

2026 FEDERAL POLICY PRIORITIES

Spotlight on CALIFORNIA

IMMIGRATION

Federal Immigration Operations

Indiscriminate mass apprehension operations conducted by the federal government have led to widespread community disruption, severe economic damage, and numerous deaths, including of U.S. citizens.

- *For instance: Since January 2025, roughly 45 percent of those arrested by federal immigration enforcement authorities in California have had no criminal history, while the federal crackdown in July 2025 has been estimated to have caused more than \$1bn in local economic damage.*
- **Hispanic Federation urges Congress to impose meaningful guardrails on federal immigration enforcement operations, including standard protocols for clearly visible identification of federal agents, ending roving patrols outside of their jurisdiction, restoring pre-arrest approval and judicial warrant requirements, and accountability measures for violations of protocol, including disciplinary actions and review panels.**

Due Process

The Administration's enforcement efforts have encroached heavily on constitutional rights, perhaps none more so than the right to due process under the law. More than 400 federal judges have ruled roughly 4,500 recent instances of immigrant detention illegal, an unsurprising outcome in the face of revelations like DHS guidance instructing agents to circumvent the need for signed judicial warrants for home entry.

- *For instance: Amid the protracted federal operation in California, immigrants detained in Kern County ICE facilities have filed thousands of habeas petitions in federal court challenging unlawful detention, denial of bond hearings, and lack of procedural protections in California detention centers, highlighting the breadth of local due process violations.*
- **Hispanic Federation demands Congress take steps to restore basic constitutional rights to due process for those entailed within federal enforcement operations, including timely legal representation, fair hearings, vetted review processes to regularly assess detention legality and necessity, and adequate funding to address the continuous backlog at USCIS.**

Detention Overhaul

A rapid expansion of detention infrastructure has led to widespread reports of harm amid unsafe conditions. The last year has seen new records broken in fatalities among those held in immigration detention, all while the number of those held without criminal convictions has risen 25-fold. As the ranks of those detained expands rapidly, communities, news outlets, and lawmakers alike have reported horrifying conditions, including woefully inadequate access to medical treatment and rampant sexual abuse.

- *Amid these heinous conditions, California alone has seen deaths in ICE detention rise 600 percent since last January.*
- **Hispanic Federation exhorts Congress implement measures reforming the conditions and processes of immigrant detention like suspending the practice of family separation, enforcing standards of access to hygiene and health care, regular health and wellness inspections, and creating enforceable mechanisms by which detainees may report abuses.**

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: Since the beginning of this year, HF has supported our statewide network of 55 community-based organizations, with immigrant direct-service providers representing a core part of that

network. Across California, from the Bay Area and Central Valley to Los Angeles and the Inland Empire, we have deployed targeted grants averaging \$50,000-\$75,000 per organization to sustain rapid response efforts and expand mental health and community healing support for individuals and families impacted by enforcement crackdowns, deportations, detention, and family separation. Through our coalition work on the Health, Wealth & Dignity Agenda and People's Hearing initiative, we are also elevating community testimony to advance policy solutions focused on due process, family stability, and institutional accountability.

HEALTH CARE

Health Care Access

Recent legislative and executive actions are poised to strip health care coverage from upwards of 11 million Americans, which will prove catastrophic not only to vulnerable communities but also underlying health care infrastructure that supports all Americans from home to school to the workplace.

- *For instance, the elimination of ACA marketplace plan subsidies has led to a roughly 100 percent increase in out-of-pocket premium payments for the average Latino family in California, while Medicaid funds are slated to decline by \$127bn in California over the next decade.*
- **Hispanic Federation demands Congress reverse looming and actualized funding cuts to key health care access programs like Medicaid and Affordable Care Act marketplace plan subsidies to protect millions of Americans from losing health care coverage through no fault of their own.**

Vaccines

Repeated real-world trials and biological theory render it indisputable that vaccines work. Mass immunization campaigns reduce incidence of illness and hospitalization, supporting healthy, productive living for all, including those living with immunocompromising conditions.

- *While California's immunization rates have largely continued to hold steady, recent years have shown worrying signs. The state has been forced into an audit of more than 400 public schools whose vaccination rates have fallen below 90 percent, while the state average writ-large for kindergarteners have dropped beneath the 95 percent herd immunity threshold. In turn, our communities are at dangerous risk of endemic spread and breakthrough infections.*
- **Hispanic Federation thereby urges Congress to redouble its commitment to vaccination as an essential pillar of public health through policies including public information and outreach campaigns, and proper funding for vaccines, immunizations, and research support.**

Health Care Provider Resources

Our communities rely on access to well-funded health care facilities and well-trained medical professionals. Reductions in federal funding going to health care facilities, particularly rural health care facilities, and proposed caps to federal financial aid for graduate students pursuing degrees like nursing are likely to lead to diminished availability of health resources.

- *For instance, more than twenty-five percent of rural hospitals across California are at risk of closure in the coming years. Simultaneously, the state faces a considerable shortfall of nearly forty thousand nurses over the next four years alone, which will only be worsened in direct consequence of funding cut in H.R. 1.*
- **Hispanic Federation exhorts Congress to appropriate wider, targeted funding to support the staffing and maintenance of health care facilities for underserved and rural communities and to reduce cost barriers for all students pursuing degrees in health care.**

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: HF has worked in close coalition with Federally Qualified Health Centers, community clinics, and health care-focused CBOs serving low-income and vulnerable communities across California, including providers facing increased demand and funding uncertainty following H.R. 1 and broader health care cuts. Through targeted grantmaking, Por Nosotros mental health programming, and the development of our Health, Wealth & Dignity Agenda, HF is helping frontline partners strengthen community care while advancing bold policy solutions to protect access to preventive care, behavioral health, and trusted community-based health services.

AI AND TECH

Digital Infrastructure Investments that Expand Access and Opportunity

Only two in three Hispanic adults have home broadband and a computer at home, leaving millions disconnected. The bipartisan Digital Equity Act was poised to close longstanding gaps in internet access and digital skills, yet the administration has moved to dismantle it before its promise could be realized.

- *For instance, across California, over \$175 million dollars in Digital Equity Act funding have been cancelled, affecting more than 30,000,000 people statewide. Likewise, nearly three million households across the state were dependent upon Affordable Connective Program funding for broadband access, which has now been jeopardized.*
- **Hispanic Federation urges Congress to expand broadband programs and digital infrastructure investments through the Digital Equity Act, the BEAD program, Universal Service Fund and to create a replacement for the Affordable Connectivity Program. These programs empower everyone in this country with the tools and connectivity required to access jobs, health care, education, and essential government services.**

Federal AI Governance that Protects the Rights, Safety, and Opportunities of Hispanic Communities and All Americans

AI systems are already making consequential decisions impacting Latino communities. Our communities need AI guardrails that protect civil rights, secure data privacy, and ensure systems are transparent, accountable, and independently audited. The unregulated development and widespread deployment of artificial intelligence have left communities vulnerable to the impacts of algorithmic discrimination, privacy violations, and serious safety concerns.

- *For instance, while California has been proactive in attempting to leverage the opportunities accorded by gains in Artificial intelligence while protecting small businesses and civil rights, several of those laws are threatened by moves toward federal preemption of state-level AI regulations. Twenty-two such laws in California are threatened by the federal push to remove these safeguards.*
- **Hispanic Federation calls on Congress to enact comprehensive federal AI governance legislation that mandates evaluations for accuracy and disparate impact for AI tools used in federal enforcement and benefits decisions – including implicit biases, privacy protections that limit procurement and deployment of personal data, and ensures affected communities have meaningful recourse when algorithmic systems cause harm.**

AI Literacy and Workforce Development

As AI reshapes industries and the skills employers demand, Latino workers risk being left behind without targeted investments in the education and training programs that build digital fluency and career readiness.

- *Latino workers are the backbone of California's economy – today comprising 40 percent of the state's workforce and projected to account for nearly 80 percent of new workers nationwide over the next six years, yet 30 percent of Latino workers in California workers are vulnerable to automation-driven displacement. A January 2025 UCLA LPPI report found that more than half of California's 4.5 million*

workers in high automation-risk occupations are Latino — concentrated in agricultural labor, trucking, construction, and food service.

- Hispanic Federation urges Congress to invest in AI literacy and workforce development programs that equip Hispanic communities and all Americans with the capacity to fully engage in a rapidly changing digital economy, including education and workforce funding for traditional and nontraditional students, as well as workers in at-risk industries, partnerships with Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and initiatives that expand Latino representation beyond end users into the AI field itself.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: Since 2020, HF has trained 5,287 Californians in digital workforce skills, including 824 participants in AI literacy since 2024, helping nearly eight hundred people secure employment, and connecting CBOs with state broadband offices to expand digital access. Through our Latino Digital Accelerator and newly launched digital equity labs in Los Angeles and Salinas, HF is working with local CBOs and corporate partners to bring digital skills training and access directly into underserved communities. Forthcoming efforts in California will build on this work by bringing local and national partners together to expand digital inclusion, strengthen workforce readiness, and connect more Californians to opportunity in the digital economy.

NON-PROFIT PROTECTIONS

Nonprofit community-based organizations play essential roles in the communities they serve, filling vital service niches in their local areas by addressing gaps in services from governmental and for-profit providers. Over the past few years, the nonprofit sector has contributed approximately \$2 trillion to the GDP, providing essential services to address gaps in each of the areas discussed above.

- *For instance, the Federation's network of COVID-19 grantees, which had an estimated combined reach of more than 10 million people annually, was able to deliver emergency services, including food and housing assistance and health care, to some of the most overlooked and vulnerable communities during times of crisis, including individuals without health insurance, undocumented and mixed-status families, children and youth, pregnant women, domestic violence survivors, farmworkers, day laborers, and seniors.*
- *Likewise, Hispanic Federation's Lucha Contra El Hambre hunger relief effort focused on boosting food support to families throughout New York, Florida, and Illinois. Since its inception in 2011, the program has provided more than 1,250,000 fresh, healthy and culturally-responsive meals to Latinos in New York alone through our network of 71 non-profit member organizations across the city. In Puerto Rico, HF piloted a new preparedness program in 20 municipalities to stock 23 community kitchens with a three-day emergency supply of nonperishable food. These community-managed kitchens that provide hot meals after disasters committed to store the food through the end of hurricane season, only to be used in case of emergency.*
- **Hispanic Federation implores Congress and executive officials alike to protect and support vital community-driven, nonprofit funding and 501c3 status.**

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: Through our California Health, Wealth & Dignity Agenda, HF has convened nonprofit, community, philanthropic, business, and civic leaders across the state to develop a shared policy roadmap focused on expanding access to health care, increasing economic opportunity, strengthening digital inclusion, and protecting the dignity and civic participation of California communities. Through statewide engagement, legislative briefings, regional convenings, and advocacy trainings, HF is helping elevate community priorities and advance policy solutions that strengthen nonprofit capacity and ensure public systems are being responsive to current needs.



hispanicfederation

hispanicfederation.org

Headquarters in NY, with regional offices in
CA, CT, FL, NC, IL, PR, and DC

55 Exchange Place, 5th Floor • New York, NY 10005
Telephone: 212.233.8955 • Fax: 212.233.8996
Hotline: (866) HF-AYUDA (866.432.9832)