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## DEMOCRATIC LAWMAKERS BRACE FOR DONALD TRUMP'S IMMIGRATION PLANS BY SETTING ASIDE FUNDS

By Alejandro Lazo  
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SAN FRANCISCO—Democratic lawmakers in some cities and states are setting aside millions of dollars to pay legal fees for immigrants who face deportation under the Trump administration.

Mayors in Los Angeles, Chicago and San Francisco have said they would establish special funds to provide attorneys for immigrants facing the threat of deportation. Critics say such measures are an inappropriate use of taxpayer dollars.

The move intensifies a looming standoff over immigration between Democratic strongholds and President-elect Donald Trump. Mr. Trump has said he would block federal funding for sanctuary cities, which refrain from helping federal officials deport undocumented immigrants unless they have committed a serious crime.

"People who have built their lives in America have rights, and they deserve all of the protections that our legal system provides," Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti said, announcing the creation of a \$10 million immigrant legal defense fund in December.

Defendants in criminal courts have a constitutional right to counsel, a role filled by public defenders if they can't afford a private lawyer. But no such guarantee exists for people in immigration court. That means the availability of attorneys for immigrants is often dependent on their ability to pay, or on the aide of pro-bono or nonprofit legal-service providers.

After he won, Mr. Trump told CBS' "60 Minutes" he would consider deporting or jailing as many as three million people in the U.S. who he said have criminal records. Experts say there aren't that many illegal immigrants in the country with criminal records. He also pledged to build a wall between the U.S. and Mexico.

The Trump transition team didn't respond to a request for comment.

The Democratic-controlled state legislature in California will consider a bill in early 2017 that would provide for the legal defense of immigrants that could cost the state between \$10 million and \$80 million annually. A spokeswoman for the bill's author said details are still being worked out.

California Democrats hold two-thirds supermajorities in both houses of state government, meaning they can pass legislation with an urgency clause that make bills effective as soon as they are signed.

The state's Democratic lawmakers have said protection for the state's immigrants will be a priority, underscoring the state's role as a political rebel on major issues, including climate change.

The leaders of both houses are Latino, as is Gov. Jerry Brown's candidate for state attorney general, U.S. Rep. Xavier Becerra, a Democrat.

"California celebrates diversity. We don't deport it," State Senate leader Kevin de León said earlier this month, introducing a package of immigration-related legislation.

In New York, Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo has said he would also create a statewide fund "to ensure all immigrants, regardless of status, have access to representation." New York City already has such a program.

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel earlier this month created a legal-protection fund, pledging \$1 million as an initial investment, because of the "anxiety and uncertainty" created by the election, he said.

Advocates of undocumented immigrants in the U.S. say access to legal representation cuts down on detentions and insures due process.

"We have a federal immigration system that is very complex and is very isolating, providing defendants with very few rights, even for people who are lucky enough to find a lawyer to represent them," said Avideh Moussavian, a policy attorney with the National Immigration Law Center.

Robin Hvidston, executive director of We the People Rising, a group based in Claremont, Calif., that advocates for a stricter enforcement of U.S. immigration laws, said taxpayer funds should be spent on American citizens. She and other members of her group, which supported Mr. Trump, have voiced their concerns to the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, saying the money should be spent on the city and county homeless population, veterans and other American citizens who are out of work.

"There are hundreds of homeless Americans—our funds and our elected officials should be focused on American citizens," she said. That is who they should be representing and that is who they should be fighting for."

San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee has set aside an extra \$7.5 million in grants to groups that provide immigration-related services in the city.

But Mr. Lee rebuffed a \$5 million plan by the city's public defender to hire 10 attorneys and seven support staff that would have guaranteed any immigrant in detention the right to counsel, said Jeff Adachi, the public defender.

Mr. Adachi said the mayor's aides expressed concern that San Francisco could be targeted by the Trump administration if it provided the defense directly.

The mayor's office didn't respond to requests for comment.