



September 5, 2025

San Diego County Board of Supervisors  
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335  
San Diego, CA 92101

**RE: Support Letter for September 9, 2025 Agenda Item #16 – No Child Alone in Court: Expanding the Immigrant Legal Defense Program (ILDP) to Protect Unaccompanied Minors**

Dear Chair Terra Lawson-Remer, Vice-Chair Monica Montgomery Steppe and Supervisors,

On behalf of Universidad Popular, we write in support of Agenda Item 16, *No Child Alone in Court: Expanding the Immigrant Legal Defense Program (ILDP) to Protect Unaccompanied Minors*.

For years, our team has stood with immigrant families across North County San Diego, newly arrived asylum seekers, long-established immigrant communities, and Indigenous peoples whose presence predates border walls... and all in between. We have met people at open-air detention sites, provided urgent support after street releases, and walked with families through the uncertainty of detention and deportation. We have fought for language access, strengthened emergency response systems in San Diego, and work daily to ensure our communities receive accurate and reliable information. Every day, we see the fear, trauma, and resilience within our community when governments at all levels fail to protect the people they are meant to serve.

That is why we support this policy as a step toward closing critical gaps in services and advancing our response efforts in San Diego. This is, simply put, common-sense policy. We know that when children and families have legal representation, they have a fair chance to present their case, keep their families together, and rebuild their lives with dignity.

The thought that beginning October 1, 2025, hundreds of unaccompanied children, some as young as toddlers, will be forced to face immigration judges and federal prosecutors without counsel is outrageous. To deny children legal representation is to deny them due process and safety at the most critical juncture of their lives. Categorizing unaccompanied minors as eligible

for ILDP services, strengthening staffing, and pursuing sustainable funding are steps to ensure that no child in our county stands in court alone. Protecting children should be our natural and immediate response.

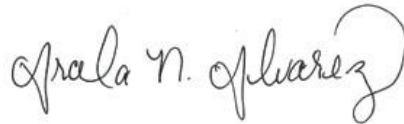
This is not abstract for us. These are children in our homes, our neighborhoods, our schools, and our community spaces. By expanding the ILDP, San Diego County affirms that justice, fairness, and compassion are not just words but values we live by. This investment will not only protect the most vulnerable but will also strengthen the trust, cohesion, and resilience of our region.

We urge you to approve this expansion. Thank you for your leadership and for standing with immigrant children and families in San Diego County.

Respectfully,



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