

# BE BRAVE, SPEAK UP

*The Quarterly Newsletter of the  
Family Violence Law Center's Policy Department*



Portrait of Frida Kahlo was painted by Diego Rivera

## Contents

Welcome Message- 2

Policy Work & Campaigns- 3

Legislative Advocacy - 4

Advocacy & Home Cohort - 5

“For to be free is not merely to cast off one’s chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.” —Nelson Mandela

# Welcome Message

At the Family Violence Law Center, our work is grounded in a simple but radical truth: none of us survives violence -or the systems that enable it- alone. Every day, our advocates, attorneys, and partners stand with survivors at the edge of uncertainty, building safety, dignity, and possibility in moments when the ground feels like it is shifting beneath their feet.

As we've been reflecting together on *Let This Radicalize You*, we're reminded that organizing is an act of collective care. In an era marked by instability, retraumatization, and systemic neglect, our work is set against long odds- but it is precisely there, in that space of "cherished improbability," that hope is made real. We see it when survivors reclaim their voices, when communities choose protection over punishment, and when care becomes a strategy for justice.

This newsletter is one small way we stay connected -to share what we are building, to name what we are fighting for, and to remind one another that while the work can be a scramble, we do not scramble alone. Together, we continue to fight for this world-one where safety is a right, care is reciprocal, and liberation is possible.

Thank you for being part of this community, and for standing with survivors alongside us.

The Family Violence Law Center Team

"I can tell you that here, on the edge of everything, we are each others best hope. As organizers we are builders in an era of collapse. Our work is set against all probability — and it is in that space of cherished improbability where our art will be made, where our joy will be found, and where our ingenuity will fashion ways of loving and caring for each other, even as the ground shifts beneath our feet. Life will be a scramble, but we will not scramble alone. Together we will fight or this world, to keep it."

- *Let This Radicalize You* by Kelly Hayes

# FVLC Policy Work and Campaigns

**Policy Work:** This year FVLC's Policy Team has helped draft and introduce two bills. Out of our Freedom Chose Campaign comes AB 1134 (Bains), a bill that will amend California Penal Code section 265 to ensure that individuals of all gender identities or sexual orientations are protected against forced marriage. AB 1134 will further amend California Family Code section 2211 to amend the 4-year statute of limitations for annulment of forced marriage to allow a judge to consider a survivor's circumstances when granting an annulment that is filed beyond the 4 year time limit. Additionally, as part of the Solis Policy Institute, FVLC's Policy Team helped draft and introduce AB 878 (Kalra), a bill that will create housing protections for victims of violence, allowing them to install cameras, move units or parking spaces, or rescind 14-day lease terminations if concerns of violence no longer exist. AB 878 passed out of the assembly with 60 votes in favor, and we look forward to advocating for this bill on the Senate side next!

## **Policy Campaigns:**

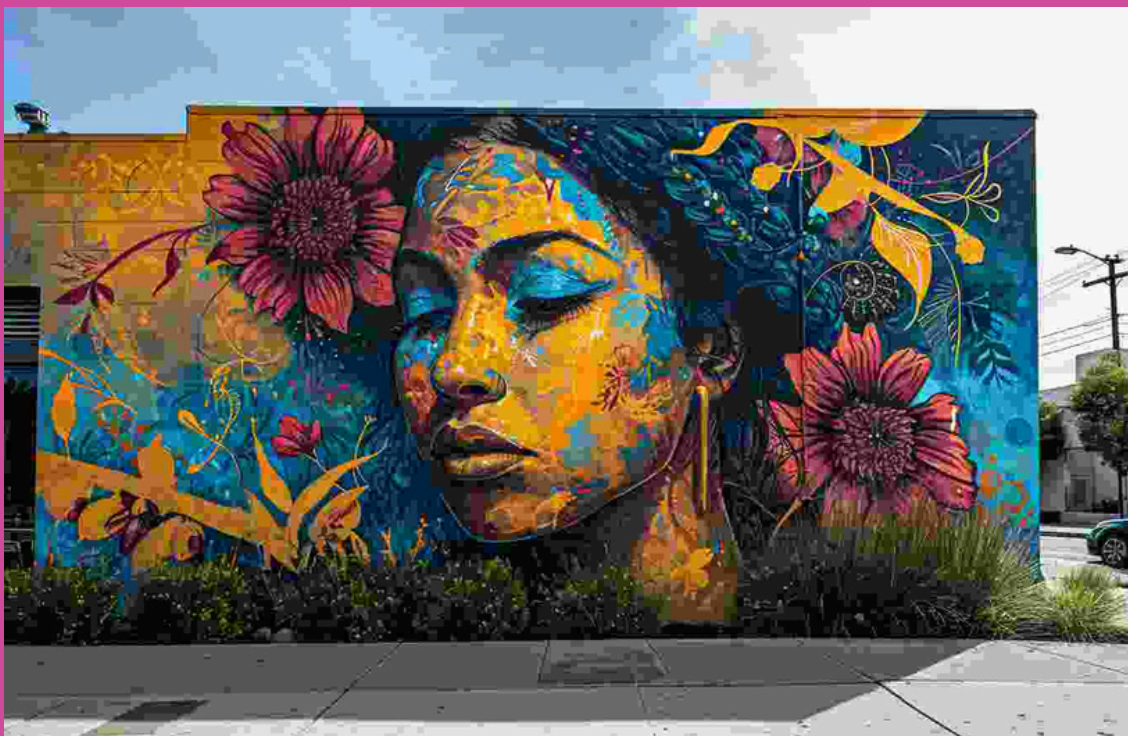
**Freedom to Choose:** Last year, FVLC worked with coalition



partners to research and collect data on forced marriage in California, and to educate lawmakers about the health, financial and safety issues arising from forced and child marriage. Over the course of this campaign to date, FVLC has surveyed and spoken with over 150 survivors in California and educated 118 of California's 120 lawmakers. As described above, in February 2025, FVLC worked with Assemblymember Jasmeet Bains to introduce AB 1134, which includes 2 of our 3 bill proposals. What is most exciting is that this bill passed with unanimous consent through the assembly floor with a final vote of 79/79 votes! We will continue to work with Assemblymember Bains, to introduce the adoption of a new form of restraining order, the Forced Marriage Protection Order, which aims to protect against forced marriage and create an escape for those already forced into a marriage.

**Right to Exit:** FVLC's Right To Exist campaign centered around the human right to safe living conditions: in order to ensure that all persons can live a life free from violence, we must provide for

# Legislative Advocacy



safe exits, and housing. Locally, Alameda County passed Measure W to provide funds for housing and homeless services. FVLC joined other advocates on May 12, 2025, to encourage Alameda County Supervisors to use all Measure W funds to support housing, services, and homeless prevention services.

## **Bills We are Following :**

### **AB 779 (Lackey) Child welfare services:**

The bill would require a domestic violence consultant under the program to assist county social workers by providing education on domestic violence-related dynamics and services and discussing complicating factors and protective measures.

### **SB 498 (Becker) County detention:**

**commissary.** This bill would require that indigent incarcerated persons and indigent wards or detainees be provided basic hygiene products free of charge and require that those individuals have guaranteed access to hygiene products upon request. The bill would prohibit an indigent incarcerated person or an indigent ward or detainee from being denied access to hygiene products as a disciplinary measure.

## **Advocacy Efforts:**

- FVLC was thrilled to work with the California Coalition for Reproductive Freedom and join in lobbying for CCRF's 2025 Reproductive Freedom Legislative Package, – a list of more than 15 bills that aim to enact

# Advocacy Efforts & Home Cohort

protections for abortion care, expand access to sexual health, reproductive health, gender affirming care and maternal health services, and support parenting families.

- FVLC sent a team of seven to Sacramento for CAPVD Lobby Day on May 20, 2025, to advocate for policy change at the state level with respect to funding for GBV victims and victim service providers. FVLC teamed with other Bay Area service providers including Narika, SAVE, and Valor to fight for more robust funding for services.



provider coalition members to advocate for those potential resources to include survivors and survivor-serving agencies. Measure W is currently the subject of litigation, and any collected funds are being held in escrow until the conclusion of the litigation.

**HOME Cohort:** Over the last several months, the advocacy committee has been hard at work researching permanent supportive housing. In our research we found the following data:

In 2024, more than 187,000 people in California were counted as experiencing homelessness on a given night—an increase of more than 5,500 from 2023. Of the unhoused population in California, 68% of individuals experiencing homelessness are unsheltered.

Between 2018 -2023, the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness in CA grew by 107% (71,150 individuals).

Research has consistently shown that permanent supportive housing is highly effective at addressing chronic homelessness. Permanent supportive housing has been found to increase long-term housing stability and reduce returns to homelessness, including for people with significant barriers to housing. In some studies, more than 75 percent of residents remained housed after two years.

**Want to help us continue making an impact for survivors in Alameda County?**

*Please consider donating to  
Family Violence Law Center!*

**To donate, click HERE**



Founded in 1978, Family Violence Law Center (FVLC) helps diverse communities in Alameda County heal from domestic violence and sexual assault, advocating for justice and healthy relationships. We provide survivor-centered legal and crisis intervention services, offer prevention education for youth and other community members, and engage in policy work to create systemic change.

*In court and in our community, every day.*

**<http://fvlc.org/> \* [info@fvlc.org](mailto:info@fvlc.org) \* 1.800.947.8301 (24 hrs./day)**