



#### ADVISORY BOARD

Hon. John Burton  
Hon. Nancy Pelosi

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cynthia Alvarez  
Richard Boswell  
W. Hardy Callcott  
Aidin Castillo  
Tsion Gurmu  
Bill Ong Hing  
Sambou Makalou  
Luca D. Mangini  
Toni Rembe  
Rudy Ruano  
Guadalupe Sordia-Ortiz  
Lisa Spiegel  
Mawuena Tendar

#### GENERAL COUNSEL

Bill Ong Hing

#### OF COUNSEL

Don Ungar

#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Eric Cohen

#### San Francisco

1458 Howard Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103

#### Washington, D.C.

600 14th Street, NW  
Suite 502  
Washington, D.C. 20005

#### San Antonio

10127 Morocco Street  
Suite 149  
San Antonio, TX 78216

#### Houston

540 Heights Blvd  
Suite 205  
Houston, TX 77007

ilrc@ilrc.org  
www.ilrc.org



## Texas House Committee on Homeland Security and Public Safety Testimony on SB 602

Priscilla Olivarez, Policy Attorney and Strategist

[polivarez@ilrc.org](mailto:polivarez@ilrc.org)

August 15, 2024

Distinguished members of the House Homeland Security and Public Safety Committee, my name is Priscilla Olivarez and I am a Policy Attorney and Strategist at the Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC). I submit this written testimony to highlight the harms of SB 602 as it compounds the collusion between state and federal immigration authorities and will result in more waste of vital state and taxpayer resources.

**SB 602 is another extension of the troubling Operation Lone Star (OLS) program.** In a little over three years, Governor Abbott's OLS program has wasted \$10 billion and counting in taxpayer money. Since OLS was created in 2021, we have seen Texas officials, including the head of the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), continue to misuse their authority to target not only migrants, but long-term Texas residents and U.S. citizens. SB 602 now draws federal immigration officials further into DPS's chaotic border operation after years of [trying to shut them out](#) to increase DPS's ability to target our communities, with Texas taxpayers footing the bill. If the last three years of OLS have taught us anything, it is that DPS's unchecked authority has failed to make our communities safer, nor has the increase in DPS presence addressed the humanitarian needs of asylum seekers at our borders.

Since 2021, in areas where DPS presence has increased, communities have witnessed an increase by over 1,000 percent in unnecessary and [deadly high-speed vehicle chases](#). In some cases, these deadly vehicle chases have resulted in bystanders being killed. In one heartbreaking case a 7-year-old child was killed while getting ice cream with her grandmother. In other communities, residents report being racially profiled and ticketed, and certain Texas counties have experienced a [1,060 percent increase in traffic related citations](#). If SB 602 is allowed to be fully implemented, it would mean DPS would use U.S Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials to do more of the same, racially profile our communities and do so without any accountability.

In addition to infringement on the liberty rights of our communities, the implementation of SB 602 would also come at a greater financial cost, as any duties performed by CBP would presumably require compensation. Therefore, before any steps are taken to implement SB 602, Texas DPS owes a duty to inform Texas officials, and Texas communities, about the true cost of implementation. Texans cannot continue to bear the burden of additional waste at the hands of OLS. Texas communities have witnessed too much of the same, waste, and infringement of our rights, all in the name of "border security" and "public safety." I respectfully ask this committee to do more to protect the rights of Texans.