



PREBYS
FOUNDATION

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Chair Lawson-Remer, Prebys Foundation to Announce \$500,000 Grant to Support County Immigrant Legal Defense Program

Partnership strengthens San Diego's national model for protecting constitutional rights

SAN DIEGO, CA — On Tuesday, San Diego County Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer will be joined by the Conrad Prebys Foundation to announce a \$500,000 private grant in support of the County's Immigrant Legal Defense Program. The new funding will help offset County costs of operating the program, a nationally-recognized initiative that ensures immigrants in detention have legal representation in their court proceedings.

"Everyone deserves a fair day in court, and thanks to this program, thousands of our neighbors have not been left to navigate the legal system without an attorney," said **Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer, Chair of the Board of Supervisors**.

"This partnership shows how we are building a community movement to defend constitutional rights and help families stay together."

"Access to legal representation is a cornerstone of American justice and a reflection of our shared humanity," said **Grant Oliphant, CEO and President of the Prebys Foundation**. "We are honored to stand with the County of San Diego in supporting this nationally recognized program, which helps ensure fairness, dignity, and compassion remain at the heart of how our community treats immigrants and their families."

WHO:

- Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer, San Diego County Board of Supervisors
- Grant Oliphant, CEO and President of the Prebys Foundation
- Tracy Crowley, Managing Attorney with the Immigrant Defenders Law Center

WHEN: Tuesday, September 30, 2025, 8:30 AM

WHERE: San Diego County Administration Center, 1600 Pacific Highway, Room 402A (fourth floor)

About the Immigrant Legal Defense Program:

Since its establishment in 2022, the program has:

- **Represented more than 2,100 clients** from over 60 countries — most fleeing persecution, torture, or violence.
- **Nearly doubled the share of detained immigrants with attorneys** at Otay Mesa Immigration Court — from 26% in FY 2022–23 to 41% in FY 2024–25.

- **Delivered real results in the courtroom (1,260 closed cases):**
 - **558 cases (26%) ended with protections** — including relief granted, dismissals, or release from custody.
 - **296 cases (14%) ended in departures** — including removal orders, voluntary exits, self-deportations, and withdrawals of application.
 - **406 cases (19%) closed for other reasons** — such as change of venue, attorney withdrawal, or client request.
- **848 cases (60%) remain pending**, with ILDP attorneys continuing to fight for fairness in the courts.
- **Secured protections in 70% of cases where clients applied for asylum-related relief** — showing that when people had attorneys to prepare and argue their asylum claims, most were able to **prove they needed protection from persecution, torture, or threats to life.**

Behind these numbers are powerful human stories. One program client, a mother fleeing political persecution, was detained upon arrival and separated from her children, who were placed in foster care. Within days of being assigned an attorney made available for free through the County program, she was released, reunited with her children, and able to move her case closer to family support.

In another case, a young man from an indigenous community targeted by criminal groups won asylum with the help of program attorneys, protecting him, his wife, and their daughter from imminent danger in their home country.

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