

Recommendations

- **Increase the ONA budget to \$10M**, to open additional opportunity centers that would handle citizenship applications and Know Your Right presentations in their respective communities.
- **Double the Liberty Defense Project Funding to \$20M** to allow organizations who received funding in the first year to continue their work, and make the additional \$8M available to groups around the state through a competitive bidding process.
- **Invest \$1M for a Statewide ICE Response Crisis Hotline.** Such a hotline would be staffed by attorneys who could answer calls when someone is facing an imminent immigration issue (e.g. ICE is at the door and the person does not have a lawyer). Ideally such a hotline would feed into the existing ONA hotlines.

Community Need and Opportunity

- Existing resources for affordable legal services are scarce, particularly outside of New York City where three-quarters of all providers are located. One quarter of organizations have total caseloads of 250 clients or less, while 40% have less than 1,000 clients.
- **Investing in legal resources helps stabilize immigrants' lives**, which in turns means they are less likely to be victims of crime, including fraud, and more likely to find jobs and continue giving back to New York in the form of innovation, entrepreneurship, taxes, culture, and much more. Having an attorney in immigration court makes it 5 times more likely that a person will be successful in defending themselves against deportation. Of those without lawyers, only 4% of detained immigrants and 13% of non-detained immigrants obtain relief from deportation.
- To increase capacity, organizations have identified their highest needs as supervising attorneys, staff attorneys to take on more cases and reduce supervisor caseloads, and funding for physical space expansions. In addition, organizations in historically underserved areas, such as Western and Central New York, are losing or are at risk of losing several attorney positions further straining remaining resources.
- **Investing in legitimate legal resources will help eligible legal immigrants protect their rights during heightened, and often unchecked, immigration enforcement.** Many of these immigrants will go on to obtain citizenship. In addition, it will protect all immigrants who are vulnerable to fraudulent schemes, as non-authorized providers often seek to fill that gap in the market.
- The initial investment in the LPD has had life-changing impacts, particularly in underserved regions, but with **most immigration cases taking several years to resolve, additional funding is required** simply to continue serving those who participated the first year and to give organizations confidence that they can hire without fear of losing funding streams. **A \$20 million investment is needed so that more individuals can be enrolled in the LDP program in 2019**, and to protect a maximum number of New Yorkers.
- By renewing and adding to its initial investment, **New York can once again show itself to be a leader in common sense policies that uplift everyone in the state** and that confront the hatred and discrimination currently embraced by the Federal Government.