



Everybody In: ICIRR 2022 State Platform

ICIRR won enactment of several major elements of our Everybody In platform in 2021, including the landmark Illinois Way Forward Act, dramatically increased funding for immigrant services, and direct cash assistance for families left out of federal COVID relief. As federal immigration reform efforts have stalled, it is even more essential that states step up to provide resources for immigrant families. For 2022, we aim to build upon our state level victories and lay the groundwork for further transformational policy that will make Illinois even more welcoming and inclusive for all.

Issue priorities

ICIRR proposes to focus our state legislative advocacy on our ongoing commitments and some other short-term priorities, but also to use the session to cultivate support for possible longer-term campaigns.

Ongoing commitments and budget priorities for 2022 session

- **ISLI/ cash assistance:** The Immigrant Services Line Item is currently funded at \$50 million, including \$32.5 million for direct cash assistance through the Immigrant Family Support Program and \$17.5 million for the Immigrant Family Resource Program and New Americans Initiative. The need for all of the programs will only grow, especially now that ISLI support includes Afghan and Haitian arrivals. ICIRR specifically proposes an increase in total ISLI funding to [\\$53 million for FY 2023](#).
- **EIC expansion (SB 3774 - Aquino):** ICIRR has been working with Economic Security Illinois and other allies to extend eligibility for the state Earned Income Credit beyond those taxpayers who qualify for the federal Earned Income Tax Credit. Main beneficiaries would be immigrant taxpayers using an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) to file and caregivers. It would also include a new credit for income eligible parents to build upon the poverty reduction efforts provided by the expired Child Tax Credit on the federal level. Expanding EIC would provide long-term relief for low-income families beyond the immediate economic crisis caused by the COVID pandemic. *Legislative priorities for 2022 session.*
- **Expanding health care coverage (HB 4437 - Ramirez):** Based on the precedents set by the AllKids program and the legislative wins by Healthy Illinois establishing state-funded health coverage for low-income Illinois residents 55 or older regardless of immigration status, the state can further extend coverage to low-income residents age 18 to 54.
- **Immigration legal assistance task force (SB 3144 - Villanueva):** In 2020 and 2021, ICIRR worked on legislation to create a state task force to make recommendations on how the state can provide legal representation for all Illinoisans facing deportation or going through other immigration procedures. The 2021 bill (sponsored by Rep. Gong-Gershowitz and Sen. Villanueva) passed both chambers but in different forms. After leadership in both chambers resolves questions around who appoints the task force members and whether members need

Senate confirmation, ICIRR and its members will seek to be involved within the creation and implementation of the Task Force.

Non-legislative priority as follow up on 2021 victory (Illinois Way Forward)

- **Free Them All:** The Illinois Way Forward Act requires the two county jails that still have contracts for ICE detention to terminate those contracts. We want to ensure that people detained at those jails are released rather than transferred to other ICE facilities as these detainees either committed no offense that requires detention, or have already served their time within the criminal law system. We will also continue to push against expansion of ICE detention capacity in the Chicago region (which includes Wisconsin, Indiana, and Kentucky) and for ICE to end immigration detention and electronic monitoring.

Longer term priorities (beyond this session)

- **Noncitizen voting rights:** Noncitizen voting emerged within the context of the elected Chicago school board legislation that passed last year. Sen. Villanueva proposed legislation to allow noncitizens anywhere in Illinois to vote in any school board elections. We will continue to collaborate with Sen. Villanueva and others to further develop this proposal and lay the groundwork for moving it forward in future sessions.
- **Drivers licenses:** Now that Illinois has fully implemented REAL ID and still makes available “standard” licenses that do not comply with REAL ID requirements, there remains little justification for keeping TVDLs separate from standard licenses. ICIRR will develop legislation to make standard licenses available to anyone who cannot get or does not want a REAL ID license.
- **Criminal legal system:** We will work in solidarity with Black-led organizations to build on the racial equity legislation that the Black Caucus won in 2020 to further reform and reduce sentencing for crimes of poverty and further enhance accountability for law enforcement.

For more information, or if you have any questions, please contact Fred Tsao, ICIRR’s Senior Policy Counsel at ftsao@icirr.org.