

**ALAMEDA COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS'
TOGETHER FOR ALL AD-HOC COMMITTEE**

**Thursday, February 6, 2025
10:00 a.m.**

Supervisor Nikki Fortunato Bas, Chair
Supervisor Elisa Márquez, Vice-Chair

Location: Susan S. Muranishi County Administration Building
Board of Supervisors Chambers
1221 Oak Street, Room 512, 5th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Summary/Action Minutes

I. INFORMATIONAL ITEM: Expected Impacts of Federal Administration Policies and Budgets on Alameda County Communities

Emily Bacque DaSilva, and Lynn Jacquez, CJ Lake reported on impacts of Federal Administration Policies and Budgets on Alameda County Communities.

There is ongoing uncertainty at the federal level with major potential impacts on Alameda County, regarding funding stability, social services, and immigration enforcement. The county's representatives are closely monitoring developments, with an emphasis on gathering local impact data to support advocacy efforts in Washington, D.C.

- Numerous executive orders and memos since January 20th have created confusion, with a "scattershot" strategy causing unpredictability.
- Internal disagreements in the House over proposed cuts (ranging from \$500 billion to \$2 trillion) are delaying the budget process. Medicaid and other social programs are at risk for potential cuts.
- FY26 budget is expected to be delayed, with likely proposed cuts to domestic programs.
- Congresswoman Latifah Simon is seeking specific data on county impacts from funding cuts to better advocate on behalf of Alameda County.
- The Office of Management and Budget memo's funding freeze was unprecedented in scope and initially affected nearly all programs. Litigation has resulted in a nationwide injunction, pausing the funding halt. Agencies are still reviewing programs to determine what may be permanently affected.
- Certain agencies (like EPA, USAID, Dept. of Education) are facing potential program shutdowns and workforce reductions. Federal workforce stability remains a concern for local jurisdictions.

Aggressive immigration actions include:

- Reopening Guantanamo Bay for detaining deportable individuals.
- Increased detentions, deportations, worksite investigations, and public space enforcement.
- Daily detention quotas imposed on ICE.

There are several legal challenges, including birthright citizenship and other executive orders. Expectation of continued litigation affecting federal agency activities.

Sheriff Yesenia Sanchez, Alameda County Sheriff's Office, explained the Alameda County Sheriff's Office policy regarding immigration and undocumented residents. Since taking office in 2023, the Sheriff prioritized changing the policy to stop honoring ICE detainer requests unless there is a criminal warrant for a serious or violent crime.

- The Sheriff's Office has a zero-contact policy with immigration authorities, except in the case of valid criminal warrants.
- They no longer share or collect any information about a person's immigration status.
- Large law enforcement gatherings in the area are often misinterpreted as immigration operations. Community members are encouraged to call and verify if they have concerns.
- Local law enforcement, including the Sheriff's Office, does not cooperate with ICE on immigration enforcement.
- If ICE conducts an operation, local law enforcement is not informed and is only responsible for ensuring public safety in case of danger.

Sheriff Sanchez stated that undocumented residents should feel safe to report crimes or seek help without fear of immigration consequences.

Aneeka Chaudhry, Interim Director, Alameda County Health, provided an [overview](#) of the county's health landscape, emphasizing its diversity and commitment to supporting all residents, including immigrants and vulnerable populations.

The county relies heavily on state and federal funding, which supports vital programs through complex funding streams. Essential services include infectious disease monitoring, chronic disease prevention, behavioral health, and homelessness services. Environmental regulations and FEMA policies impact health and emergency preparedness.

Nearly 500,000 residents are on Medi-Cal, which has expanded to cover immigrants regardless of status. Programs like CalAIM are transforming Medicaid services but could face risks from federal policy changes. Threats to the Affordable Care Act and subsidies could affect low-income residents' coverage. The department is addressing the "chilling effect", where fear prevents people from seeking services.

AC Health programs support marginalized groups, including immigrants, LGBTQ+ individuals, and families with a focus on climate resilience and social determinants of health (income, housing, policy impacts).

Launching inclusive public messaging to ensure health spaces are welcoming. Upcoming 2025 planning will align behavioral health, public health, and homelessness services with an awareness of federal policy impacts. The county is committed to serving all residents and will continue updating the Board.

Jessica Pinckney Gil, ACCESS Reproductive Justice (Access RJ), spoke about their mission and the current landscape of reproductive rights.

Access RJ's mission is to remove barriers to sexual and reproductive health care and empower Californians to demand health, justice, and dignity. Access RJ is California's only statewide standalone abortion fund. They offer a multilingual health line (English, Spanish, and over 100 languages via interpretation) to help people access reproductive health care.

Support includes:

Financial assistance for abortion procedures (pills and in-clinic). Practical support like travel, lodging, meals, childcare, and lost wages.

Post-Dobbs Landscape:

- 19 states ban or restrict abortion.
- California has strengthened protections, but there's ongoing debate about care beyond viability.
- California is considered a safe haven, but barriers still exist, including:
- Medi-Cal limitations on access.
- Rural areas without nearby clinics.
- Low provider reimbursement rates.
- Confusion around Medi-Cal eligibility, especially for youth.

Access RJ's Impact (2023-2024) has supported nearly 3,000 people with over \$1.3 million in aid. About 50% of individuals helped were from out of state. In Alameda County, they supported nearly 100 people.

Access RJ requests that Alameda County strengthen public messaging, connect social service agencies for smooth referrals, enhance physical safety and support for those traveling for care and ensure awareness of available resources and services.

Joe Hawkins, CEO and co-founder of the Oakland LGBTQ Community Center, spoke about the ongoing struggles and disparities facing the LGBTQ community in Alameda County. He shared that prior to the center's opening in 2017, Oakland was the only major city in California without an LGBTQ center. The Oakland center is notably the first in the state founded by Black people for all people.

Mr. Hawkins emphasized how national anti-LGBTQ rhetoric from the federal government, directly threatens the community, especially trans and gender-nonconforming individuals. He reported on the history of discrimination LGBTQ people face across government, healthcare, religious institutions, and even within families.

Mr. Hawkins called attention to the lack of adequate county funding for LGBTQ services, despite clear evidence of need. He thanked the Board of Supervisors, particularly Supervisor Nikki Fortunato Bas, for their support and allyship.

Jehon Lehner, an attorney at the Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC), spoke to highlight the importance of maintaining strong local protections for immigrants, especially in the face of increased enforcement under the Trump administration. He thanked local leaders, including Sheriff Sanchez, for their commitment to protecting immigrant communities.

Role of the ILRC is to analyze immigration law and share updates with practitioners and communities, . gather feedback to inform immigration policy advocacy at local, state, and national levels.

The Trump administration is aggressively targeting immigrants through mass deportations and revoking legal statuses. Tactics include publicized raids, family separations, and criminalizing immigrants to instill fear. Federal pressure on local governments to cooperate with immigration enforcement continues, despite legal protections for sanctuary policies.

Policy Changes Under Trump include:

- Ended targeted enforcement priorities, now arresting anyone without status.
- Increased use of detention, causing severe hardships for individuals and families.
- Expanded expedited removal across the U.S., leading to faster deportations without proper legal processes.
- Terminated Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Venezuelans and ended key parole programs for several nationalities.
- Passed laws (like the Lake and Riley Act) expanding mandatory detention and enabling state lawsuits over immigration cases.

The ILRC requests that Alameda County:

- Uphold and strengthen sanctuary policies, limit cooperation with ICE unless legally required;
- Symbolically stand with immigrants, rejecting harmful narratives and scapegoating
- Tactically support immigrant communities through legal defense, public health initiatives, and community protections.
- Recognize that most ICE arrests start with local law enforcement cooperation, so resisting collaboration is key to protecting residents.

Purpose:

- ☐ Report progress
- ☒ **Advocacy or Education**
- ☐ Request Together for All ad hoc Committee Recommendation or Position
- ☐ Other:

This item was informational only and required no Committee action.

II. ACTION ITEM: Immediate Needs for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

[Attachment](#)

Brendon Woods, Alameda County Public Defender, presented a PowerPoint presentation on Immigrant Defense. Raja Jorjani, supervisor of the office's immigration unit, was unavailable due to court.

The Alameda County Public Defender's Office became the first public defender's office outside of New York City to represent clients in removal proceedings due to the injustices of the immigration system. The Immigration Unit, created in 2014, has grown to six attorneys and support staff, thanks to county leadership during the Trump administration.

Developments under the current administration include:

- Revocation of protections like TPS for thousands.
- Military deployment to the border.
- Use of Guantanamo Bay for detainees.
- Aggressive ICE detention policies through acts like the Lake and Riley Act, which mandates detention based on arrests, not convictions.
- Dismantling of state and local protections for immigrant communities, even in places like schools and hospitals.
- High daily arrest quotas for ICE officers.

To address growing threats and service gaps, Woods requested funding for 1) an immigration attorney in the juvenile unit to assist undocumented youth with Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS); 2) an attorney to support individuals with immigration concerns during and after criminal proceedings; 3) a post-conviction immigration attorney in the Clean Slate unit to help non-citizens with records clear immigration obstacles.

Two legal secretaries and litigation support to handle growing clerical and case management needs. The total funding request is approximately \$1.3 million.

Monique Berlanga, Executive Director of Centro Legal de la Raza, presented a [PowerPoint](#) presentation on the urgent need to revive a rapid response network in Alameda County to protect immigrant communities from immigration enforcement.

Centro Legal was founded in 1969 during the Chicano Civil Rights movement and provides free legal services to over 10,000 immigrants, workers, and tenants annually in Alameda and Contra Costa counties.

They specialize in removal defense and support for vulnerable populations, including unaccompanied minors and Central American asylum seekers.

Rapid Response Network is a coordinated effort providing Know Your Rights education, hotlines to track and verify ICE activity, emergency legal intervention during arrests and post-enforcement family support. Volunteer mobilization for community verification and accompaniment.

ACRIP (Alameda County Rapid Response Network) Provided:

- 26,000+ Know Your Rights trainings
- 7,854 legal consultations
- 8,000 hotline calls answered
- 2,625 legal representations

Countywide coverage (avoiding past North County concentration). Shift to short-term, high-volume legal triage rather than full-scope legal representation. Partnering with organizations like Eden United Church of Christ and Spanish Speaking Citizens Foundation for broader community reach. Build a countywide advocacy coalition to create lasting policy changes and systemic protections.

The vision is to create a sustainable, inclusive, and proactive network that not only responds during crises but empowers immigrant communities long-term to defend their rights and resist deportations.

Edwin Carmona Cruz, Co-executive Director of the [California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice](#) (CCIJ), spoke on behalf of his colleague Lisa Knox to advocate for \$2 million in removal defense funding to support immigrant communities in Alameda County. CCIJ, with roots in rapid response and legal defense networks formed after the Trump administration's anti-immigrant policies, focuses on legal services and advocacy for immigrants facing detention and deportation.

The immigration court proceedings are long and complex processes, where individuals—often without the right to legal counsel—must defend themselves against government attorneys in non-independent courts. Many immigrants are detained far from their families and face months or years of legal battles that require expert witnesses, documentation, and legal navigation.

The importance of community-based legal partnerships helps establish community ties that can significantly influence a judge's decision. Alameda County is home to a large immigrant population—with one in three residents born abroad—and there is an urgent need for sustained legal support to keep families together and communities strong.

The California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice requested the Board of Supervisors to approve the \$2 million emergency funding request to help ensure immigrants are not forced to face deportation proceedings alone.

Jennifer Alejo, Executive Director of Trabajadores Unidos Workers United (TUWU), spoke on behalf of a regional Bay Area immigrant worker center advocating for immigrant rights, racial justice, and economic equity. With over 200 members and two decades of grassroots organizing, TUWU highlights the urgent need for Alameda County to build sustainable coalitions to protect immigrant communities—similar to those in neighboring counties. Immigrant communities face systemic marginalization and require long-term, community-led organizing efforts, not just emergency responses. The Alameda County United in Defense of Immigrant Rights coalition, among others, has a history of fighting deportations and supporting detainees, but lacks stable funding. Ms. Alejo called for a \$1 million investment to scale and sustain a multicultural, countywide coalition that ensures safety, unity, and justice for all immigrant families, free from criminalization and deportation.

Speakers

Several speakers spoke in support and in opposition to the emergency request for funding.

Purpose:

- ☐ Report progress
- ☒ Advocacy or Education
- ☒ **Request Together for All ad hoc Committee Recommendation or Position**
- ☐ Other:

A motion was made by Supervisor Fortunato Bas and seconded by Supervisor Márquez to advance an emergency funding request of \$3.5 million for one year to the full Alameda County Board of Supervisors, with the intention of exploring multi-year funding options. The funding would support immigration-related legal and community services, including:

1. \$1.3 million for the Public Defender's Immigration Unit (staff, legal, and litigation support).
2. Funding for ACRE/CLIP for rapid response, Know Your Rights trainings, and legal services.
3. \$500,000 for multiracial community organizing and preparedness in neighborhoods and workplaces.
4. \$1 million for legal defense services for detained and deportation-threatened individuals.

The motion was approved unanimously.

Recommendation from Together for All ad hoc Committee: Support. Move to the full Board of Supervisors.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jackie Cota expressed strong support for former President Trump and his administration's actions on border security, immigration enforcement, and fiscal accountability. She supports the Remain in Mexico policy and holding sanctuary cities accountable.

Patricia Beebe read from the Laken Riley Act, a bill that mandates the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to detain non-U.S. nationals who are unlawfully present and have been involved in burglary, theft, larceny, or shoplifting. The bill also gives states the authority to sue the federal government over immigration enforcement decisions or failures. Ms. Beebe urged everyone to learn about Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) and related rights.

John Guerrero commented that his late wife and her family were immigrants who became U.S. citizens without issue as they followed the legal process. Asylum must be claimed at official ports of entry, not by crossing the border illegally, and current issues are because some do not follow this process. ICE is targeting criminals, those involved in violence, drug trafficking, and human trafficking.

Mindy Pechenuk commented that the Board of Supervisors should not focus on immigration-related initiatives and instead address more urgent local issues, such as keeping fire stations open, increasing police funding, and combating the fentanyl crisis. Discussions around immigration should focus on individuals committing crimes, not average citizens. She asked why the board is not collaborating with President Trump on drug enforcement efforts because current policies may enable drug access rather than prevent it.

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