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**NEW YORK IMMIGRANTS NOW PROTECTED FROM EXPLOITATIVE  
FOR-PROFIT BOND COMPANIES AS HOCHUL SIGNS STOP IMMIGRATION BOND  
ABUSE ACT INTO LAW**

*This regulatory legislation is the first of its kind in the United States*

**NEW YORK, NY** — New York is the first state in the nation to sign into law legislation that addresses the for-profit bond industry’s exploitative business model and abusive practices toward immigrants. Governor Kathy Hochul signed the Stop Immigration Bond Abuse Act (SIMBAA) [#A7770 / #S7475] on December 9, following its June passage by the New York State Legislature, where it was co-sponsored by Senator Jamaal Bailey and Assemblymember Harvey Epstein.

Thanks to leadership by Hochul, Bailey, Epstein, and vigorous advocacy by the [Break the Shackles](#) coalition—composed of directly impacted immigrants and organizations, co-anchored by African Communities Together and Envision Freedom Fund—immigrant New Yorkers subjected to the unjust burden of paying bond in exchange for their freedom will finally have vital consumer protections from for-profit bond companies, including: 1) the prohibition of electronic shackles, 2) caps on excessive fees and interest rates, and 3) the end of misleading contracts.

“I am very happy that the bill has been passed. Other people will not have to go through what I went through. It's not something good to talk about, the experience is very bad, especially for people with children,” said **“Angela,” who shared her personal experience with Libre by Nexus to advocate for SIMBAA.**

“After over three years of dedicated advocacy, we are thrilled to celebrate Governor Hochul signing the Stop Immigration Bond Abuse Act into law! SIMBAA will provide relief to formerly detained immigrants from exploitative for-profit bond contracts, and make New York a national leader in holding this previously unregulated sector accountable for predatory practices. We thank Governor Hochul, our legislative champions, partner organizations, and especially, the brave immigrants who shared their stories. This is not the end of our fight to hold accountable

those who profiteer from detained immigrants, but it is a brand new beginning,” **said Amaha Kassa, Executive Director, African Communities Together**

“This is an incredible win for detained immigrants who have been at the mercy of the predatory for-profit bond industry in order to regain their freedom. And thanks to Gov. Hochul and our champions in the Legislature, New York is setting an important precedent for the rest of the country by regulating this industry,” **said Carl Hamad-Lipscombe, the executive director of Envision Freedom Fund.** “We look forward to helping ensure the new law is implemented properly and swiftly, and to providing guidance to detained community members and their loved ones facing unaffordable bond amounts about the protections they’re now entitled to if they turn to a private bond company. SIMBAA is just the beginning. The immigration bond and detention system has seemingly endless ways of exploiting, surveilling, and extracting, and we’re prepared to fight until we truly ‘break the shackles’ of injustice.”

“No one should not have to choose between their freedom and subjecting themselves to unscrupulous companies that exploit fear for profit. Immigrant New Yorkers face constant uncertainty navigating our immigration system and too often, find themselves trapped in deceptive contracts by for-profit immigration bond companies that prey on the most vulnerable. This exploitative cycle creates emotional and financial strain for immigrant New Yorkers, pushes families deeper into poverty, and makes it difficult for individuals to secure their freedom. I am thrilled that Governor Hochul has signed into law S7475/A7770 to finally regulate the for-profit immigration bond industry, cap excessive fees, end the practice of mandatory electronic ankle monitoring, and require transparency in contracts. The signing of this bill is a result of the tireless organizing and strength of countless advocates, directly impacted immigrants, and organizations who fought for this important victory. I want to thank Assemblymember Harvey Epstein for championing this legislation in the Assembly, Governor Kathy Hochul, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, and my colleagues in both houses for their commitment to seeing this legislation through,” **said Senator Jamaal Bailey.**

“Today, years of hard work culminated in a victory for immigrants and their families. The Stop Immigration Bond Abuse Act has become law, creating strong protections for immigrants and outlawing abusive practices and in an industry where bad actors took advantage of a lack of oversight to prey on the vulnerable. With the enactment of this first of its kind law in the country we’ve shown we’re on offense, ready to continue the fight against the predators who would exploit immigrant New Yorkers for profit. I want to thank Governor Kathy Hochul, Senate sponsor Jamaal Bailey, and the Break the Shackles coalition for getting this done,” **said Assemblymember Harvey Epstein.**

“As a champion for immigrant New Yorkers, I applaud the Governor for signing such a critical piece of legislation. The Stop Immigration Bond Abuse Act was signed into law closing a predatory loophole that allowed so many Immigrant New Yorkers to be shackled by predatory bonds and deceptive contracts preying on our most vulnerable communities statewide. I want to thank ‘Angela’ and other directly impacted New Yorkers who have led these efforts that seek to provide our communities relief from scrupulous for-profit bond companies. This win is fully attributable to the joint work of the advocates, directly impacted New Yorkers and my colleagues in both the Assembly and Senate, who knew it was time to Break the Shackles for so many immigrants facing financial hardship at the hands of the predatory for-profit bond industry in NY,” **said Assemblymember Catalina Cruz.**

“After years of tireless advocacy from immigrant communities and civil rights groups, we’re thrilled to see Governor Hochul sign the Stop Immigration Bond Abuse Act into law,” **said Surveillance Technology Oversight Project Communications Director Will Owen.** “For far too long, abusive immigration bond companies have preyed on immigrant New Yorkers, expanding surveillance into their communities with electronic shackles and other harrowing spyware. This is an essential first step toward ending their profiteering and fraudulent practices, but we must hold the Governor accountable in its implementation and continue the fight to make New York a true sanctuary city for all immigrant New Yorkers.”

“We applaud Gov. Hochul for signing the Stop Immigration Bond Abuse Act, and ensuring that the thousands of immigrants who are locked up in detention every year in New York State are safe from abuse by for-profit immigration bond companies. For too long, these previously-unregulated companies have acted as true parasites in New York, subjecting our immigrant neighbors to intrusive surveillance and exorbitant fees in order to pay the immigration bonds they could not afford. Today, New York State said no more. We look forward to continued progress in protecting immigrants during their immigration hearings in New York, from language access to guaranteed legal representation throughout their cases,” **said Murad Awawdeh, Executive Director, New York Immigration Coalition.**

“The Governor's signature of the Stop Immigration Bond Abuse Act is the critical final step to stopping predatory immigration bond companies that target immigrants who are detained by ICE. Yet, just as we celebrate this key bill, we strongly condemn the Governor's veto of the Court Notification bill (S2903A/A9877A) which passed the legislature and is long overdue to strengthen much-needed protections for immigrants facing criminal charges. We will continue to fight for passage of laws that strengthen rights for all immigrant New Yorkers,” **said Yasmine Farhang, Director of Advocacy, Immigrant Defense Project.**

“New York State has taken a major step in protecting immigrants from the harms of the predatory immigration bond industry, while setting a precedent for the protection of immigrants

across the country,” said **Zach Ahmad, senior policy counsel at the New York Civil Liberties Union**. “This victory comes after years of tireless advocacy from immigration advocates and impacted community members. We look forward to seeing this new law fully implemented to ensure that immigrants are protected from abuse and that no New Yorkers fall prey to predatory contracts.”

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**Envision Freedom Fund (formerly Brooklyn Community Bail Fund)** works alongside impacted communities to dismantle the oppressive and interconnected criminal legal and immigration systems. With freedom as our guiding principle, we invest in innovative campaigns and programs that aim to win long-term, transformative change, while meeting the urgent needs of community members in the present.

**African Communities Together** is an organization of African immigrants fighting for civil rights, opportunity, and a better life for our families here in the U.S. and worldwide. ACT empowers African immigrants to integrate socially, advance economically, and engage civically.