

Your Community Impact Statement has been successfully submitted to City Council and Committees.

If you have questions and/or concerns, please contact the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment at NCsupport@lacity.org.

This is an automated response, please do not reply to this email.

Contact Information

Neighborhood Council: Eagle Rock Neighborhood Council

Name: Richard Loew

Phone Number:

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The Board approved this CIS by a vote of: Yea(16) Nay(0) Abstain(0) Ineligible(0) Recusal(0)

Date of NC Board Action: 04/05/2022

Type of NC Board Action: For

Impact Information

Date: 04/07/2022

Update to a Previous Input: No

Directed To: City Council and Committees

Council File Number: 17-0046-S2

Agenda Date:

Item Number:

Summary: The ERNC believes that the City must continue its support and funding for the Los Angeles Justice Fund. We support the recommendations made in the Report of the Chief Legislative Analyst: Proposed Immigrant Legal Services Framework¹. Specifically, we support Recommendation 1A that the City move in tandem with the County, and philanthropy to provide funding; Recommendation 2B to fund both existing and new cases; and Recommendation 3B to remove the current criminal exclusions, and adopt a merit based approach to case screening.

**EAGLE ROCK
NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**

Executive Committee

Richard Loew, President
Michael Sweeney, Vice President
Laura Gonzalez, Treasurer
Wade Harpootian, Communications
CJ Savage, Secretary
Jesse Saucedo, Immediate Past President

**CITY OF
LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA**



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**CIS in support of Council File 17-0046-S2
Los Angeles Justice Fund / Status / Evaluation / Immigration / Legal
Representation / California Community Foundation (CCF)**

April 5, 2022

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

Dear City Council,

We declare that on April 5, 2022, a Brown Act noticed public meeting was held by the Eagle Rock Neighborhood Council (ERNC) at which a quorum was present. The following motion in favor of a Community Impact Statement supporting Council File 17-0046-S2 Los Angeles Justice Fund / Status / Evaluation / Immigration / Legal Representation / California Community Foundation (CCF) passed unanimously:

The ERNC believes that the City must continue its support and funding for the Los Angeles Justice Fund. We support the recommendations made in the Report of the Chief Legislative Analyst: Proposed Immigrant Legal Services Framework¹. Specifically, we support Recommendation 1A that the City move in tandem with the County, and philanthropy to provide funding; Recommendation 2B to fund both existing and new cases; and Recommendation 3B to remove the current criminal exclusions, and adopt a merit based approach to case screening.

The Los Angeles Justice Fund (LAJF) was created in 2017 in partnership with the City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, the Weingart Foundation, and the California Community Foundation (CCF), with the goal of protecting Angelenos and their families from the impacts of deportation due to a broken immigration system. The Fund seeks to reinforce a safety net that is pro-family, pro-economic growth and pro-civil and human rights.

Immigrant Angelenos continue to face attacks from the federal immigration system, often supported by local police and sheriffs. We urge the City Council to act to ensure that the City takes action to protect immigrant Angelenos by making the LA Justice Fund a true universal representation program that

¹ https://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2017/17-0046-S2_rpt_cla_10-15-2021.pdf

provides due process for all. Expanding the LA Justice Fund to include all immigrants, regardless of background, is a necessary and important step for racial justice in LA. Excluding those with criminal records from representation only serves to further marginalize the most overpoliced members of our community.

The intersection between criminal and immigration law is one of the most complex areas of law, and determining the effects of an arrest or conviction is research intensive and time consuming. The current criminal exclusions actually increase the program's administrative costs and overhead. A person's criminal history is not immediately apparent, and often requires extensive research, including consultation with courthouses and public defenders, collecting and reviewing records (sometimes from multiple jurisdictions) which individuals often do not have, and conducting legal research to determine whether the conviction falls within a prohibited category. In the Los Angeles Justice Fund pilot program, 1,300 screenings were conducted for applicants ultimately deemed ineligible, with at least one provider estimating that their attorneys spent up to 25% to 30% of their time on screening for criminal history during the pilot program, taking nearly one full day of work for an attorney. Eliminating the criminal carveouts is necessary to make the best use of the City's funding as it would significantly reduce the amount of time and resources spent on screenings as opposed to the critical work of representation and, in fact, allow LAJF to be even more efficient and even more of a success than it already has been. The County of Los Angeles, as well as cities and counties across the country, have already recognized these facts and adopted universal representation programs to protect their immigrant communities.

As outlined in the Vera Institute of Justice, "Los Angeles Justice Fund: Year 2 Evaluation"², the LAJF serves vulnerable populations in several ways,

"LAJF organizations provide indispensable services to historically vulnerable populations that otherwise would not have access to many needed services. For instance, Asian American Advancing Justice is the largest legal and civil rights organization for Asian American, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the United States. They offer legal representation and education in multiple areas, including housing, domestic violence and family law. Similarly, the Central American Resource Center (CARECEN), the largest Central American immigrant rights organization in the nation, offers humanitarian aid, support services, and accompaniment to many Central American refugees coming to the United States. The Los Angeles LGBT Center provides free or low-cost services for more LGBTQ people than any other organization in Los Angeles. From HIV testing, to supporting homeless youth, to legal support, the LGBT Center has served more than half a million visits each year since its inception in 1969. Lastly, Kids in Need of Defense (KIND) is a leading national organization advocating for the rights of unaccompanied migrant and refugee children in the United States and providing no-cost legal representation"

The community of Eagle Rock, like the City itself, has a large, diverse, and important immigrant population. Significant numbers of community members who are Latino, Filipino, and Asian, could potentially benefit from LAJF.

Los Angeles has long been seen as the city of immigrants. We urge the council to support the proposed Immigrant Legal Services framework, support multiple funding sources, support funding for existing and new cases, and support a merit-based approach to screening cases.

² <https://www.vera.org/downloads/publications/los-angeles-justice-fund-evaluation.pdf>

Please place this letter in the case file, and acknowledge its receipt via email to: **executive@ernc.la**.
Thank you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'R' followed by a horizontal line that loops back under the 'R'.

Richard M. Loew
President, Eagle Rock Neighborhood Council

cc: Office of Councilmember Kevin de León