

For Immediate Release

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IDP & Allies Cheer Passage of Fair Courts for Immigrant New Yorkers Bill, Call on Governor to Sign It

ALBANY, N.Y.-- For the second year in a row, the state legislature has passed [the Fair Courts for Immigrant New Yorkers Act](#) (S.5836/A.3057), a critical bill that will ensure that immigrant New Yorkers facing criminal charges get a clear notification that there could be an immigration impact and be alerted to get the advice they are entitled to from their attorneys.

The Immigrant Defense Project, legal advocacy organizations, and community-based organizations alike [have been united](#) in continuing to show the urgent need for the bill and are now calling on Governor Hochul to sign it after her veto undermined last year's passage.

The bill provides vital protections for immigrants who have contact with the criminal legal system. While immigrants facing criminal charges have a constitutional right to receive immigration advice, these protections are lacking for many immigrant New Yorkers. The bill makes these critical protections meaningful for all immigrant New Yorkers and creates accountability mechanisms where immigrants' rights are violated.

We thank the sponsors Assemblymember Catalina Cruz and Senator Brian Kavanagh for championing this important and common sense legislation to protect immigrant New Yorkers' due process rights and offer a remedy when those rights are violated.

"Immigrant New Yorkers are often unaware that a plea in criminal court can cause devastating consequences – including detention, deportation and ineligibility for citizenship. Yet, many New Yorkers do not receive an accurate notification of this risk. We fought for this bill and celebrated passage in the legislature last June, but it was undermined by a veto which showed a blatant disdain for immigrants' constitutional rights and a disregard for the legislative process. This year we have stood unified as advocates in continuing to fight for this protection - and the legislature has spoken. We urge the Governor to sign the bill as soon as possible," said **Yasmine Farhang, Director of Advocacy at the Immigrant Defense Project.**

"This legislation would ensure that justice-involved Immigrant New Yorkers receive and understand the potential impact of any pending criminal charge on their immigration status," said **Deborah Lee, Attorney-In-Charge of the Immigration Law Unit at The Legal Aid Society.** "Having this information is critical to a defense, and towards keeping families and

communities whole. The Legal Aid Society applauds the Legislature for passing this bill, and we urge Governor Kathy Hochul to enact it into law.”

“Every noncitizen defendant should have the right to be accurately notified of the often-dire immigration consequences of his criminal case” said **Elizabeth A. Hume, Supervising Attorney with the Legal Aid Society of Westchester**. “It is time for the Governor to recognize this critical due process protection and finally sign the bill the legislature has passed twice.”

“It is critical that immigrant New Yorkers are notified of their rights and consequences of criminal charges. Without the court notification law, QD clients will suffer severe consequences of criminal charges that undermine due process. This is contrary to the understanding that New York State is a safe home to all New Yorkers,” said **Lori Zeno, Executive Director, Queens Defenders**.

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The Immigrant Defense Project (IDP) is a New York-based nonprofit that works to secure fairness and justice for immigrants in the racially-biased U.S. criminal and immigration systems. IDP fights to end the current era of unprecedented mass criminalization, detention and deportation through a multi-pronged strategy including advocacy, litigation, legal support, community partnerships, and strategic communications. Visit www.immigrantdefenseproject.org and follow [@ImmDefense](https://twitter.com/ImmDefense).