

**For Immediate Release**

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**Over 340 Faith Leaders Call on Governor Newsom to Support the VISION Act**

*Bishops, faith leaders, indigenous leaders, ministers, rabbis, imams, and people of faith from across California call on Governor Newsom to strengthen protections for immigrants and refugees from deportation by supporting the VISION Act*

**Oakland, CA** - On Tuesday, August 23rd 2022, over 340 faith leaders from across California and the United States will deliver [a letter](#) to Governor Newsom urging him to champion the VISION Act (AB 937) and sign the bill when it reaches his desk. The VISION Act would end California's voluntary practice of transferring immigrants and refugees who have been deemed eligible for release from state or local custody or earned parole to ICE detention.

Thousands<sup>1</sup> of immigrants each year have been subject to cruel and inhumane conditions when transferred from jails and state prisons into ICE detention centers, which have been shown to be rife with neglect and abuse. Immigrant community members who have completed a jail or prison sentence should not be doubly punished by ICE detention and possible deportation.

In the letter, the faith leaders share "Though we are people from multiple faith traditions, we share a set of common beliefs that we, as humans, are capable of error, but also of redemption, forgiveness and transformation. We know that with honesty, hard work, recognizing root causes and proper support, people are capable of change. It is unfair to transfer, deport and exile a person with a conviction for an offense committed decades or years ago, for which the person has served time and earned release."

**Rev. Noel Andersen**, of Church World Service in Washington, DC, states that "As people of faith and consciousness, we are called to support the immigrant community and prevent harm and suffering caused by unfair and unjust policies. The California legislature has a moral responsibility to pass the VISION Act to help stop the ways criminalization and double punishment has harshly impacted far too many lives and wrongfully separated families. The people who have transformed their lives and completed their sentences should be able to return home to their loved ones immediately."

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.iceoutofca.org/uploads/2/5/4/6/25464410/vision\\_act\\_infographic\\_policylink.pdf](http://www.iceoutofca.org/uploads/2/5/4/6/25464410/vision_act_infographic_policylink.pdf)

**Rev. Deborah Lee**, of Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity, states “Beloved community members, such as Phoeun You, a Cambodian refugee and genocide survivor who was recently deported by ICE, have not only made amends and transformed their lives, but become community leaders who others look to and learn from. They are family members, role models, friends, caretakers and mentors who their communities need at home.”

The letter will be presented at a [zoom presser](#) on Tuesday, Aug 23, 11:00 AM PT featuring civil rights icon Dolores Huerta and a multi-state alliance of leaders who will highlight the national significance of passing of the VISION Act, AB 937.

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, and more than 200 national organizations. A [UC San Diego poll](#) found that a majority of voters across the political spectrum support the VISION Act.

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