

Tuesday, August 16th, 2022

Senator Tom Umberg  
California State Senate  
Capitol Office (SD-34)  
1021 O Street, Suite 6730  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator Josh Newman  
California State Senate  
Capitol Office (SD-29)  
1021 O Street, Suite 6520  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator Dave Min  
California State Senate  
Capitol Office (SD-37)  
1021 O Street, Suite 6710  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Orange County Elected Officials Support The VISION Act — AB 937 (Carrillo)**

Dear Senators Umberg, Newman, and Min:

**We, the undersigned Orange County elected officials, write to respectfully ask for your yes vote on AB 937 - the VISION Act** (Voiding Inequality and Seeking Inclusion for our Immigrant Neighbors)<sup>1</sup>, to end California’s voluntary practice of transferring refugees and immigrants who have been deemed eligible for release from state or local custody or earned parole to ICE detention. This year, we have the critical opportunity as Orange County legislators and elected officials to stand with our refugee and immigrant communities by passing AB 937.

For four years under the Trump Administration, refugee and immigrant communities were subject to racist rhetoric, xenophobic scapegoating, psychological and physical abuses in ICE detention, and permanent family separation through deportation. In 2017, after the state of California passed SB 54 - the VALUES Act - to ensure state and local resources will not be used to assist with federal immigration enforcement, the Trump Administration sued the state of California to challenge SB 54. Several Orange County elected officials joined the Trump Administration’s anti-immigrant efforts by passing anti-sanctuary resolutions against SB 54. However, Orange County immigrant and refugee residents, organizations, and allies rallied at city councils across the county to defend local immigrant communities against the Trump Administration’s attempts to challenge our state sanctuary law.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.iceoutofca.org/ca-values-act-sb54-408546.html>

Today, the Orange County political landscape is shifting from its anti-immigrant past to one that is reckoning with the systemic racism in our immigration system that disproportionately targets Black, Indigenous, Latino, Asian, and Pacific Islander communities. We have an opportunity to address this historic, racial injustice by supporting and passing the VISION Act to defend the civil and human rights of immigrants and refugees. This bill is an opportunity to directly address the anti-Black and anti-Asian racism rooted in the criminal justice and immigration systems. State and local participation in federal immigration enforcement programs have raised constitutional concerns, including arrests and detentions that violate the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution, and that target immigrants on the basis of race or ethnicity in violation of the Equal Protection Clause.

**It is imperative that as Orange County elected officials, we unequivocally reject the scapegoating rhetoric of the Trump years, and finally put an end to those harmful policies of double punishment** for immigrants and refugees who have already completed their sentences, had their charges dropped, were granted release by a judge, or obtained parole. Earning parole is a rigorous process, where less than one in five people who present their case to the Board are found “suitable” for parole each year.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, after someone is granted parole by the Board, the Governor’s office reviews the decision and can reverse the decision if they believe the person poses a public safety risk. Therefore, when a person obtains parole, their path to rehabilitation has been recognized through rigid and meticulous processes. They received parole because experts deemed them ready to return home to their families and communities and begin their reentry plans. ICE transfers disrupt reentry plans, separate families and undermine the very notions of rehabilitation and transformation that are bedrock principles of the US criminal justice system.

**The VISION Act is the next step toward a vision of California where we set the example for equality under the law that must include immigrants and refugees. It is how we can continue to make our way forward, together. Orange County must continue on our path of progress.**

The VISION Act is supported by the [California Democratic Party](#), the [Santa Ana City Council](#), the Black, [Latino](#), and [API](#) Legislative Caucuses, and [over 180](#) faith, civil rights, and community based organizations across the state. A [UC San Diego poll](#) found that a majority of voters across the political spectrum support the VISION Act. The VISION Act passed through the Public Safety, Judiciary, and Appropriations Committees in the Assembly and Senate last year. It’s time to enact the VISION Act into law this year.

The VISION Act will ensure the constitutional right to equal justice under the law and affirm our values in upholding the civil and human rights of immigrants and refugees. We respectfully ask

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<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/bph/2020/03/04/cv-2020-suitability-results/> for latest statistics

for your public endorsement of this landmark bill that will transform the lives of many immigrant and refugee communities in Orange County and CA and **vote yes on AB 937**.

Sincerely,

Vicente Sarmiento,  
Santa Ana Mayor

Farrah Khan,  
Irvine Mayor

Sunny Park,  
Buena Park Mayor

Andrea Marr,  
Costa Mesa Mayor Pro Tem

Jose Moreno,  
Anaheim Councilmember

Ahmad Zahra,  
Fullerton Councilmember

Larry Agran,  
Irvine Councilmember

Jessie Lopez,  
Santa Ana Councilmember

Johnathan Hernandez,  
Santa Ana Councilmember

Nelida Mendoza,  
Santa Ana Councilmember

Al Jabbar,  
AUHSD Board President

Juan Gabriel Álvarez,  
AESD Board President

Jose Paolo Magcalas,  
AESD Board Member

Rigoberto Rodriguez,  
SAUSD Board President

Carolyn Torres,  
SAUSD Board Vice President

Alfonso Alvarez,  
SAUSD Board Member

Walter Muneton  
GGUSD Board Member

Sal Tinajero,  
RSCCD Trustee

Zeke Hernandez,  
RSCCD Trustee