COMMUNITY-LED MOVEMENT TO END ICE TRANSFERS

THE VISION ACT
AB 937

A reflection on 2021
A growing, multiracial coalition called ICE Out of CA is reimagining public safety and immigrant rights in California. Together, we are holding our elected representatives accountable to a safe, thriving, and just future - and organizing with our neighbors, families, and communities to push forward systemic change. In the past year, we’ve come together to take on tough fights for justice and celebrate important wins along the way. Take a look back at 2021 with us and learn what’s coming in 2022.
The VISION Act (AB 937), authored by Assemblymember Wendy Carrillo, was introduced in the California state 2021 legislative session.

The VISION Act would protect community members who have already been deemed eligible for release from being transferred by local jails and our state prison system to immigration detention.

The VISION Act takes urgent and necessary strides toward ensuring that our local and state tax dollars are not used to funnel immigrants into dangerous health conditions in immigration detention, violate Constitutional protections, and separate immigrant families and communities. (ICE Out of CA)
When President Biden took office, he ordered a 100-day pause on deportations, which was short-lived. A federal judge’s order blocked the administration’s “pause” on deportations, but did not require President Biden to schedule deportations. Nonetheless, in the week following, he deported immigrants to Guatemala, Honduras, and Jamaica. During this “pause” on deportations, he still scheduled a deportation flight for 30 Vietnamese refugees, including Tien Pham.

Thousands of people spoke out through the #100DaysForFreedom campaign, calling on the Biden administration to free incarcerated immigrant community members.
Tien's family fled to the U.S as Vietnamese refugees and resettled in a poor housing project in San Jose, where he faced constant attacks and bullying by gangs. Like many SE Asian youth, Tien began associating with gangs for protection, and ended up incarcerated.

While in prison, Tien grew up and dealt with his trauma despite being surrounded by violence. After over 2 decades of incarceration, CDCR handed Tien to ICE. After a grueling 6 months in ICE detention, Tien was sent on a mass deportation flight to Vietnam in March 2021.

Take a moment to learn about these powerful leaders:

Tien Pham
Gabby Solano, a survivor of domestic violence, was unjustly sentenced to life without the possibility of parole for the fatal actions of her abusive boyfriend. After serving 22 years in prison, she earned release through a commutation from Gov. Jerry Brown and approval from the state’s parole board. Survivors like Gabby are forced to make impossible choices under devastating circumstances. This summer, Gabby decided to sign her deportation order to get out of the ICE detention, which is abusive and violent by nature. Separated from her family and loved ones in Los Angeles, Gabby continues to advocate for the VISION Act.
Phi ‘Tommy’ Pham, a Vietnamese refugee and incarcerated firefighter, was supposed to have his first day of freedom on June 16, 2021 but instead California prison staff called ICE to have him arrested.

He was finally welcomed home by his family and community in Hayward after 5 months in an ICE detention facility in Colorado.

“Today, I can finally hug my family and friends. We kept fighting for my freedom and future” - Phi

#FightforPhi
Liyah is a Black immigrant from Ethiopia residing in Placer County, who was prosecuted and incarcerated for defending herself against her abusive husband. After serving her sentence, she was turned over to ICE and spent another 1.5 years detained.

Liyah awaits a pardon from Gov. Newsom to stop her deportation. Black women, particularly immigrants, are incarcerated and deported at over twice the rate of white women. Upwards of 90% of incarcerated women are survivors of domestic violence or sexual assault.

"Can you imagine how heartbreaking it is when a mother asks her child when she’ll be coming home, and there is no answer?"

Watch: bit.ly/specnews-liyah
Bun is currently a Yuri Kochiyama Fellow with Advancing Justice Asian Law Caucus.

“We’re coming out here more positive. If we were deported, our family wouldn’t be as happy as they are now. We draw them together and the positive mindset we bring — that heals them and heals our community. I believe deportation is really double punishment for our family, for us, and for our community.” (SEARAC)

Chanthon Bun

Chanthon Bun is a Cambodian refugee who lived through the compounding effects of war, bullying and poverty growing up. At 18 years-old, he was incarcerated during the U.S. "tough on crime" era that resulted in the dramatic rise of the incarceration of people of color. While inside, Chanthon dedicated himself to self-help programs and mentoring other people coming into person who are looking for a second chance at life. Chanthon suffers from a blood disorder, hyperkalemic periodic paralysis, and hypertension, and is medically vulnerable. On Chanthon’s upcoming day of release, he should be released to his community and family, and not sent to an ICE detention facility where he would face life-threatening symptoms to COVID-19.
“Every day I get up in the morning, sit outside on the porch, and tell myself, ‘I’m free. But any day they could knock on the door and get me, watch me from the street and pull me over, or stop me and just arrest me.’”
AS AN ARTIST, BUN EXPOSES THE REALITY OF ICE TRANSFERS

Video: bit.ly/whatareICEtransfers
COMMUNITY WINS: GOV. NEWSOM PARDONS FORMERLY INCARCERATED FIREFIGHTERS TRANSFERRED TO ICE

Kao Saelee and Bounchan Keola each spent more than two decades in prison for acts committed when they were teenagers. Kao is from Fresno, CA. Boun is from Contra Costa County. Over 200,000 signatures on the petition to #FreeSaelee!
A majority of California voters support ending the double punishment of immigrant Californians and stopping transfers of Californians to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), according to a poll from the U.S. Immigration Policy Center (USIPC) at UC San Diego, commissioned by the Asian Law Caucus.
WHY THIS MATTERS: PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS VOCALIZE THEIR SUPPORT

ICE transfers separate families, disrupt re-entry plans, and intensify existing trauma. Sen. @Portantino, please pass the #VISIONAct #AB937 so that ALL immigrant families and communities can remain whole. #StopICEtransfers

Bend the Arc: Jewish Action DC/CA
Senator @Portantino, the Jewish Community urges you to pass the #VISIONAct #AB937 out of the Appropriations Committee. There should be no exclusions to human dignity, equal justice, and reunification of immigrant families and loved ones!

Bend the Arc: Jewish Action CA
California stands in strong support of the #VISIONAct. As the state with the largest immigrant community in the country, California has an ethical and moral obligation to step up our leadership and take action to protect the rights of all refugees and immigrants who call California home.

Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
The Vision Act is important to us.

Human Impact Partners stands in strong support of the #VISIONAct (AB 937)
Our research shows that direct ICE transfers measurably harm individual, family, and community health. It doesn't have to be this way. Removing families after their loved ones are released from incarceration, is critical for inter-generational health and well-being.

Human Impact Partners

CCWP is a proud co-sponsor of The Vision Act (AB 937) because people like Marisela should come home.
Join us in urging @Portantino, @CASenCaballero, and your Senator to stop ICE transfers and pass the #VisionAct bit.ly/VISIONAct

CCWP

We NEED our Senators to pass the #VISIONAct + Gov. @GavinNewsom to sign it into law.
We MUST protect immigrant families, #StopICEtransfers, get #ICEoutofCA, + end the double punishment of non-citizens who have served their time and been granted parole.

Gustavo Lopez

DON'T DEPORT ME END ICE TRANSFERS PASS THE VISION ACT #AB937
TAKE ACTION: www.bit.ly/VISIONACT
The VISION Act upholds the most sacred principle upon which the entire bedrock of our democracy relies: All are created equal. All should have equal protection under the law." - Asm. Carrillo
Cities, counties, and hundreds of organizations are united:

- California Democratic Party
- Black Legislative Caucus
- Latino Legislative Caucus
- API Legislative Caucus
- Black Lives Matter - CA
- Labor unions and federations
- Faith organizations and leaders across the state
- City and county governments across California
- LA and SF district attorneys
VICTORY IN SAN MATEO COUNTY

II/9/2021: On the footsteps of the TRUTH Act forum where community members demanded an end to ICE transfers, and after many years of hard-fought advocacy, San Mateo County Sheriff Bolanos announced he will stop collaborating with ICE.

San Mateo County has transferred more people to ICE than any other Bay Area County.

This win could be a reality in every county if the VISION Act passed.

SAN MATEO COUNTY COALITION FOR IMMIGRANT RIGHTS RESPONDS TO SHERIFF'S DECISION TO STOP COLLABORATION WITH ICE

November 9, 2021

Sheriff Bolanos has finally heeded the calls of impacted families and community members who have been speaking out against ICE transfers for years. This victory would not have been possible without impacted families who have organized to bring this issue to light. Last week at a TRUTH Act Forum, more than 60 people shared how San Mateo County’s policy of collaborating with federal immigration enforcement has torn our families and community apart.

We’re in solidarity with those who have suffered irreparable harm due to San Mateo County’s devastating and unnecessary ICE transfer policy. There is no going back for our loved ones who were deported and their families who will have an empty seat at the table during the holidays. The Sheriff and Board owe it to these families to make this policy permanent and stop ICE transfers for good. We continue to call for the Board of Supervisors to make a countywide commitment and pass an ordinance to ensure no further County resources are used to tear apart immigrant families.
The bill will resume through the legislative process in January 2022. We will continue to fight, day and night, to #StopICEtransfers.

-- From the ICE Out of California coalition --

For immediate release: September 10, 2021

Bill to end prison-to-deportation pipeline will return next year

VISION Act won momentous support across the state; coalition well-positioned for victory

Sacramento, CA -- Moments ago, the California State Senate made the VISION Act, AB 937 by Asm. Wendy Carrillo, a two-year bill. The broadly-supported bill is expected to resume moving through the legislative process in January of next year, and advocates are planning sustained efforts across the state to continue building momentum for the proposal.

While the VISION Act maintained backing from a majority of Democratic Senators, a handful of legislators reneged on their commitment to support in the wake of a misleading attack from a small number of police lobby groups, sparking at least four community-led protests in Orange County, Vallejo, Los Angeles, and Riverside. Advocates will continue to educate members of the legislature on the urgent need to uphold equality under the law.

The VISION Act would ensure that once a person has earned their release from state prison or local jail, they are not transferred to abusive and possibly deadly ICE detention, and instead are able to return to their loved ones and rebuild their lives. This includes a person who has completed their sentence, been granted parole, had charges dropped, or been granted release by a judge.

A recent poll conducted by UC San Diego's US Immigration Policy Center found a strong majority of California voters support the bill and the principles that undergird it, with two-thirds of voters backing the VISION Act and 80% agreeing that regardless of what country a person was born in, we should treat them as equals under the law.
WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

In January, we’ll be mobilizing and organizing in bigger ways than ever before for racial and immigrant justice. This is our year to #StopICETransfers with the #VISIONAct once and for all!

Follow the #VISIONAct hashtag and visit ICEOutofCA.org to get the latest updates and action alerts. Together, we’re building a movement to reunite immigrant families and communities and make California a place where immigrant and non-immigrants alike are treated with dignity and respect.