



LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTION PARTNERSHIP

ADVANCING JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY SOLUTIONS

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March 17, 2021

Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas

Department of Homeland Security

3801 Nebraska Ave NW

Washington, DC 20016

Dear Secretary Mayorkas,

We are writing to you as police, sheriffs, prosecutors, and other criminal justice professionals. In the interest of public safety, law enforcement needs the trust of the communities we took an oath to protect and serve. In order to earn this trust, we believe that the Department of Homeland Security should end the programs that use local and state police officers and sheriffs' deputies to conduct federal immigration law enforcement.

As police, prosecutors, judges, and other criminal justice professionals, we know from firsthand experience that protecting public safety means rebuilding police-community trust. The police are only as strong as our relationships with the public, because we prevent and solve crime based on information from witnesses and victims. With community trust in police at a [historic low](#) nationwide, this is one of the most urgent and important barriers to public safety today.

One major factor destroying community trust is the fact that many local police officers and sheriffs' deputies are asked to enforce federal immigration law. [A report on Latino perceptions of police](#) found that 44% of Latinos hesitate to report crime to police for fear that police would investigate the immigration status of their family or community members.

Local police need to prioritize local safety, rather than sacrificing community safety to become pawns of federal immigration policy. We urge DHS to take two important actions to rebuild trust in immigrant communities:

LawEnforcementActionPartnership.org

Formerly known as Law Enforcement Against Prohibition

287(g) program:

Under the 287(g) program, ICE signs agreements with local law enforcement agencies requiring officers to serve as immigration agents. These responsibilities, which include interviewing individuals about their immigration status and searching them in DHS databases, are added on top of their existing workload. There are close to 150 agreements with agencies around the country.

This collaboration encourages crime in immigrant communities because victims and witnesses refuse to report crime to the police to avoid immigration status interviews, turning immigrants into targets of crime.

We believe that the 287(g) program needs to end immediately in order to increase crime reporting and strengthen local law enforcement.

ICE Detainers:

ICE detainers are requests for local jails to hold specific individuals for an additional 48 hours past their jail release date. These detainers allow ICE agents more time to take the person into federal custody to deport them.

These place local law enforcement in a compromised position. Because detainers request that deputies hold individuals beyond their release date without a signed judicial warrant, deputies are left vulnerable to costly damages lawsuits for constitutional violations. They also undermine community trust and cooperation, because some people will not report crime if low-level arrests are a pipeline to deportation.

To protect constitutional rights and community trust, we urge you to end ICE detainers. We also encourage you to direct ICE field offices to protect civil liberties in the notification process.

Respectfully,

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