



News from the Independent Democratic Conference

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Contact: Tom Musich 201.315.2295, Candice Giove 347.866.6742

*****RELEASE*****

IDC ANNOUNCES IMMIGRANT DEFENSE COALITION PARTNERS AND 1-800 EMERGENCY HOTLINE

*Assistance will be available through the IDC's 1 (800) 213-6385 hotline
with partners who will provide immigration services in Member's District Offices*

New York, NY — The **Independent Democratic Conference** expanded on the recent creation of its **Immigrant Defense Coalition** with the announcement of a new emergency hotline and partnerships with immigrant groups that will provide services in district offices. Those needing assistance with any immigration matter are urged to call 1(800) 213-6385.

Partnership organizations providing assistance through the Immigrant Defense Coalition include the Vera Institute for Justice, Northern Manhattan Immigration Coalition, New York Immigration Coalition, The Black Institute, Brooklyn Legal Services, Urban Justice Center's Domestic Violence Project, Caribbean Women's Health, CAMBA Legal Services, American Friends Services Committee, MFY Legal Services and Central American Legal Assistance.

“We are living in a difficult time for immigrants across this country. Many are fearful of the rhetoric and actions of President Donald Trump and have questions about their rights. Today’s announcement of our new hotline gives people a place to go anonymously for answers. I encourage anyone with any question regarding immigration, no matter how big or small, to call our hotline for help and to share it with those who may need it,” **said IDC Leader Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester)**.

“Our immigrant communities need to know that there’s a place to turn if they need help. The IDC’s launch of an emergency hotline gives everyone with concerns about the Trump administration’s immigration policies a place to get answers and assistance,” **said IDC Deputy Leader David Valesky (D-Syracuse)**.

“We cannot stand idly by while President Trump runs roughshod over our immigrant families and the values that bind us all together as New Yorkers and, above all, Americans. I want my constituents and immigrants throughout the state to know that my door is always open and they are not alone in the fight against this administration,” **said Senator Jose Peralta (D-Queens)**.

“As an immigrant and a Latina, I am heartbroken by the cruel and shortsighted immigration policy of the Trump administration. I want all of the people in my district, especially the undocumented, to know that I consider my district a sanctuary district from the reach of the federal government. In partnership with the IDC and many immigrant organizations, I will do everything in my power to help our immigrant population stay in this country, raise families and access the American Dream,” **said Senator Marisol Alcantara (D-Manhattan).**

“At many events I’ve attended since the impact of President Trump’s executive orders were first felt, I have heard many question where they can find help and resources. Though I hope that we can find a long term solution to these issues, I am dedicated to providing these resources now. These new services and 1-800 number will reassure those in my community that help is a quick phone call or visit to my office away,” **said Senator Jesse Hamilton (D-Brooklyn).**

“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. To deny them entry or support is to deny our American values etched in stone on the Statue of Liberty. The IDC and 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. To the immigrants of Queens, and all of America, know that my office will always advocate on your behalf, even if the President requests otherwise,” **said Senator Tony Avella (D-Queens).**

“I have serious concerns about the policies coming from President Trump and his unchecked power in a Republican dominated Congress. This initiative and the funding the IDC is fighting for will put a check back on the unjust and un-American actions being taken in Washington that threaten the wellbeing of hard-working immigrant families. Now, whether you face deportation or simply want to know your rights, there will be a number to call, free of charge” **said Senator David Carlucci (D-Rockland/Westchester)**

“The administration’s poorly written and hastily issued executive order left many in our immigrant communities confused and looking for answers. The IDC’s established emergency hotline will provide guidance and help to those who need it,” **said Senator Diane Savino (D-SI/Brooklyn).**

IDC member offices will provide expanded immigrant services through partner organizations, such as assistance with visas, green cards, deportation issues and questions regarding actions by the federal government. Members will also be distributing literature throughout their districts with the 1-800-213-6385 hotline as well as additional information and helpful numbers from partner organizations.

Members are currently developing workshops to coincide with the Immigrant Defense Coalition initiative that will be held within the next two weeks in their districts.

“The Vera Institute of Justice applauds and looks forward to using its immigration legal expertise to support the IDC’s Immigrant Defense Coalition initiative,” **said Oren Root, director of Vera’s Center on Immigration and Justice.** “The IDC has supported the Vera’s efforts to

ensure that all detained immigrants in the State of New York, regardless of financial resources, have access to a lawyer and has commendably been in the forefront of making these efforts a reality.”

Steven Choi, executive director of New York Immigration Coalition said, "We thank the Independent Democratic Caucus for their commitment to supporting immigrants in a time when our communities are being targeted with these anti-immigrant executive orders. Now more than ever, we need our elected officials at the helm of creating safe and accessible services for our communities, and IDC is helping to lead the charge. We look forward to working closely with the IDC to ensure that the emergency hotline and legal services at district offices are successful and help as many New Yorkers as possible."

"As we continue to see the impact of the Trump Presidency on immigrants and communities of color it is important that we band together to fight these actions. The continued availability of resources is an important action to resist these efforts. The Black Institute will commend the formation of this Immigrant Defense Coalition and will work to ensure the protection of our communities," **said Bertha Lewis, Founder and President, The Black Institute.**

“CAMBA is proud to partner with the New York State Senate to provide reliable information and services to the thousands of New Yorkers worried and confused about the impact of the Executive Order,” **said Joanne M. Oplustil, President & CEO, CAMBA / CAMBA Housing Ventures.**

“At Brooklyn Legal Services, we are excited to support an initiative designed to publicize information and offer direly needed services to the communities which are, and will continue to be, directly affected by the actions of our federal government,” **said Luis A. Henriquez Carrero, Director, Tenant Rights Coalition, Brooklyn Legal Services.**

"We are thrilled to be part of this effort to serve immigrants and refugees who are the targets of discriminatory federal policy. By providing legal assistance, we hope to give immigrants and refugees the knowledge and tools necessary to withstand this shameful onslaught," **said Jeanette Zelhof, Executive Director of MFY Legal Services, soon to be called Mobilization for Justice.**

“Now is a time when every New Yorker must do all they can to stand with immigrant communities across the nation, but particularly in our own neighborhoods. Empire Justice Center is pleased to see that the IDC is doing just that and will do all we can to support efforts to make current, critical information and legal resources available to the advocates and immigrants who need it,” **said Kristin Brown, Vice President for Policy and Government Relations for Empire Justice Center.**

"Caribbean Women's Health will join the Senators through this initiative to respond to the fear immigrants feel in our community. We will work with our attorneys through this project to ensure that protections are made available to all immigrants," **said Cheryl Hall, Executive Director, Caribbean Women's Health.**

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