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PRESS RELEASE

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CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE FILES LAWSUIT TO PROTECT FUNDING FOR SDPD TASK FORCE COMBATING CHILD EXPLOITATION

SAN DIEGO – The City of San Diego, joined by the City of San Jose, has filed a lawsuit challenging unlawful conditions imposed by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) on Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) grant awards.

The ICAC Task Force Program, created by Congress and administered by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, provides critical funding to help local law enforcement combat online child exploitation and technology-facilitated sexual abuse. The San Diego Police Department relies on ICAC grant funding to investigate internet crimes against children and protect the region's most vulnerable residents.

The complaint alleges that the DOJ inserted conditions into the ICAC grant awards that are unconstitutional, unrelated to the program's purpose, and contrary to congressional intent. These conditions would require the City to provide unspecified access to U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) agents and comply with DHS requests.

"These conditions have nothing to do with protecting children from online predators," said **City Attorney Heather Ferbert**. "Congress created the ICAC program to fund investigations and prosecution of internet crimes against children, not to coerce local governments into adopting unrelated policy positions. Our lawsuit seeks to ensure that San Diego can continue its vital work safeguarding children without being forced to choose between unconstitutional conditions and losing critical funding."

"The City of San Jose has consistently acted to protect funding that is earmarked to address local public health and safety needs. This ICAC grant is to be used to give our police department the resources to protect children in our community from becoming victims of online abusive practices. The action now taken by the DOJ to insert after-the-fact grant conditions to convert these funds to assist with civil immigration enforcement violates the terms set by Congress," said **San Jose City Attorney Susana Alcala Wood**.

The lawsuit seeks declaratory and injunctive relief to prevent enforcement of these conditions and to preserve ICAC funding for its intended purpose, which is protecting children from online exploitation. Without this funding, the San Diego ICAC Task Force, which includes SDPD and more than 30 partner agencies, would face severe resource constraints that could jeopardize its ability to respond to thousands of CyberTip reports and conduct forensic investigations.

The Complaint is attached [here](#).

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