

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**ESSEX COUNTY EXECUTIVE DIVINCENZO AND FREEHOLDER BOARD
PRESIDENT BRENDAN GILL ANNOUNCE \$750,000 BUDGET ALLOCATION TO
CREATE LEGAL SERVICE FUND FOR ICE DETAINEES AT ESSEX COUNTY
CORRECTIONAL FACILITY**

Administration Agrees to Freeholder Board Request

Newark, NJ – Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr. and the Board of Chosen Freeholders announced that the 2019 Essex County Budget will include an allocation of \$750,000 for a Legal Services Fund. The fund is being created to provide representation to ICE detainees at the Essex County Correctional Facility.

"We are pleased to join with the Freeholders to announce the creation of the Legal Services Fund for ICE detainees. This will provide immigration detainees have enhanced access to legal representation," DiVincenzo said. "We have always been committed to providing the best possible conditions for people being detained at our Correctional Facility. The improvements that we have implemented will benefit the entire population at our facility," he added.

"The Sub Committee hearing held on Thursday evening was a much needed step in demonstrating the Board's commitment to make sure that all people of the county, including undocumented residents, receive equal protection under the law." Freeholder President Gill stated. "As an immediate action item, I asked for substantial monies from the revenue of the ICE contract be earmarked for the legal defense of the undocumented detainees in the Essex County Jail. We are pleased to announce, along with the Administration, that 750k will be set aside for the legal defense of said undocumented detainees."

Freeholder Richardson added, "The Sub Committee Hearing provided the proper forum for a necessary conversation that needed to be had. This was somewhat overdue, but it's never too late to do the right thing. We are happy to join with the Administration in providing the necessary legal assistance to the undocumented detainees of Essex County."

The creation of the Legal Services Fund represents the commitment by the County Executive and Freeholder Board to ensure ICE detainees have access to legal representation that is above and beyond the pro bono services that currently are available. The specifics of how the new fund will operate are still being worked out.

Detainees also have access to a variety of immigrant advocacy organizations that provide assistance to both those in the ECCF and their families.

Opened in 2004, the ECCF has been accredited by the American Correctional Association, which sets the standards for correctional facilities and detention centers in the United States, American territories and some foreign countries, since 2013. It also has received 100 percent compliance with the New Jersey State Department of Corrections every year since 2006 and has been accredited by the National Commission on Correctional Health Care and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities since 2007.

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