Californians, regardless of immigration status, AB 4 (Arambula) would remove immigration status as an eligibility barrier to Covered California, CA’s health insurance marketplace. The bill would establish a parallel marketplace that mirrors Covered California, where undocumented families could shop for health coverage.

**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 Medi-Cal to all regardless of where they were born, this does not provide a solution for the estimated 520,000 Californians whose household incomes are above the eligibility threshold for Medi-Cal. AB 4 (Arambula) establishes a “mirror” marketplace identical to Covered California, where undocumented individuals can get health insurance for themselves and their families.

**How much does this cost?** *[If asked:]* The Health4All coalition is asking the state to invest at least \$15 million in one-time start-up costs to get the mirror marketplace up and running. Eventually, the marketplace should be self-funded via plan fees and other revenue, just like Covered California is currently.

### **Talking Points for AB 4**

**Ask for Legislative Visits:** Pass AB 4 to direct Covered California to develop a “mirror” marketplace for immigrants who are currently excluded from existing marketplace coverage.

- **IT'S ABOUT OUR COLLECTIVE HEALTH.** While the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing inequities, it also made it clear that each person's 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.
- **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 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. Since, we have seen a ripple effect of other states across the country following suit. By doing the same for Covered California, California can once again cement its role as a leader in advancing groundbreaking health care solutions that are a model for the nation.

### **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 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 will help create an Excluded Workers Program for the one million 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. As climate change disasters continue to threaten our state and disrupt people's livelihoods, California can't wait to respond to the needs of immigrant workers. All Californians, regardless of where they were born, deserve access to a safety net when they are displaced and out of work.

### **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.

- **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.

### **Public Health Inspections in Private Detention: SB 1132 (Durazo)**

**Sponsored by CIPC, Immigrant Defense Advocates (IDA), California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice (CCIJ), and NextGen California**

**What does the proposal do?** Senate Bill (SB) 1132 (Durazo) would allow county health officers to investigate health and sanitary conditions in private detention facilities operating in California. This includes for-profit detention facilities used to detain immigrants, which have a history of inadequate health and safety standards. The goal of SB 1132 is to ensure that county health officials have the ability to enter these facilities when necessary.

**Background:** At present, California is home to six privately operated civil detention facilities that can detain more than 7,200 individuals at any given time. These facilities are required to abide by California law and public health orders. Despite these requirements, the for-profit companies operating these detention facilities routinely fail to meet basic standards to protect individuals detained or in these facilities.

### **Talking Points for SB 1132**

**Ask for Legislative Visits:** Pass SB 1132 (Durazo) to allow county health officers to enter and inspect private detention facilities, and ensure that public health standards apply to individuals who are detained in detention centers operated by private prison corporations.

- **IT'S ABOUT PUBLIC HEALTH STANDARDS FOR ALL.** For-profit detention facilities have a horrific track record in our state when it comes to health, safety, and human rights. Detention facilities can pose a public health risk to individuals held inside, as well as those who work, visit, or live near these sites. This bill empowers county health officials to enter these facilities when necessary and ensures that these private facilities adhere to public health orders and guidelines that are necessary to keep our state safe.
- **IT'S ABOUT PROTECTING ALL CALIFORNIANS.** Immigration detention not only deprives people of their liberty and breaks families apart, these facilities have a long history of unsafe and unsanitary conditions. California must protect the health, safety and wellbeing of all people detained by ensuring that these facilities run by private, for-profit corporations are accountable to local health and safety standards.
- **IT'S ABOUT ACCOUNTABILITY ON BEHALF OF FAMILIES.** Thousands of California families are impacted by the immigration detention system that is rife with inhumane conditions, due process violations, and a lack of accountability. This bill is a natural follow-up to AB 263 (Bonta), passed in 2021, and builds on our continued efforts to ensure accountability and oversight in these facilities. California should do everything it can to ensure that minimum standards are observed by the corporations running these facilities.

## BUDGET PRIORITY

---

### Protect California's Immigration Legal Services Programs

Sponsored by CIPC and supported by Immigrant Defense Advocates and the One California Coalition



**What does the proposal do?** As California navigates a budget crisis, immigration legal services programs are facing potentially devastating cuts of \$15.2 million, reducing and eliminating programs that provide California families with access to life-changing legal services. These cuts particularly harm rural immigrant communities and are a step backward for California. Advocates hope to protect and preserve California's Immigration Legal Services Programs that provide critical legal services and representation to thousands of youth, students, workers, individuals and families every year.

**Background:** In 2015, California created the first state-based program in the U.S. to dedicate state funding for nonprofit organizations providing outreach and legal services to immigrants. By 2019, California invested an annual allocation of \$45 million for the One California Immigration Services Funding program with millions more dedicated to capacity building projects, such as the California State University Immigration Legal Services Project (CSU-ILSP), Temporary Protected Status (TPS) Immigration Legal Services Program and the Children's Holistic Immigration Representation Project (CHIRP).

**Impact of the proposed cuts of \$15.2 million to immigration legal services:** The proposed cut of \$5.2 million to the California State University (CSU) Immigration Legal Services Project would slash the crucial legal services program by nearly 75%, and the proposed cut of \$10 million to the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) Immigration Legal Services Programs, including equity projects, would eliminate the TPS program entirely. Both of the CSU and TPS immigration programs have assisted thousands of students, workers, and families with free immigration legal services and representation while applying for DACA, TPS, Naturalization, family-based petitions, asylum, and deportation defense. The proposed discontinuation of CHIRP would eliminate a critical program that has provided legal representation, social workers and supportive services to hundreds of children in deportation proceedings across dozens of California counties.

### Talking Points

**Ask for Legislative Visits:** Retain \$15.2 million in state funding for the TPS and CSU Immigration Legal Services Programs proposed to be cut by the Governor's

January budget, as well as a reinvestment in the Children’s Holistic Immigration and Representation Project (CHIRP) in the amount of \$17.8 million.

- **IT’S ABOUT EQUITY.** California’s historic investment in immigration legal services is an investment in California’s future. California is stronger when all of its residents feel safe and supported. State legislators should continue funding support for immigration legal services, so that all Californians have the right to counsel — not cut them as proposed by Governor Newsom.
- **IT’S ABOUT PROTECTING ALL CALIFORNIANS.** As the Biden administration and Congress threaten to ramp up detentions and deportations, California should be increasing—not decreasing—state funds for immigration legal services. These legal services programs serve as bridges to difficult to reach immigrant communities, many of which are the most impacted by ICE enforcement and raids.
- **IT’S ABOUT IMMIGRANTS BEING SAFE AND WELCOME IN CALIFORNIA.** Ensuring that immigrants feel safe and welcome starts with building bridges, increasing education and trust. That is why programs like CHIRP and CSU-ILSP are so critical. Immigration legal service programs build these bridges, and contribute to community stability throughout the state, making California safer for everyone.