



Major County Sheriffs' Association

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July 21, 2015

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Chairman, Judiciary Committee
U.S. Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
Ranking Member, Judiciary Committee
U.S. Senate
437 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Leahy,

On behalf of the Major County Sheriffs Association, an association of sheriffs collectively representing over 100 million Americans, we submit to the Senate Judiciary Committee our statement for the record in response to the hearing, "Oversight of the Administration's Misdirected Immigration Enforcement Policies: Examining the Impact of Public Safety and Honoring the Victims."

In response to the July 1, 2015 murder of Kathryn Steinle, there has been much discussion regarding grant penalties as a way to bring "sanctuary cities" into line with federal policy. While we understand the debate and political tension surrounding "sanctuary cities," the proposed solution of grant penalties does nothing address the core issue of a broken immigration system and lack of information sharing between state and locals. Rather, grant penalties will only further prevent law enforcement from effectively protecting their communities and themselves at a time when violent crime continues to rise.

The Major County Sheriffs Association believes that solving the issue of "sanctuary cities" requires a comprehensive and multifaceted approach that would increase border security and enhance information sharing between federal and state law enforcement regarding illegal immigrants.

MCSA has long advocated for comprehensive policy that would secure our nation's porous borders. The range of threats and crimes that continue to impact public safety in our communities – from narcotics to gangs and human trafficking – can be traced in large part back to continuing insecurity along our borders. Additionally, MCSA has repeatedly brought to light the need for increased information sharing between Federal, State, local and tribal law enforcement.

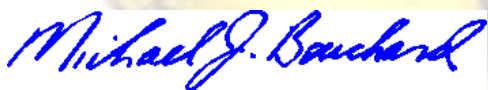
Information sharing is absolutely critical to maintaining public safety and combatting a wide variety of interstate and international threats that impact our communities. One specific area that we remain concerned about focuses on timely delivery of key information from the Federal level to States and locals on known criminal aliens that may reside in our communities. Information sharing responsibilities are binary meaning

that information should not just flow from the bottom up. State and local law enforcement officers have a need to know – for officer safety and basic policing operations – about any resident criminal alien threats that Federal law enforcement agencies are already aware of.

While we appreciate Congress’ continued support for law enforcement, we strongly feel a law enforcement grant penalty solution would not only negatively impact law enforcement efforts across the country, but also not achieve its intended purpose. Any proposed solution that includes grant penalties is a failed attempt to address a problem that cannot be solved with a surface-level solution. “Sanctuary cities” present an array of challenges for state and federal governments, and will continue to do so without a clear solution that addresses the foundation of the problem. If Congress ultimately settles on a grant penalty, MCSA strongly advocates for a penalty that originates from another funding stream, separate from those designed to assist state and local law enforcement, given that “sanctuary” policies are derived by local politicians, not law enforcement officials.

As Congress moves forward with its deliberations, we respectfully request that Members of Congress contact their state and local law enforcement representatives to understand the adverse impact law enforcement grant penalties would have on their respective constituencies. It is imperative that we take a step back to fully comprehend the complexity of “sanctuary cities” and not cut necessary and needed funding to local law enforcement.

Very Respectfully,



Michael J. Bouchard

Michael J. Bouchard, Sheriff, Oakland County (MI)
Vice President – Government Affairs, Major County Sheriffs’ Association

