



EVERYBODY IN ICIRR 2021 Organizing & Policy Framework

Throughout the past year, amid a deadly pandemic, a white supremacist federal administration, and ongoing systemic threats and inequities, ICIRR and our members have organized, fought for, and won victories to uphold the dignity and livelihood of our families and communities. While we welcome the new Biden-Harris administration and its promises to address the wrongs of the past years, ICIRR and our members are committed to holding the new administration accountable to fulfill these promises and to fighting for all impacted communities at each level of government. Within this backdrop, ICIRR and its membership are unequivocally committed to struggle for communities, a state and country where:

- All people have access to healthcare
- All people live within an economic system that puts people first, setting them up to thrive
- All people feel safe and free of racist criminal justice and immigration systems

We reject a vision of the world that normalizes criminalization, scarcity, and terror inflicted by police and immigration enforcement. ICIRR's 2021 state, federal and local policy platforms build upon the transformative visioning, leadership development, relationship building and community power building that centers all of our efforts and has led to years of victories.

What follows is our state, federal and local platform that lays out our collective demands of our elected officials to address relief and build the foundation for long-term transformational change to ensure that we bring everybody in and leave nobody out in the equitable and beloved communities we seek.

ICIRR 2021 State Level Platform

SAFETY FOR ALL: The police murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and so many others have forced a national reckoning regarding racial equity and police practices. Meanwhile, abuse and neglect at Immigrant and Customs Enforcement (ICE) facilities has caused the most deaths in ICE custody in 15 years. These threats to our communities are part of the same systems of oppression and continue to disappear members of our community and disrupt community livelihood and prosperity. We are committed to push our state and our nation to build a better vision of how to ensure public safety and to dismantle the practices and institutions that have failed to protect our communities.

- **Illinois Way Forward** (SB 667 - Aquino/ L. Hernandez): Despite our previous victories, Illinois law still allows local police to communicate with ICE and to otherwise cooperate and coordinate with immigration enforcement. We need to pass further legislation to prevent immigrants from being fed into the deportation pipeline if they interact with local law enforcement, and to hold law enforcement agencies accountable if they violate our state laws.



Illinois Way Forward will

- Draw a bright line between law enforcement and civil immigration enforcement by:
 - restricting local police participation in and coordination with ICE operations
 - restricting ICE access to police facilities and equipment
 - restricting ICE access to people in police custody
 - restricting police sharing of information with ICE
 - restricting police inquiries regarding immigration status
 - ending county jail contracts to detain people for ICE.
- Set up **accountability measures** to ensure that law enforcement agencies are following state laws that limit police collaboration with immigration agencies, and that protect access to legal protections for immigrant survivors of violence.
- **Legal Representation** (HB 25 - Gong-Gershowitz/ Villanueva): Even under the Biden Administration, immigration enforcement and detention will remain a threat to immigrants and their families. Access to legal assistance and representation are key to getting released from detention and beating a deportation case: Yet in Illinois fewer than one in three individuals facing deportation have an immigration lawyer. The Right to Counsel in Immigration Proceedings Act would make it state policy that every individual who lives in or is detained in Illinois who is facing deportation should have the right to legal representation, and establish a task force to determine how to meet this goal.
- **Divest / invest:** ICIRR will work with Black-led organizations to support state and local initiatives to divest from systems that police, criminalize, and incarcerate our communities and shift resources toward investments that meet the basic needs of our communities and enable them to grow and flourish.

HEALTHCARE FOR ALL: The COVID pandemic has taken a disproportionate toll on the physical and emotional health of immigrant and Black communities. While we celebrate great state-level victories assuring that all Illinois residents are covered for COVID testing, treatment, and vaccines regardless of immigration status, and that all Illinoisans age 65 or older have health coverage regardless of immigration status, the underlying disparities in health care access that the pandemic exposed remain. Moreover, the threat of a Supreme Court ruling striking down the Affordable Care Act could deal a further setback for equitable coverage and access. **ICIRR will continue to push for state-level solutions to broaden health care coverage and facilitate access to health care for all Illinois residents, regardless of status, income, language, race, or neighborhood.**

- **Hospital Financial Assistance accountability and transparency** (SB 1840 - Hunter/ Lilly): ICIRR will partner with Cook County and other health advocates to introduce state legislation that holds all not for profit hospitals accountable to the free care they are obligated to provide by: (1) allowing uninsured patients to pre-qualify for free and reduced cost services for medically



necessary care and (2) increase transparency about the free services they provide (or don't provide) in exchange for their tax exemptions.

- **Healthy Illinois for ALL** (HB 3493 - Ramirez): This bill would create a pathway to health coverage for all low-income Illinoisans. It would extend Medicaid-Look-Alike eligibility to all low-income Illinois residents aged 19 to 64, with annual household incomes of up to 138% of federal poverty level (\$17,609 per year for an individual) regardless of their immigration status

ECONOMIC SECURITY FOR ALL: The economic shutdown caused by COVID-related precautions continues to leave many families unable to pay rent, buy food and other necessities, and maintain their livelihoods. ICIRR will advocate for measures to address these needs on a sustainable basis that will provide support beyond the current crisis with a particular emphasis on solutions that provides direct cash assistance to those that need it the most, regardless of status:

- **ISLI funding:** The Immigrant Services Line Item in the Illinois Department of Human Services budget has historically provided key support for immigrant families. The Immigrant Family Resource Program offers community outreach, interpretation, and case management for families needing safety net support, while the New Americans Initiative assists immigrants with citizenship application services and education. Both programs provide key funding for the network of community-based organizations that support immigrants with many of their basic needs.

During the May 2020 session, responding to the pandemic, ICIRR won \$30 million for the Immigrant Services Line Item and \$35 million for the Welcoming Centers. We are using \$20 million of the ISLI funds to provide relief through the Immigrant Family Support Project. While that project is providing crucial immediate support for many families who cannot access federal aid or unemployment benefits, the impact of the pandemic will continue well beyond this year. **ICIRR will push to expand the allocation for ISLI in FY22 to \$33 million, to address the ongoing emergency needs of our families and communities.**

- **Earned Income Credit** (HB 2792 - Ammons / SB 2184 - Sims): ICIRR will also push for longer-term support for immigrant families beyond the current emergency. Working with the Economic Security Project, we will continue to advocate for expansion of the state Earned Income Credit, a refundable tax credit for low-wage workers. In particular, we will seek to enable immigrants who file tax returns using an Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers (ITIN) to receive the state EIC, and to allow caregivers (including those caring for ailing household members during the pandemic) to also gain recognition for their work by receiving the credit.
- **Progressive Revenue:** The investments that ICIRR is calling for in health care, income support, immigrant services, and basic needs and safety will be possible only if the state has sustainable sources of revenue. ICIRR and our members strongly supported the Fair Tax amendment to increase revenue in an equitable manner. Without this amendment, the



Governor and the General Assembly must now identify potential revenue streams that will minimize burdens on working families and avoid severe cuts to services for our communities.

SOLIDARITY SUPPORT: ICIRR's leadership will make a decision on a case-by-case basis to support efforts led by other organizations around issues that impact our base and are aligned with our values such as affordable housing, criminal justice reform, and other opportunities that come throughout the legislative session.

ICIRR 2021 Federal Level Platform

The 2020 presidential election ended an administration that repeatedly attacked immigrants, refugees, and our immigration system. As candidates, Joe Biden and Kamala Harris promised to undo the damage of the last four years and to move forward on positive policies. Immigrant voters in such key states as Arizona, Georgia, Wisconsin, and Michigan responded, giving Biden and Harris the margin they needed to win the presidential race.

ICIRR will continue to push to ensure that the Biden-Harris administration keeps their promises and to advance our vision of **full citizenship for all**.

Our federal work will continue to be grounded in this framework:

- **Reversing the historic wrongs in federal immigration policy, including the 1996 immigration laws**
- **Ending the further criminalization and incarceration of our people**
 - Advancing long-term policy solutions that end detention and advance immigration and resettlement policies from a humanitarians lens.
 - Advancing short-to-mid-term solutions to disrupt the current ability to



criminalize migration, asylum seekers, and immigrants at the border and in our communities.

- Disrupting the deportation pipeline at the state, county and other local levels.

- **Challenging the "good versus bad" immigrant frame and the framework of what immigrants need to do to "earn" or justify citizenship**

- Advance policy solutions that provide protections for all 11 million undocumented and all vulnerable people
- Push beyond the "economic value/contributions" narrative.

Even with Democratic control of the US Senate, prospects for legalization and other pro-immigrant legislation might be limited. Still, the new Administration can take executive action to rescind the proclamations, orders, regulations, and policies of its predecessor, and take advantage of opportunities such as a new COVID relief package to include provisions that will extend relief to immigrant communities:

Immediate / short-term administrative fixes:

- Expand DACA and TPS and develop other avenues to protect from deportation
- Impose moratorium on ICE enforcement, detention, and deportations
- Rescind the public charge rules
- Restore refugee resettlement goals to more than 100,000 per year
- Rescind Remain in Mexico and other policies/ regulations regarding asylum claims and the border

(This is not an exhaustive list)

Inclusion in COVID relief legislation

- Provide relief payments for all taxpaying families regardless of status
- Provide unemployment insurance for all workers regardless of status
- Provide legal status for essential workers
- Remove barriers to healthcare access for all

We will also continue to build for the longer-term by pushing the Illinois Congressional delegation and our federal partners to advocate to

- **Divest from enforcement /Invest in citizenship**
 - Abolish ICE
 - Defund CPB and ICE in federal appropriations legislation
 - Fully fund US Citizenship and Immigration Services
- **Promote legislative solutions that provides citizenship for all 11 million undocumented residents without harming those without relief .**