



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

Senator Brad Hoylman Applauds Signing of "Protect Our Courts Act," Protecting Immigrants from Warrantless ICE Arrests When Attending Court Proceedings

BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL December 15, 2020

| ISSUE: **SENATOR BRAD HOYLMAN, SD 27, PROTECT OUR COURTS ACT, IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS**

NEW YORK—Today, the Protect Our Courts Act ([S.425A/A.2176A](#)), legislation sponsored by Senator Brad Hoylman (D/WFP-Manhattan) and Assemblymember Michaelle Solages, was signed into law by Governor Cuomo. The Protect Our Courts Act enshrines into law the ban on warrantless civil arrests for individuals going to, attending, or returning from court proceedings, a tactic commonly employed by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers which have increased dramatically throughout the course of the Trump Administration. There is widespread concern among advocates that warrantless civil arrests of this nature have had a chilling effect on the integrity of the judicial system.

Senator Brad Hoylman, Chair of the New York Senate Judiciary Committee, said: “This new law is a powerful rebuke to the outgoing Trump administration and their immigration policies that have undermined our judicial system. After today, New York’s courts will no longer be hunting grounds for federal agents attempting to round-up and initiate deportation proceedings against immigrants. The Protect Our Courts Act bars ICE from making warrantless civil arrests of immigrants attending court proceedings and gives New Yorkers the peace of mind that our courthouses remain sanctuaries of justice.

I'm grateful to Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins for making immigrant rights a priority issue and Governor Cuomo for signing this bill into law and, as well as Assemblymember Michaelle Solages and the coalition of advocacy organizations that fought for this bill, including the Immigrant Defense Project, Make the Road New York and the New York Immigration Coalition. I'm also thankful to Attorney General Tish James for her successful legal challenge to ICE's outrageous courthouse arrest practices."

According to the Immigrant Defense Project's 2020 report, "[Denied, Disappeared, and Deported: The Toll of ICE Operations at New York's Courts in 2019](#)," ICE made 1,700% more arrests in 2019 in and around courthouses than they did in 2016, before President Trump took office. While the New York State Court System issued a directive prohibiting warrantless arrests inside courthouses, nearly half of the 2019 ICE arrests occurred after that directive was in place.