



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Independent Democratic Conference Announces Immigrant Defense Coalition

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**Albany, NY** — After the Trump administration issued an un-American executive order and ramped up anti-immigration rhetoric and policies, the New York Senate **Independent Democratic Conference** announced a major initiative to protect immigrant communities across New York State.

Starting immediately, the IDC's new Immigrant Defense Coalition will operate out of each member's district office to provide legal services, resources and any assistance to immigrants and their families.

The new service in each of the eight offices represents real action and help for New Yorkers on a day when other Senate Democrats took a soft, indirect approach of attaching hostile amendments to Senate resolutions in protest.

"President Trump's anti-immigrant rhetoric came to life this weekend through his un-American executive order banning immigrants from predominantly Muslim countries from entering the United States and through his demonization of Mexicans with renewed vigor

and plans to build a wall on our border. This level of intolerance starkly contrasts with the core values of our nation, one which has always embraced those who seek refuge here. All eight members of the Independent Democratic Conference will create the 'Immigrant Defense Coalition' to protect and defend immigrants in New York. Our offices will each offer services to immigrants who need assistance during this troubling time. Already, the IDC provided the Vera Institute of Justice's New York Immigrant Family Unity Project with \$250,000 to provide legal assistance to immigrants facing deportation, and this year the IDC will prioritize funding for other groups that provide similar services to immigrants in New York," **said IDC Leader Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester).**

"It is against our country's values to slam the door shut on immigrants seeking refuge. Our doors will be open to serve any immigrants who need help during this frightening time," **said IDC Deputy Leader David Valesky (D-Syracuse).**

"The president's executive order is antithetical to our nation's values and we will not stand for it. I fight against the anti-immigrant rhetoric and policies coming out of Washington and protect my district which is one of the most diverse places in New York City. My door will be open to help each and every person who needs a hand because that is the spirit of this country," **said Senator Jose Peralta (D-Queens).**

"On inauguration day I protested President Trump for his anti-immigrant rhetoric and was arrested. Now, his words are a real threat to the people I represent and these dangerous policies will not be tolerated. I came to this country as an immigrant and I will always protect the rights of those who seek refuge here. My district will be impacted by these anti-immigrant policies and I will keep my door open to protect residents. I will fight to the end to

make sure that we protect the rights of everyone who seeks to be an American,” **said Senator Marisol Alcantara (D-Manhattan).**

“The executive actions on immigration taken by the Trump administration are unacceptable and un-American. This country was built on the backs of immigrants who came here looking for a better life for them and their families, many of them fleeing persecution. I will continue to fight to fund programs that aid immigrants and ensure that any person who needs help or resources knows that my office door is open to assist them,” **said Senator Tony Avella (D-Queens).**

“Providing important services is taking action directly to community members who are affected by the president’s executive orders. I am proud to take these important steps towards protecting immigrant New Yorkers and I look forward to continuing to find innovative ways towards combatting these destructive actions from the President,” **said Senator David Carlucci (D-Rockland/Westchester).**

“Over the weekend I joined protests at JFK that erupted after the impact of President Trump’s executive orders were first seen. I felt outrage that our country, the land of the free, was not letting people in. It is incredibly important that immigrants know that there are resources available to them and I am immensely proud of the leadership of the IDC to create this coalition to bring them directly to our communities,” **said Senator Jesse Hamilton (D-Brooklyn).**

“The administration’s poorly-written and hastily implemented executive order has caused confusion in regard to immigrants’ rights. My door is open to help everyone in my district,” **said Senator Diane Savino (D-SI/Brooklyn).**

Key elements of the Immigration Defense Coalition include the establishment of a toll-free number for those seeking assistance for themselves or those they know.

IDC member's district offices will provide legal services from partner immigration organizations to assist immigrants one-on-one with immigration related issues such as visa, green cards, deportation and questions on the impacts of the President Trump's immigration related executive orders. In addition, the IDC will again in this year's budget prioritize funding for immigration groups that provide necessary services for New Yorkers.

Each IDC member will also hold a "Know Your Rights" workshop in their respective districts on the same day so that community members know the services that they are providing and that their Senate offices are a place to find help.