



February 15, 2018

Hon. Janet DiFiore
Chief Judge of the State of New York
NYS Unified Court System
Office of Court Administration
25 Beaver Street
New York, NY 10004

Dear Chief Judge DiFiore:

As elected representatives of immigrant and mixed-status communities in New York, we implore you to exercise your constitutional authority to promulgate policies that protect universal access to justice in New York State.

Since President Trump's inauguration, lawyers and advocates have documented a 900% increase in arrests and attempted arrests by ICE in and near New York's courts. ICE tactics at courts have become increasingly aggressive and degrade the constitutional rights of litigants and their lawyers.

Squads of ICE agents are conducting these enforcement operations in criminal and family courts alike. They are preying on people with documented mental illness, people who are survivors of domestic violence and sexual violence, immigrants who are documented and undocumented, and others from the most vulnerable populations in our state.

These arrests have created widespread fear of the courts in immigrant and mixed-status communities. Statistics and reports from across New York State confirm that immigrants are declining to appear in court or to initiate legal actions due to fear of ICE. This tragic result also impacts the effectiveness of local law enforcement and residents' engagement with essential government services.

We urge you to protect the interests of our constituents and people throughout New York State, to protect the justice system's integrity, and to end the ICE presence in our courts.

Sincerely,

Corey Johnson
NYC Council Speaker

Letitia James
NYC Public Advocate

Scott Stringer
NYC Comptroller

Eric Adams
Brooklyn
Borough President


Gale Brewer
Manhattan
Borough President

Melinda Katz
Queens
Borough President


Ruben Diaz, Jr.
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Diana Ayala
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Ben Kallos
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Ritchie Torres
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Justin Brannan
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Karen Koslowitz
NYC Council Member



Bill Perkins
NYC Council Member

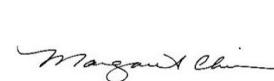

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