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**IMMIGRANT
DEFENSE
PROJECT**



IDP LAUNCHES THE IMMIGRANT CLEMENCY PROJECT

New platform will help immigrants access gubernatorial pardons that can protect against the risk of deportation, keep families together, and strengthen communities

NEW YORK – October 25, 2018 – The **Immigrant Defense Project (IDP)** today launched “[The Immigrant Clemency Project](#),” a new initiative that will help immigrants apply for gubernatorial pardons that can protect them from the risk of deportation, keep families together, and strengthen communities. The Immigrant Clemency Project provides free pardon screenings, connects eligible individuals with pro bono legal representation for their pardon application, and advocates on their behalf.

“The current political climate combined with inflexible U.S. immigration laws, puts thousands of people who have lived in and contributed to our communities for years – parents, spouses, employers, and employees – under the constant threat of deportation,” said Alisa Wellek, IDP Executive Director. “A Governor’s pardon is a powerful tool that provides immigrants with a fighting chance in the face of a harsh immigration climate. It sends a strong message against hate and fear mongering and reinforces a core value that *ALL* of us, including immigrants, deserve dignity, respect, and a chance at life.”

The Immigrant Clemency Project will help determine eligibility for individuals who have had contact with the criminal justice system and face disproportionate immigration consequences. These harsh consequences fall on a broad range of individuals, for serious and low-level offenses, some decades old and others more recent. Often, the consequences are imposed on people without regard to their family ties, community contributions, or other individual circumstances. For many people who face mandatory deportation, a pardon is their only chance at holding on to life as they know it.

As the Trump Administration continues waging war on immigrant communities, a gubernatorial pardon is a unique safeguard for many individuals who are unable to challenge their deportation because of past criminal convictions. The Immigrant Clemency Project was created in response to this crisis, in partnership with The Fortune Society, SEIU 32bj, the Legal Aid Society of Nassau County, the New York Immigration Coalition, the Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem; the immigration clinics at Brooklyn Law School, CUNY Law School, Cardozo School of Law, and New York University School of Law; and with support from the New York Community Trust. Orrick, Herrington and Sutcliffe, WilmerHale, and Gibson Dunn will provide pro bono support to individual pardon applicants.

The Immigrant Clemency Project will initially launch in New York State, under “PardonNY,” and expand to additional regions in the coming months. For more information, please visit [ImmigrantPardonProject.com](#).

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About the Immigrant Defense Project

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).

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