



Media Statement

Nov. 6, 2024

California Welcoming Taskforce Statement Re: Election of President Donald Trump

The California Welcoming Task Force is a binational coalition dedicated to re-envisioning how the U.S. can welcome people seeking asylum safely and expeditiously at our border by coordinating across sectors: humanitarian, legal, health, advocacy and communications. With the announcement of Donald Trump as the incoming president, we acknowledge that many in our communities, both at home and abroad, are experiencing deep apprehension and uncertainty.

Let us be clear: We vow to continue to do the crucial work of welcoming immigrants into our country. We have done this work across multiple presidencies, and this work will always continue.

We have diligently prepared for this possibility, and are ready to meet the impending Trump administration head on to defend the rights of immigrants and people seeking asylum in our region. **We stand ready to support people seeking asylum and migrants amidst what we know will be a flurry of needlessly cruel and draconian immigration and border policies.**

The San Diego-Mexico border is currently the location with the highest number of arrivals of children and adults seeking asylum in the U.S. The work that the members of the California Welcoming Task Force do every day to welcome people seeking asylum proves that there are solutions that work. We must efficiently welcome people seeking refuge and ensure people have access to a fair and organized process if the U.S. is to continue championing itself as a defender of human rights.

The California Welcoming Task Force is clear eyed about the immense challenges that await us, but in times like these, history has shown that solidarity, resistance and community strength are our greatest tools. To the communities we work with that are feeling the weight of this moment: We are here, we are organizing, and we will continue to build a future where all people are treated with respect, compassion and fairness.

California Welcoming Task Force

The California Welcoming Task Force advocates for the federal government to coordinate with and ensure adequate resources for nonprofits and community-based organizations supporting people during the asylum process. A more fair and humane asylum process will not only uphold our legal and moral obligations to protect the human right to seek asylum in the U.S., it will make our border communities safer.

“Immigrants deserve to be treated with dignity. However, the first Trump administration rejected this cherished national value, relentlessly attacking the fundamental rights and freedoms of all people in this country, including immigrants,” said **Norma Chávez-Peterson, executive director of ACLU Foundation of San Diego & Imperial Counties**. “Our legal, advocacy, organizing and strategic communications experts have worked diligently to create a roadmap for protecting civil rights and civil liberties in this outcome. We are prepared to meet the impending Trump administration head on— in the courts, in Congress and at the state and local levels. We will use every tool in our toolbox to defend immigrants’ rights and the legal right to seek asylum in this country.”

“Mr. Trump’s win should not be interpreted as a mandate to mass deport or separate families. Most Americans reject the extreme and cruel proposals embedded in Project 2025, including plans to mass deport members of the community, to tear apart families, and cause chaos in countless communities,” said **Angelica Salas, CHIRLA Executive Director**. “Most Americans support a path to citizenship, and we will continue to work with the current and incoming administrations and Congress to advance practical, humane, and permanent solutions. As we face an uncertain four years for immigrant families and other vulnerable communities, we stand together in unity and solidarity with other movements and communities prepared to reject more of Mr. Trump’s divisive policies. Together, we organized and fought back during President Trump’s first administration. Regardless of who is president, we will be resilient, united, and defiant to protect, defend, and advocate for our families, dignity, and humanity, until we achieve a just and humane society for all.”

“In recent months, immigrant communities have faced a relentless wave of dehumanizing language and hostility,” said **Isa Pena, Director of Strategy at Innovation Law Lab**. “The election results may bring added fear, and uncertainty, but let me be clear: no matter who holds office, we remain united. Real change doesn’t come from the top, it comes from our own strength, resilience and commitment to each other. For years, we’ve lifted one another up, fighting side by side for dignity and safety. The road ahead may be difficult, but we are resilient and determined. Together, we will continue facing every challenge and building a future grounded in justice, dignity and respect.”

California **Welcoming** **Task Force**

“We will not be frozen by fear. We are prepared to tap into our collective experience to defend against attacks that target our immigrant neighbors and communities,” said **Monika Langarica, senior staff attorney at the Center for Immigration Law and Policy at UCLA School of Law**. “No matter who is in office, we remain committed to fighting for an immigration system that respects the constitutional and other legal rights of longtime immigrants and newcomers alike, and is grounded in the principles of welcoming with dignity and unlocking opportunity for all.”

“‘Welcoming the Stranger’ has been a core value of Jewish Family Service of San Diego throughout its 106-year history,” said **Michael Hopkins, CEO of Jewish Family Service of San Diego**. “Today and every day, we reaffirm our commitment to protecting and supporting the legal right to seek asylum and safety in the U.S. JFS, along with numerous partners, provides vulnerable families and individuals with respite services, represents long-time immigrants and newcomers in exercising their rights, and resettles refugees in their new homes in San Diego – all with dignity and compassion. We are resilient in pursuing a future where no one stands alone.”

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