

Immigration Advocates Exploring Further Legal Action Against ICE's Abrupt Transfers of Detained Immigrants

August 30, 2018 – San Francisco, California – As concerns continue to rise over ICE's sudden transfer of detained immigrants from the West County Detention Facility, immigrant rights groups have begun taking legal action. In response to these developments, an alliance of legal collaboratives and "rapid response" networks, including the Northern California Rapid Response & Immigrant Defense Network (NCRRIDN) and the Northern California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice (NCCIJ), issued the following statement:

We add our voices to the chorus of profound concern over ICE's transfers, which have harmed more than 30 detained people represented by our networks. These transfers are dehumanizing in their impact and punitive in practice, and create immense obstacles for the detained people, as well as the attorneys and community advocates working to support them.

ICE could have used its discretion to release these community members, but instead, violated its own procedures and impinged the right to legal representation, transferring people whose cases had already begun to be heard here in San Francisco. The impact for families and communities has been devastating.

We applaud the petitions our colleagues recently filed in federal court to seek the release of several detainees. Our collaboratives and networks are also currently considering all legal options to challenge ICE's actions. We must protect the due process rights of everyone, including immigrants.

Valerie Zukin, Northern California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice Lead Attorney Coordinator, further described the significant hardship the transfers placed on detained immigrants. "People detained by ICE already faced tremendous hurdles, including the lowest rates of legal representation - which can make all the difference between deportation and freedom."

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The Justice & Diversity Center (JDC) of the Bar Association of San Francisco advances fairness and equality by providing pro bono legal services to low-income people and educational programs that foster diversity in the legal profession. JDC is the largest legal services provider in San Francisco. JDC's primary purpose is the delivery of free legal services to low-income San Franciscans, as well as the non-profits that serve them. JDC delivers free legal services through its Legal Services Programs division, which consists of the Pro Bono Legal Services Program, Homeless Advocacy Project, and the Immigration Program. JDC provides enrichment programs to diverse youth and young adults through its Diversity Educational Programs. JDC's programs serve approximately 9,500 disadvantaged San Franciscans a year, with the overarching goal of assisting the community's most vulnerable members with accessing the judicial system and strengthening their personal, professional, and economic security.