



October 15, 2015

Dear Senator:

As law enforcement leaders dedicated to preserving the safety and security of our communities, we have been alarmed to see various legislative proposals that would attempt to impose punitive, “one-size-fits-all” policies on state and local law enforcement. Rather than strengthening state and local law enforcement by providing us with the tools to work with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in a manner that is responsive to the needs of our communities, these proposals would represent a step backwards. Notably, a number of proposals to defund so-called sanctuary cities sweep too broadly, punishing state and local law enforcement agencies that engage in well-established community policing practices or adhere to federal court decisions that have found federal immigration detainers to violate constitutional protections. We oppose such proposals and urge Congress to adopt a different approach.

Law enforcement needs are specific to each community. There are thousands of state and local law enforcement agencies across the United States, all with differing priorities, challenges and concerns. A rural county sheriff’s department will have different needs than a big city police department. A state police agency will have different priorities than a university police department. Different communities may face different public safety concerns. Yet, current legislative proposals make little distinction between the needs of different communities.

Immigration enforcement is, first and foremost, a federal responsibility. Making our communities safer means better defining roles and improving relationships between local law enforcement and federal immigration authorities. But in attempting to defund “sanctuary cities” and require state and local law enforcement to carry out the federal government’s immigration enforcement responsibilities, the federal government would be substituting its judgment for the judgment of state and local law enforcement agencies. Local control has been a beneficial approach for law enforcement for decades – having the federal government compel state and local law enforcement to carry out new and sometimes problematic tasks undermines the delicate federal balance and will harm locally-based policing.

Rather than requiring state and local law enforcement agencies to engage in additional immigration enforcement activities, Congress should focus on overdue reforms of the broken immigration system to allow state and local law enforcement to focus their resources on true threats – dangerous criminals and criminal organizations. We believe that state and local law enforcement must work together with federal authorities to protect our communities and that we can best serve our communities by leaving the enforcement of immigration laws to the federal government.



We urge Congress to reject proposals that tie needed law enforcement funding to federal mandates to carry out various immigration enforcement functions. Our immigration problem is a national problem deserving of a national approach, and we continue to recognize that what our broken system truly needs is a permanent legislative solution – broad-based immigration reform.

Sincerely,

Chief Art Acevedo  
Austin Police Department  
Texas

Chief Richard Biehl  
Dayton Police Department  
Ohio

Chief Mike Brown  
Salt Lake City Police Department  
Utah

Sheriff Mark Curran  
Lake County Sheriff's Office  
Illinois

Sheriff Tony Estrada  
Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office  
Arizona

Sheriff Paul Fitzgerald  
Story County Sheriff's Office  
Iowa

Assistant Chief Randy Gaber  
Madison Police Department  
Wisconsin

Chief Ron Haddad  
Dearborn Police Department  
Michigan

Chief Dwight Henninger  
Vail Police Department  
Colorado



## **LAW ENFORCEMENT IMMIGRATION TASK FORCE**

Chief Michael Koval  
Madison Police Department  
Wisconsin

Chief Brian Kyes  
Chelsea Police Department  
Massachusetts

Chief Jose Lopez  
Durham Police Department  
North Carolina

Sheriff Leon Lott  
Richland County Sheriff's Department  
South Carolina

Chief J. Thomas Manger  
Montgomery County Police Department  
Maryland

Sheriff William McCarthy  
Polk County Sheriff's Office  
Iowa

Sheriff Margaret Mims  
Fresno County Sheriff's Office  
California

Chief John Mina  
Orlando Police Department  
Florida

Chief Roy Minter  
Peoria Police Department  
Arizona

Lieutenant Andy Norris  
Tuscaloosa County Sheriff's Office  
Alabama

Commissioner Charles Ramsey  
Philadelphia Police Department  
Pennsylvania



Commissioner Keith Squires  
Utah Department of Public Safety  
Utah

Sheriff Richard Stanek  
Hennepin County Sheriff's Office  
Minnesota

Chief Michael Tupper  
Marshalltown Police Department  
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Sheriff Lupe Valdez  
Dallas County Sheriff's Office  
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Chief Roberto Villaseñor  
Tucson Police Department  
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