

## Communication from Public

**Name:**

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**Council File No:** 19-0002-S95

**Comments for Public Posting:**



**CHIRLA**  
Coalition for Humane  
Immigrant Rights

July 3, 2019

Los Angeles City Council  
John Ferraro Council Chamber  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**RE: Council File (19-0002-S95)  
Resolution in Support of AB 1753 - SUPPORT**

Dear Council President Herb Wesson,

On behalf of the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA), I am writing to voice our **strong support for Council File 19-0002-S95, a Resolution presented by Councilwoman Martinez in support of AB 1753 authored by Assemblywoman Wendy Carillo which seeks to prevent immigration fraud by strengthening consumer protections for immigrants.**

Founded in 1986, the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA), is a California leader, with national presence, who serves the immigrant community through civic engagement, community education, organizing, advocacy, and the provision of legal immigration services. Our mission is to achieve a just society fully inclusive of all.

I am proud to write as a sponsor and strong supporter of Assembly Bill 1753, which amends the business and professions code to prohibit any person from providing immigration legal services unless the person is an Attorney, or an accredited representative authorized by federal law. This bill brings California law in line with longstanding federal regulations that authorize only Attorneys and accredited representatives to provide legal advice and representation in immigration matters, including form preparation. More importantly, this bill protects immigrant legal service consumers at a critical time when our immigrant community is under constant attack by the federal administration.

Under the current presidential administration, the legal immigration process has significantly been undermined given their anti-immigrant view point. In addition to implementing policies that are contradictory to federal immigration law the administration has handed down various USCIS policy memos that significantly increase the chances an applicant has to be denied. According to a 2018 report by the Cato Institute USCIS denial rate has surpassed previous rates for every immigration remedy available including citizenship, family unification, worker visas, and other forms of immigration relief<sup>1</sup>.

Our state is home to approximately 2.67 million undocumented immigrants and 3.4 million legal permanent residents. California's investments in immigration legal services in recent years have produced an important expansion in nonprofit capacity. However, anti-immigrant rhetoric and federal policy changes have pushed vulnerable immigrants to seek immigration relief in unprecedented numbers despite the majority of undocumented immigrants not being able to qualify for immigration

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cato.org/blog/immigrationapplication-denials-jump-37-percent-under-trump>  
Cato Institute: Immigrant Application Denial Rates Jump 37% Under Trump



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relief. Moreover, in June of 2018 the Trump Administration made several policy changes that place applicants seeking to adjust their status at greater risk of deportation.

Over the years the legislature has enacted numerous bills to amend the California Immigration Consultants Act with the aim of protecting immigrant consumers. Those efforts have not succeeded. Instead, immigration consultants continue to grow in number throughout the state. Previously the City of Los Angeles adopted a Motion (Martinez-Cedillo), relative to combating immigration fraud by fraudulent individuals who pose as Attorneys and defraud our community who is seeking to adjust their status and comply with federal immigration laws. Today the Los Angeles City Council is presented with another Motion to support legislation at the state level that will further protect our immigrant community.

Immigration law is too complex, and the stakes are too high, to entrust the immigration status of Californians to form preparers with no training or professional standards. The immigrant communities we serve and represent deserve more and cannot wait. As a result, we urge the Los Angeles City Council to support AB 1753 to expand protections for our immigrant community.

Thank you for your consideration should you have any questions please contact Mariana Magaña Gamero at [mmagana@chirla.org](mailto:mmagana@chirla.org).

Sincerely,

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Joseph Villela  
Director of Policy

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Mariana Magaña Gamero  
Policy Advocate

**CC:** Gilbert Cedillo, District 1, Los Angeles City Council  
Paul Krekorian, District 2, Los Angeles City Council  
Bob Blumenfield, District 3, Los Angeles City Council  
David Ryu, District 4, Los Angeles City Council  
Paul Koretz, District 5, Los Angeles City Council  
Nury Martinez, District 6, Los Angeles City Council  
Monica Rodriguez, District 7, Los Angeles City Council  
Marqueece Harris-Dawson, District 8, Los Angeles City Council  
Curren D. Price, Jr., District 9, Los Angeles City Council  
Mike Bonin, District 11, Los Angeles City Council  
Mitchell Englander, District 12, Los Angeles City Council  
Mitch O'Farrell, District 13, Los Angeles City Council  
Jose Huizar, District 14, Los Angeles City Council  
Joe Buscaino, District 15, Los Angeles City Council