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*PRESS RELEASE*

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## **SAN DIEGO CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE HAS PRESERVED MORE THAN \$450 MILLION IN FEDERAL FUNDING FOR SAN DIEGO**

*Aggressive federal litigation strategy has prevented further strain on the City's challenging budget while safeguarding public safety, disaster response, housing, and environmental dollars that residents rely on.*

**SAN DIEGO** — City Attorney Heather Ferbert today announced that her Office's federal accountability litigation work has protected more than \$450 million in federal funding for the City of San Diego. With the City now facing a \$164 million budget deficit, every federal dollar protected is critical revenue that prevents further cuts. Had these federal funds not been preserved through litigation, the City would have had to either cut direct neighborhood services or dig deeper into its already-strained funds.

Since the beginning of 2025, the City Attorney's Office has filed or joined six lawsuits and over two dozen amicus briefs challenging unlawful actions by the federal administration, preserving grants for the San Diego Police Department's Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force, FEMA disaster preparedness funding, HUD housing dollars, and a \$10 million tree-planting grant for San Diego neighborhoods.

"San Diegans pay federal taxes and they deserve every federal dollar that has been promised by Congress to this City," said **City Attorney Heather Ferbert**. "When the federal administration tried to use those funds as leverage or pull them back entirely, my Office moved fast, joined the strongest coalitions in the country, and went to court. The result is hundreds of millions of dollars protected for San Diego: police officers on the street, firefighters ready for the next wildfire, roofs over families' heads, and a cleaner environment. We're standing up for our residents, defending the City's interests, and making sure the services San Diegans count on are still there today and tomorrow."

The Office's federal accountability strategy took a more aggressive stance beginning in early 2025, when it became clear that federal threats to local government authority were rapidly increasing. In February 2025, City Attorney Ferbert brought forward a streamlined process to the San Diego City Council to file or join federal response litigation and amicus briefs with quicker consent, which was unanimously approved. Just days later, San Diego joined San Francisco, San Jose, Santa Clara, Oakland, and a dozen other plaintiffs in the first major multi-jurisdiction lawsuit challenging federal efforts to withhold grant funding from so-called "sanctuary jurisdictions." The coalition secured a court injunction protecting tens of millions of dollars in public safety and grant funding for participating cities, including San Diego.

On the public safety front, the Office filed lawsuits to challenge grant conditions in San Diego Police Department funding from the U.S. Department of Justice, including the COPS Program, which supports SDPD officer hiring and training, and the San Diego Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force, which supports the investigation and prosecution of online child predators. San Diego serves as lead plaintiff in the ICAC case, alongside the City of San Jose. The Office also led litigation to preserve grant funding threatened over the City's compliance with state law on local police involvement in immigration enforcement.

To protect disaster preparedness funding, the City sued the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and FEMA, to challenge new conditions placed on FEMA grant awards. These dollars support the City's Office of Emergency Services, San Diego Fire-Rescue, and SDPD — funding wildfire preparedness, disaster response, and emergency-management functions critical to a region that faces wildfires, earthquakes, and coastal hazards every year.

On housing and infrastructure, San Diego sued the U.S. Department of Transportation and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development over new grant conditions. The funding at stake supports affordable housing, rental assistance, and homeless services, as well as long-term capital improvements like bridge rehabilitation, street repairs, libraries, parks, and community centers in San Diego neighborhoods.

On environmental investments, when the federal government paused funding under the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the City sued to unfreeze those dollars, including a \$10 million USDA Urban and Community Forestry grant for "Ready, Set, Grow San Diego," a tree-planting and urban canopy project for City neighborhoods. The City also joined federal litigation to expand the same EV charging, clean energy, and infrastructure investments at stake nationally.

"The \$450 million protected through this work represents funding the City would otherwise need to replace with other funds we know simply don't exist in a budget deficit year," said **City Attorney Heather Ferbert**.

Beyond litigation, the City Attorney's Office continues to advise the Mayor, City Council, and City departments on how shifting federal actions affect San Diego's grants, contracts, and day-to-day operations. Successful court injunctions have not only allowed the City to keep previously awarded funds but have preserved the City's ability to apply for and receive future federal grants.

For a complete one-page summary of the City Attorney's Office federal litigation work, [click here](#).

