

Keep ICE out of our courts

The story of Juan Parra and why ICE must be banned from California courthouses.



DAN SIEGEL

Partner, Siegel, Yee & Brunner

[See more...](#)

The Judicial Council of California should adopt the proposed ban on arrests by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement at California's courthouses. The proposal by Legal Aid at Work builds on the strong stand taken by California Supreme Court Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye against the practice of federal immigration officers trolling the state's courthouses to arrest immigrants there for criminal or civil proceedings.

As the chief justice told U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions earlier this year, sending ICE agents into the courts will discourage immigrants from participating in judicial proceedings and will degrade the courts' ability to provide fair proceedings to people involved in civil or criminal cases.

The current debate over immigration officers making arrests at California courthouses reminds me of my long-ago representation of Juan Parra, a frozen food cannery worker arrested in Watsonville in October 1981 after a dispute with a foreman. Juan worked at Watsonville Canning, a processor of cauliflower, broccoli and other vegetables. Almost all of the production workers at the plant were Mexicans, and almost all of the foremen and other managers were white.