

ICE UNDER FIRE: THE RADICAL LEFT'S CRUSADE AGAINST IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

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ICE UNDER FIRE: THE RADICAL LEFT'S CRUSADE AGAINST IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2025

UNITED STATES SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON BORDER SECURITY AND IMMIGRATION,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:34 p.m., in Room 226, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. John Cornyn, Chair of the Subcommittee, presiding.

Present: Senators Cornyn [presiding], Cruz, Moody, and Padilla.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN CORNYN, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

Chair CORNYN. Good afternoon, everyone. I want to extend my appreciation to Senator Grassley, Chairman of the full Judiciary Committee, for letting us have this hearing.

Today's discussion centers around how radical groups continue to incite violent protests and impede the enforcement of our immigration laws. We will examine how groups, primarily on the left, and even elected officials at the Federal, State, and local level continue to vilify immigration enforcement officials who are simply carrying out their duties required under the law. We'll discuss how the mainstream media gaslights the public about the true scope of criminal alien activity in the United States.

But first, let me take a moment to remind everyone how we got to this point. President Biden invited millions of unvetted illegal aliens into the United States. These included hundreds of thousands of criminal aliens, violent gang members, and even individuals on the terror watchlist. And where did these aliens go? They went to neighborhoods in major cities across the United States. These criminal aliens took up residence in States, counties, and cities that call themselves sanctuary cities like Los Angeles, Portland, and Chicago.

Sadly, many of these communities have suffered for decades under the weight of failed policing mandates. The influx of millions of illegal aliens exacerbated the failure of these policies, resulting in skyrocketing crime. Local residents have begged their elected leaders to reverse course and to address rising crime, but to no avail.

To add insult to injury, imagine their surprise when they learned that these Biden-era illegal aliens were prioritized for all types of

public services, including housing, schooling, and medical care funded by their tax dollars. In some cities, police departments were hamstrung by budget cuts in order to prioritize spending on illegal immigrants. Thankfully, President Trump has listened to these concerns and fulfilled one of his most important campaign promises—to secure the border and remove illegal aliens from the United States.

Aggressive immigration enforcement is not unprecedented, nor is it a particularly partisan issue. The reality is that President Obama, who was once praised for unifying the country, deported more than 2.5 million illegal aliens, earning him the title the *Deporter-in-Chief* at some point. But ever since President Trump was sworn into office and began prioritizing immigration enforcement, assaults and attacks on immigration agents and officers have skyrocketed.

These immigration officers are law enforcement officers that are doing what their country has asked them to do, which is to enforce our laws, just like every other law enforcement officer. They carry out their sworn duties to uphold the law and arrest those who have violated our laws. And make no mistake, we are talking about the arrests of criminal aliens who have committed some of the most heinous crimes—murder, rape, sexual abuse, and molestation of children, aggravated robbery and assault, kidnapping, human smuggling, theft, and even acts of terrorism.

But you don't have to take my word for it. DHS has published dozens of press releases highlighting the criminal aliens whom ICE and CBP have apprehended. These criminal aliens were hiding in the United States, some for years, and were allowed to continue terrorizing American communities. DHS has reported that currently, more than 415,000 illegal aliens in the United States already have criminal convictions, 415,000. Of that number, nearly 400,000 aren't even detained. They are still out there somewhere, in our neighborhoods, wreaking havoc.

There is, unfortunately, a lot of misinformation spread among the American public by the news media and the social media, especially regarding the current laws that authorize our immigration enforcement officers and what they are allowed to do and what they are required to do, and why they have to go into these communities to arrest illegal aliens, especially in so-called sanctuary cities.

Immigration enforcement officers are well trained and many with years of experience. The only reason that ICE and CBP must go out in our streets and seek out and arrest criminal aliens is because sanctuary cities simply refuse to cooperate with law enforcement and allow them to be transferred directly from jail if detained.

According to the Center for Immigration Studies, there are currently 12 sanctuary States and more than 200 sanctuary cities and counties across the United States. Many of them have passed laws that prevent their police department from cooperating with immigration enforcement or sharing information about detained or incarcerated aliens or honoring DHS detainers. Consequently, criminal aliens are often released back into their communities, inevitably to reoffend, rather than being detained before being placed

into custody. This practice not only defies common sense, but it makes the role of immigration enforcement officers much more difficult and, in the end, more painful for these communities.

The mainstream media, unfortunately, has shown no willingness to educate the public. Instead of reporting these realities truthfully, mainstream media outlets like CNN, MSNBC, and ABC have ignored the real harm that these criminal aliens have caused in these communities and instead directed their ire toward law enforcement.

I want to be sure, however, to praise those reporters who do their job honestly, who called out false statements when they see them on social media or otherwise. That is also an important function of the media, and it does not go unnoticed.

[Poster is displayed.]

Here is one example where Bill Melugin of Fox News points out a social media post depicting an infant with handcuffs on as false, which, of course, comes from TikTok. TikTok is owned by the Chinese Government, in part, and operates under the rules set by the Chinese Communist Party and is famous for their propaganda and disinformation efforts. But here is an example of how TikTok is sowing dissension among Americans by suggesting, somehow, that U.S. law enforcement officials are doing things like detaining an infant, and it looks like even putting them in handcuffs, which is obviously a false statement, false depiction.

We also know that some of our Democratic colleagues have used incendiary rhetoric to fan the flames of public protests that are anything but “mostly peaceful.” The result has been widespread assaults on our law enforcement officers. Protesters and criminal aliens have physically attacked officers. Officers have been pepper-sprayed, choked, punched, or even injured to the point of hospitalization. Protesters have made violent threats against ICE officers, comparing them to fascists and Nazis, inciting more violence against immigration officers, who are, again, simply doing the job that Congress has asked them to do. They are enforcing Federal laws.

They have rammed officers with vehicles, thrown teargas, smoke grenades, rocks, bottles, and even punched and shot at our ICE officers. Left-wing protesters have laid down in the road, in an attempt to prevent vehicles belonging to law enforcement from entering or leaving detention facilities, and even slashed the tires on Government vehicle cars, all to prevent ICE and CBP from doing their jobs.

These groups have also interfered with the capture of illegal aliens, including facilitating the escape of a convicted child rapist and an alien convicted for narcotics and weapons possession. Some of these protesters are outright lunatics, and I don’t use this word lightly. Anyone watching the news has seen protesters from every corner of the radicals’ left base. We have seen everything from straight-up thugs committing physical violence to activists dressed as dinosaurs and rabbits, and in some costumes that I won’t even hazard a guess as to what they are trying to represent. We have even seen some dancing grandmas trying to stop enforcement of our immigration laws, one Jane Fonda dance move at a time.

[Video is shown.]

Chair CORNYN. Well, suffice it to say, some of these activists have become so divorced from reality as to be characterized accurately as unhinged. But when you give protesters information about who is being targeted and why, suddenly they see the wisdom of this action.

[Video is shown.]

Chair CORNYN. Many of us look to law enforcement officers for protection in cases of robbery, burglary, or assault. Why can't we extend the same level of respect to law enforcement officers who carry out our other laws that Congress has passed, like our immigration laws?

The left sometimes calls themselves the party of the people, but they don't seem to have much regard for their fellow man and woman when they engage in tactics designed to impede ICE and CBP from getting criminal aliens off our streets and out of the United States. Why is the radical left so intent on protecting illegal aliens over U.S. citizens who are suffering the consequences of violent crime? To me, that is the most important question that remains unanswered.

I now recognize Senator Padilla, the Ranking Member.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ALEX PADILLA,
A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Senator PADILLA. Good afternoon. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me first say that violence against law enforcement is never okay. I speak for all my Democratic colleagues in the Committee, and the Senate for that matter, in saying so. Violence against law enforcement is never okay, and I will continue to emphasize that as we have in the past. We will today and in the future, if for no other reason because many of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle suggest and accuse Democrats of believing otherwise.

But for today's hearing, let me begin with a very simple question. Why are we here? Are we here truly to conduct oversight and find ways to actually improve the situation and public safety in our communities? Or are we simply here to throw more fuel on the political fire?

Today's hearing title tells us all we need to know. "The Radical Left's Crusade Against Immigration Enforcement." That doesn't exactly set the stage for a productive, serious conversation about how we both protect law enforcement officials and improve public safety. It's the title of the next exercise in Republican political theater. That is really what is happening here. So let me once again say that violence against law enforcement is never okay.

But I refuse to sit back as this Committee attempts to use or condone the use of law enforcement as a shield for abuses of power by this administration. If today's hearing was indeed a serious effort to protect our law enforcement, we would have government witnesses testifying before us today and fielding our questions as a Committee. But that is not the case. If today's hearing was a serious effort, those government witnesses would be providing facts and data behind the numbers that the Department of Homeland Security so often cites to claim an increase in assaults on its officers and agents. But even after repeated requests, months and months of requests from my office and from others to the Depart-

ment of Homeland Security to back up their claims of a, is it 500 percent, is it 1,000 percent? Now we are even hearing claims of up to 8,000 percent increase in assaults or death threats. They have refused to provide them.

Mr. Chairman, you are very well aware of this. You and I discussed this last week. And as far as I can tell, they have even refused your requests for data and statistics.

Why am I insisting on this? Why am I making this point? Because that data is critical. Not only would it allow us to actually verify their claims, but that data would be critical to informing our policy response.

So no, today's hearing is not a serious attempt to protect law enforcement. It is designed to fuel the propaganda machine and encourage even more brutal immigration enforcement operations. It's designed to cover up for the fact that after President Trump pledged to go after the worst of the worst—this we do know from DHS statistics—over 70 percent of those currently detained in ICE custody have no criminal record. If they were simply focused on those truly dangerous violent criminals, there would be no objection. There would be no debate. There would be no discussion. But the reality is far from their claims. At the same time, what we are seeing every day is new acts of brutality and misuse of force in communities across the country.

But my guess is that today you won't be hearing about the Department of Homeland Security's violent takedowns of peaceful, hardworking, long-term immigrants who don't have that violent criminal record that the administration wants you to believe. And I am not just making this up. There is case after case, including a deaf DACA recipient who had his hands cuffed and his phone taken away so he couldn't communicate as he was shoved into the back of a car.

You won't hear about the journalists who are threatened and assaulted, one so severely in New York they had to be hospitalized. You won't hear about the clergy being shot in the head with a pepper ball or arrested for attempting to administer the sacrament of communion to the faithful at a detention facility. And you won't hear about the 170 American citizens—there are probably more, but that is what has been documented—caught up in these chaotic immigration raids, American citizens caught up in these raids.

Even as Secretary Noem lies and claims when she says that no American citizens have been detained, every week we read new reports about another American who has had their neck knelt on, their door blown off, or their windows smashed, and even a pregnant woman in Florida, a United States citizen, who was thrown to the ground during an arrest and who later miscarried. This is happening every day across the country. Masked agents have become so emboldened that even a Reagan-appointed Federal judge recently wrote, "In all our history, we have never tolerated an armed, masked, secret police carrying on in this fashion."

Now this administration ignores the fundamental rights to due process every day as it carries out this authoritarian enforcement agenda and instead has replaced it with the idea that if you look or talk a certain way, that's enough for you to be detained, or even deported, before you have a day in court. That is not just morally

wrong, it is an attack on our fundamental liberties and the rule of law in the United States of America.

But again, Republicans don't want to discuss any of this. Why? Out of fear of crossing the President and his outrage machine? Americans have had enough. They are sick of masked agents disrespecting daycares, schools, and churches, disappearing loved ones, and intimidating our communities. Americans are demanding that we do something.

So, Mr. Chairman, it is clear to me that this hearing will not be a serious or constructive conversation. And for that reason, I refuse to give oxygen to the fire of disinformation and propaganda that this hearing was set up to ignite, and I refuse to be part of this charade.

Chair CORNYN. Well, Senator Padilla, I think you say we are not discussing a lot of those items, but I think you just raised a lot of interesting questions that I would be happy to discuss and ask questions of the witnesses and get their views. This is not necessarily the only hearing we are going to be having on this topic. And I think given the fact that there is so much disinformation, it's important for us to get the facts and not just rely on misinformation, which seems to be rampant.

I will proceed to introduce the witnesses. The first is Sheriff Roy Boyd of Goliad County, Texas. Everybody who knows a little about Texas history knows the importance of Goliad and the Texas Revolution. Goliad is in rural South Texas, with a population of around 1,000, situated halfway between Houston and Laredo along U.S. Highway 59. Sheriff Boyd has been a peace officer for 31 years and retired from the Victoria Police Department and Victoria Sheriff's Department before becoming the Sheriff of Goliad County. Sheriff Boyd also worked as one of the co-leaders on Texas' Operation Lone Star.

Mia Cathell is an investigative journalist at the Washington Examiner, tracking activist movements in the U.S. and civil unrest across the country. She closely monitors mobilization strategies, funding sources, and the ideologies driving political violence. Her coverage on Antifa's operations has caught the attention of the White House as the Trump administration seeks to dismantle far-left domestic terrorism networks.

Danielle Carter-Walters is co-founder and vice president of Chicago Flips Red and a dedicated political activist and community advocate. Chicago Flips Red is a grassroots initiative dedicated to transforming the political landscape by prioritizing the needs of Chicago's communities and residents. Ms. Carter-Walters has been a vocal critic of the city's sanctuary policies and the misallocation of public resources during the migrant crisis. In April 2025, Ms. Carter-Walters testified before the U.S. House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration Integrity, Security, and Enforcement about sanctuary cities, where she urged Federal and State leaders to end sanctuary policies and prioritize the need of American citizens.

If you will all please rise, and I will administer the oath. Raise your right hand.

[Witnesses are sworn in.]

Chair CORNYN. Thank you.

Sheriff Boyd, why don't we start with you? And if you take about 5 minutes or so to make an opening statement, and then I am sure we will have some questions for you and the rest of the witnesses.

**STATEMENT OF ROY BOYD, SHERIFF,
GOLIAD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, GOLIAD, TX**

Sheriff BOYD. Thank you, Senator.

To the Honorable Chair and Members of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, my name is Roy Boyd. I'm the Sheriff of Goliad County, which is a rural South Texas county, about halfway between Laredo and Houston, as the Senator said.

I'm here to discuss the current situation with regards to law enforcement and the enforcement of the laws, and more specifically, the implementation of the 287(g) Task Force Model, and the need to expand the program and change our model of conducting law enforcement operations across the United States of America.

Here is why these efforts are important to the future of our Nation and the safety of our citizens. While illegal immigration has been a historical issue along the U.S.-Mexico border, this changed more than a decade ago, when the cartels seized control of the border regions of Mexico and changed their business model to include smuggling of people. When this happened, the cartels began controlling who came across the border and began torturing and killing anyone who attempted to violate their control by crossing into the U.S. without paying the cartels.

This control gave rise to a new way for the cartels to conduct business throughout the United States and beyond. In Mexico, the Federal Government leases territories to criminal organizations in what they refer to as the plaza system. The Mexican Government allows cartels to conduct limited smuggling and trafficking activities in exchange for a monthly fee, with any activity above and beyond requiring additional payments to government officials as a tax on excess illicit commerce.

The cartels have replicated this Mexican Government's program in the—with geographic control throughout the United States. I witnessed this firsthand when I was the chief deputy for Victoria County Sheriff's Office, which is next door to Goliad. The Gulf Cartel took control of the cocaine trade in Victoria and surrounding counties. They then leased the sole distribution rights for the dealing of pure cocaine to the Houston chapter of the Mexican Mafia. The Gulf Cartel then sent out people onto the streets to tell the other dealers that unless they were authorized distributors of pure cocaine, they would have to cut their product, by at least 50 percent, with inert material.

After operations were underway, the cartel sent people back out on the streets to purchase cocaine from nonauthorized distributors, for the purpose of testing the product for purity. If the cocaine was without inert product, the dealer was given a warning about violating the cartel's control of the product within the plaza.

During this time, we began to receive word from local cocaine dealers that local cocaine dealers were disappearing. Many families were not reporting their missing loved ones to the authorities out of fear of retribution from the cartel and the Mexican Mafia. In total, our contacts on the streets advised that at least 10 drug deal-

ers had refused to dilute their product and had been disappeared, never to be seen again. Only one family went public and sought justice for their son. We never found him or discovered what became of him or his remains.

The other aspect of this new business model was that cartels began using illegal aliens smuggled into the United States as part of their logistic workforce. When people are smuggled into the U.S., they must pay a fee to the cartels in order to gain safe passage. In our area, most illegal aliens are smuggled into Houston for transport across the eastern half of the United States. Once in Houston, they are given the final amount that they owe the cartels and their contractors for being here. From there, the illegal aliens end up in various forms of indentured servitude across our Nation. However, as part of that obligation of the cartels, these people have to be willing to provide labor and other services to pay off their final debt.

We have interviewed many illegal aliens who have been smuggled into Texas during our investigations. What we found is that some will pay off the debt with money over a period of 8 to 13 years. Some will pay off the debt by smuggling other illegal aliens or drugs into the United States. Some will move illegal aliens and drugs from one area of the interior to another. Others will be placed into forced prostitution or will be called upon to provide material support in the unloading or moving of drugs in any areas in which they reside.

If you think these indentured people can just decide not to cooperate once they are here, that is not the case. The cartels have a vast intelligence network and keep records of the people they smuggle to include family member information. I've had illegal aliens involved in criminal activity tell me that they had no choice but to commit the criminal acts in order to prevent their family members from being placed into bondage and doing unspeakable acts in their home countries.

What this means is that millions of illegal aliens now residing in the United States are part of the logistical support operations for illicit cartel activities throughout our country. If our goal is to dismantle cartel operations in the United States, we must never be able—we will never be able to do so unless we deny them the logistical capacity to conduct business in a manner that generates an acceptable stream of revenue to be moved from the United States into their home countries.

In order to take the initiative in what can only be deemed as asymmetrical warfare against the cartels and their business partners, law enforcement must change their mindset and must change their methodology. We must look at what we have been doing in the past and ask if the billions of dollars we have spent are accomplishing the primary goals of the missions of the programs implemented. In most cases, I will speculate that with an honest assessment, we will find that most of the Federal dollars being pumped into law enforcement programs is remaining in urban areas where expense versus return is not in balance.

According to ICE.gov, as of November 14, 2025, there were 1,167 local and State law enforcement agencies in, 40 States, that had signed memorandums of agreement for at least one of the 287(g)

programs. Only 605 of those agreements are for the participation in the Task Force Model, which is a model that allows local and State law enforcement to conduct field immigration enforcement under the supervision of ICE. With more than 18,000 local law enforcement agencies in the U.S., 605 agencies assisting ICE in the field is insufficient to hinder the profit margin of the cartels.

If we are to succeed in this monumental task, this effort of defeating the cartels, we must restructure our law enforcement efforts. We must disregard those who stand in the way of change, ignore the anti-American media outlets working against the interests of Americans, and create a new chain of command and organizational structure that allows for the synergy throughout the full spectrum of law enforcement and streamlines the functionality in a manner that demands results and accountability while ensuring funds are being utilized in accordance with their intended purpose. This purpose must be to defund and prosecute organized criminal activity throughout America, which will not happen if we fail to enforce our immigration laws and deport those who have violated our sovereignty and have placed themselves at the disposal of organizations who victimize our citizens.

The presence of Mexican cartels in the United States has changed how domestic criminal organizations function. It has created a negative impact that is becoming more pervasive day by day. Street gangs, motorcycle gangs, and other domestic criminal organizations have all been relegated to the status of mere contractors and subcontractors for the cartels. As such, they are beholden to act as they are commanded by their masters. Furthermore, hostile foreign governments and organizations have joined to work alongside cartels in an effort to undermine the safety and security of the United States from within.

As a law enforcement professional who has witnessed the evolution of the influence of foreign organized crime in the United States, I fear that if we fail to act swiftly and with purpose, we shall find ourselves on the path that mirrors the never-ending violence and instability found in Mexico.

In the words of Pyotr Wrangel, the general of the White Russian Army in 1919, fighting the Bolsheviks, "We must have the courage to see things as they are, to look at the situation squarely in the face and be ready for fresh ordeals."

Thank you for your time and your consideration.

[The prepared statement of Sheriff Boyd appears as a submission for the record.]

Chair CORNYN. Ms. Carter-Walters, if you would proceed with your opening statement, please.

**STATEMENT OF DANIELLE CARTER-WALTERS,
VICE PRESIDENT, CHICAGO FLIPS RED, CHICAGO, IL**

Ms. CARTER-WALTERS. Good afternoon, Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee. My name is Danielle Carter-Walters, vice president of Chicago Flips Red. Thank you to President Donald J. Trump for giving regular citizens like me the courage to speak up. And thank you to this Subcommittee for letting me share what is really happening in our city.

Chicago Flips Red support the work the President is doing, and we fight for the people of Chicago every day. We have also been targeted for doing what's right. Our founder, Zoe Leigh, and our advisor, Jessica Jackson, were attacked after speaking out about stolen property in poor neighborhoods. And I recently faced pushback in Cook County Court for trying to protect my community.

Even with all of this, we stand with the men and women of ICE, officers who risk their lives daily. These officers get no help from Governor Pritzker or Mayor Brandon Johnson. ICE has found dangerous criminals in Chicago, violent felons, child traffickers, drug smugglers, and cartel members, all hiding under sanctuary city protection. ICE has stopped fentanyl shipments, broken up trafficking groups, and removed criminals who were hurting our neighborhoods. This work is especially needed in the Black communities that are still recovering from the crack and the AIDS crisis of 1980s and from the damage caused by the '94 crime bill orchestrated by "Jim Crow Joe Biden," and put into law by Bill Clinton.

But instead of helping ICE, our State and city leaders block them. They refuse to share information, ignore detainers, and even threaten to arrest Federal officers for just doing their jobs. Some judges have also joined in. They have made unfair rulings meant to scare ICE agents. One of the worst examples was when a judge ordered Agent Greg Bovino to report to court every day, as if he were the criminal. That was not justice. It was political games backed by the fake news media.

While this is happening, Mayor Johnson, Governor Pritzker are spending hundreds of millions of dollars on illegal aliens while regular Chicagoans struggle. Schools are crowded, crime keep rising, and families can't afford food or rent. Yet our leaders still put illegal aliens first. Over 56,000 illegal aliens are living in Chicago homes, while our veterans and homeless sleep outside. Cartel gangs like MS-13, Tren de Aragua now have presence in our city. Fentanyl, guns, and human trafficking are flowing through neighborhoods that used to be filled with working families. ICE tries to stop this, but the judges, the Illinois attorney general, the Chicago Teachers Union, certain clergy members, the Mayor, and the Governor block them every step of the way. This is not compassion. This is failure. This is a betrayal of the people they were elected to protect.

Chicago is broke. We are in a billion-dollar deficit, overpriced contracts, and shrinking middle class. Mayor Johnson blames the Government in Washington, but the truth is simple. Sanctuary policies have brought chaos and corruption to our city. So we—the people of Chicago, we demand this; a Federal review of how Illinois blocks ICE from doing their job, a criminal investigation into judges who target ICE officers unfairly, a full check of all the money spent by State and the city on migrant programs, police, Cook County, and Federal agencies working together again with ICE, and an end to the sanctuary city policies that put our safety at risk.

Sanctuary should mean safety for Americans. In Chicago, it now means giving up our rights and our security. To every leader still defending these harmful policies, your time of pretending to serve

the people is over. We will speak up, we will stand up, and we will not let corruption decide the future of our city. We will take our city and State back because it's for we, the people.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Carter-Walters appears as a submission for the record.]

Chair CORNYN. Thank you. Ms. Cathell.

**STATEMENT OF MIA CATHELL, INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALIST,
WASHINGTON EXAMINER, WASHINGTON, DC**

Ms. CATHELL. My name is Mia Cathell. I am an investigative journalist at the Washington Examiner. I've been closely covering civil unrest in the U.S. since the 2020 racial justice riots. Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to be here, before you today, to testify about this important issue.

When the uprisings against ICE erupted on the West Coast in June, we saw uniform signage, tactical gear, and boots-on-the-ground activists deployed to Los Angeles, the epicenter of the unrest, almost instantaneously. These certainly were not spontaneous riots. They were well coordinated, and in fact, well funded. What we uncovered was an orchestrated operation, and those at the forefront of the anti-ICE resistance have received ample funding.

Chief among them is the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles, or CHIRLA for short. CHIRLA, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, is part of a sprawling anti-ICE activist network in the Los Angeles area, serving as rapid response to deportation sightings. CHIRLA instructs its followers, via Bluesky, to report ICE encounters to the Los Angeles Rapid Response Network, abbreviated LARRN. CHIRLA co-founded LARRN, in late January, with the expressed intent to counter the incoming Trump administration's immigration policies.

Here's how it works. In response to reports of immigration enforcement called in over its hotline, LARRN sends out cells, comprised of immigration lawyers, legal observers, and activist organizers in order to mobilize counter-efforts against ICE. This rapid response model is replicated elsewhere across the country, using crowdsourced surveillance software, some quite sophisticated, or simply social media to track ICE activity in the region and alert activists, as well as illegal immigrants, to nearby ICE agents.

CHIRLA has acquired its funding from Federal and State sources. According to CHIRLA's tax filing from fiscal 2023, the group reported receiving about \$34 million in government grants. In its capacity as a legal services provider, CHIRLA helps illegal immigrants, including those convicted of crimes, avoid deportation. Grant records show that Homeland Security, the very Agency CHIRLA's protesting, has awarded the anti-deportation group several six-figure grants since 2014, as part of an immigration aid program that financially supports organizations actively working to remove barriers to naturalization.

CHIRLA has also received generous taxpayer funding from the State of California. In 2023, the State's Department of Social Services awarded CHIRLA about \$3 million for an initiative providing free legal services to immigrants, such as application assistance in cases seeking immigration remedies. That is deportation relief.

In 2022, CHIRLA received \$1.37 million from California's Social Services Department, specifically to provide pro bono defense services in removal proceedings. CHIRLA's deportation team, nicknamed Warriors for Justice, was bankrolled by the Los Angeles Justice Fund, a public-private partnership between liberal grantmaking foundations, the city of Los Angeles, and Los Angeles County. These grantees formed a removal defense pipeline in the county.

Another far-left agitator group fomenting anti-ICE unrest is the foreign-funded Party for Socialism and Liberation, whose chapters mass-mobilize their forces in major U.S. cities, many of them so-called sanctuaries or safe havens welcoming illegal immigration. At the time of the Los Angeles riots, PSL activated its followers, from all corners of the country, to take to the streets, rise up in solidarity, stage parallel protests, and force ICE out of LA, a rallying cry that has since been repurposed for cities targeted by Federal immigration authorities. PSL's San Antonio arm explained to local press at the time that the more cities that oppose ICE operations through these pressure campaigns, the more difficult a Federal crackdown becomes.

PSL chapters, such as the ones operating in Washington, DC, and Milwaukee, continue to convene ICE OUT rallies to stop the raids. Most recently, PSL led an emergency march in Charlotte, where activists were seen waving Mexican flags, to drive out Border Patrol and "defeat the deportation machine." PSL Charlotte began circulating call-to-action material days before Border Patrol made landfall in North Carolina. A coalition of local and national organizations sponsored the protests, including 50501, one of the organizers behind the nationwide No Kings movement. Left unchecked, these powerful actors work in tandem to advance agendas harmful to the safety and security of the Nation. Their shared objective is to obstruct the enforcement of U.S. immigration law, legislation that Congress enacted.

Simply put, the men and women of ICE are law enforcement officers tasked with carrying out their congressionally mandated duties. They are under increasing threat of targeted attacks and hostile demonstrations that often devolve into violent clashes. At this rate, I fear more political violence is to come unless Federal officers take further steps to protect our Federal officers.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Cathell appears as a submission for the record.]

Chair CORNYN. Thank you very much.

We will have a round of questions, and it looks like our Democratic colleagues are boycotting the hearing, so Senator Moody and I will have a chance to ask questions we would like, and I think there is a lot to cover.

First of all, Sheriff Boyd, I know you were very active as a leader of Operation Lone Star in Texas. Would you describe what that is?

Sheriff BOYD. So in the State of Texas, you have Operation Lone Star, which is a State-initiated program that helps to focus State law enforcement to go out and to conduct anti-smuggling operations and to help secure the border in Texas, to provide assistance to our Border Patrol. And that's been going on since about 2021.

But then you have the Operation Lone Star grant, which is a grant from the State of Texas that provides funding to local agencies, such as ourselves, in order to pay for overtime and equipment needed to go out and combat transnational criminal activity across the State of Texas.

And then what we have formed is the Operation Lone Star Task Force, which is now at 61 agencies across the State of Texas. And we come together and we work in unison with our partners at ICE, Border Patrol, Homeland Security, Texas Department of Public Safety, and Texas Parks and Wildlife, and, of course, the Texas Department of Agriculture under Commissioner Sid Miller. And we go out and we help conduct enforcement operations to help secure Texas against the criminal predations of foreign entities.

Chair CORNYN. Well, Sheriff, can you explain for people who are listening why, if these are Federal immigration laws that are being violated by people illegally entering the country, why is it necessary for local and State law enforcement to work alongside of Customs and Border Protection, the Border Patrol, and ICE to deal with this problem?

Sheriff BOYD. Just to give you a little bit of perspective, so during the first Trump administration, the Goliad County Sheriff's Office, on average, arrested 77 people a year. In 2021, we arrested 252. We thought that was a phenomenal number.

Chair CORNYN. How far are you from the border now?

Sheriff BOYD. A hundred and eighty miles——

Chair CORNYN. Okay.

Sheriff BOYD [continuing]. Halfway between Laredo and Houston.

Chair CORNYN. Okay.

Sheriff BOYD. So from there, by 2024, we arrested 502 people. It climbed every single year. It now is on the path declining since the second Trump administration has come in. But the problem is that we have allowed tens of millions of people to come into this country illegally, and they are beholden to the cartels, and they are moving around. And there's no way for our Federal partners to be able to tackle this monumental problem without the assistance of local and State law enforcement. And as a law enforcement official, it is my duty to stand up and make sure that the citizens of my community, in my State, are safe, and as part of that, I am there to help the Federal partners that we have to achieve the goals given to them by the duly elected administration under President Trump.

Chair CORNYN. And of course, that job is even harder when the Federal Government's policy is basically not to enforce immigration laws, correct?

Sheriff BOYD. That was exactly why we had the problem under the Biden administration in the first place, because the laws were not being enforced, and so we were being overrun by transnational criminal activity being directed by the cartels.

Chair CORNYN. I think some people who don't live in Texas or don't understand the nature of the border thought that this wave of folks from Mexico and Central America and around the world would be welcomed with open arms by local border communities, which are overwhelmingly Hispanic. Can you explain what your experience has been?

Sheriff BOYD. What the reality is, is those folks do not come across and stay in those border communities. Yes, the border communities were not happy with this massive surge of criminality coming across the Rio Grande or across the border in other areas, but what you'll find is those individuals were being moved in by the cartels. They—when they got here, they are not free to go. They are indentured servants. They go where they've been assigned to go to. And those individuals would come up and, in our area, go to Houston for distribution all across the eastern half of the United States, same as the cartel does with drugs, they did with people. And they moved them all throughout the U.S.

And so it wasn't a—it's not so much a border problem, which is part of the problem we've had is describing it as a border problem. The real problem is it's now a problem for the entirety of the United States of America, thanks to the tens of millions of people allowed to come across under the previous administration.

Chair CORNYN. So, is it fair to say this is a problem that is not limited to the border but extends throughout the country?

Sheriff BOYD. This is a national security issue of the highest level, sir, and it is coast to coast, border to border.

Chair CORNYN. So, Ms. Carter-Walters, we are going to get to her in a minute and Ms. Cathell because there are a lot of questions I want to ask. I am sure Senator Moody does as well. But one of the things you talked about, or that was mentioned, is so-called sanctuary cities don't cooperate with Federal law enforcement officials. And my understanding is the Department of Homeland Security will issue a detainer on illegal aliens in the Goliad County Jail or any other jail. And in those jurisdictions where they do cooperate with Federal law enforcement officials, the transfer of those individuals can occur there in the jail, and ICE isn't relegated to raiding populations in other places. It can happen on a much more orderly way. But you mentioned the 287(g) agreement. Could you describe that further?

Sheriff BOYD. So under the 287(g) program, which provides limited Federal authority to local law enforcement after we've received our training on it, you have three different programs. You have the jail enforcement model, which is that allows us—if we arrest somebody on a State offense and they come into the jail, that provides somebody who has been trained access to the database in our jail to find out if that person who's already in jail is in this country legally or illegally. And there's a system we go through, and ICE verifies everything.

The next program, which is what you were talking about, was the Warrant Service model. It is the Warrant Service Officer model, which may sound like you're going out and knocking on doors, but that's not the case. What it does is it grants those who are trained in the jail the authorization to transfer somebody who's in jail on State custody from State to Federal custody at the request of ICE. It also allows us to transport them from a facility that is not a contract facility for incarceration to another jurisdiction that is a contract facility for incarceration for Federal crimes.

The last program is the Task Force Model program. And what that does is that allows us, my deputies in the field, myself included, to go out and when we're conducting our business and we

come across somebody that we believe is in this country without authorization, gives us the ability to contact ICE, to go through a verification process. ICE then tells us, yes, you are correct, that individual is in the country illegally, gives us the authorization to detain them. We detain them, we take them, and then we get them transported to a federally approved contracted facility for them to be housed at before they move on to where they're going to have their deportation hearing.

Chair CORNYN. So in the absence of cooperation by the local or State jurisdiction to transfer those prisoners from State or local government custody to the Federal Government, are those individuals simply just released into the community?

Sheriff BOYD. You are absolutely correct, Senator. In those jurisdictions, which we refer to as sanctuary jurisdictions, those individuals then, once they make bond on their State charge, they're going to be allowed to return back out onto the streets within that community. If you're not part of the Task Force Model, it may stop you for not having—you know, for having a violation of traffic enforcement, and just because you're in this country illegally, you'd still get released and be driving around on the streets of America, even though you're not supposed to be here.

Chair CORNYN. Thank you. Senator Moody.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ASHLEY MOODY,
A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA**

Senator MOODY. Thank you, Senator Cornyn, and thank you for holding this hearing.

[Poster is displayed.]

I think one of the biggest mistakes we could make right now, in the history of our country, is to not examine this pattern of completely ignoring our laws under one administration, and in fact, not only emboldening and permitting, in fact, funding anarchist behavior under one administration, and then when an administration comes in to try to right the ship, restore the country, repair the damage, we get behavior that is not only obstructionist, subversive, but illegal, all in the name of what? For the life of me, if we want to ensure the devolution of our free State, our free Nation, a Nation under a rule of law, this is the quickest way to do it.

And shockingly, we have not only funded and permitted this type of behavior, we now have lawmakers in Congress, Senators complicit in this, advocating it. As of yesterday, they were putting out a video encouraging Government officials to ignore orders. Our enemies, our adversaries across this world are laughing at what is happening right now. And not only have they, are they doing this and encouraging the behavior, they are obstructing us in trying to fix this every step of the way. And it's not just happening in our cities. They just shut down the Government for 43 days, shut it down.

And at what point are Americans going to catch on and understand that these are not lawmakers of yore? These are people that are here that do not, in any way, shape, or form, want our country to continue as the country it was founded to be 250 years ago, a Nation under a rule of law made by the people, the people's law. And every time they are ordering a Government official to ignore

it, ignore orders, they are telling them, ignore those that were elected by the people, ignore the law of the people. And so somebody in this place has to call that out because that is the quickest way to lose this Nation.

And I want to say thank you for being here today and testifying. We have a law enforcement officer that was on the frontlines and saw—I was the attorney general of Florida, and when the sheriffs came to me and said, the Biden administration is telling us to release people here illegally that are in our jails, they've committed crimes, and instead of taking them from us, as they are required to do under the law, and deporting them back to their home countries so that they can't continue to victimize Americans, they are telling us to release serious felony offenders back into the communities. And so they had to, because Biden was not following the law. And that happened time and time again, drug traffickers, burglars, people—and did it shock the Nation when we kept seeing crimes being committed? If they were paying attention, it shouldn't have because the sheriffs and law enforcement officers around this Nation were being told, by the Biden administration, to push them back into our communities.

Let me tell you another thing that I had to file suit on to get information when we found out. Historically, when we picked up people internationally that were trafficking drugs, killing Americans, when they were brought to our country to be prosecuted and put in prison for that, as soon as they served that sentence, they were deported because they were picked up in international places, because they were drug traffickers. Who would have ever released them into our country when their only skill is drug trafficking, in the middle of a drug crisis? Oh no, the Biden administration did. They started taking Federal prisoners in Federal prisons for drug trafficking here illegally, and instead of deporting them when their sentences were over, they released them back into your communities in America. And their only skill was pushing drugs into your communities. That's their skill.

So thank you for testifying as what was happening. Now, we have agents being directed, rightfully so, by this administration, to go into communities and arrest those people that are here illegally that have been committing crimes, many that were forced to be released by the Biden administration. And this is what we get. This is what we get, people threatening, harassing, victimizing law enforcement trying to go out and arrest those people that the Biden administration pushed into your communities.

And it wasn't just when they emptied the jails into your communities or they emptied the Federal prisons into your communities. They kept letting everyone just walk into our country, hundreds of thousands of people every month, and push them in mass quotas to release into our country. They called it their discretion to parole, no vetting done. They kept saying, there is nothing happening at the border. Our border is secure. They testified to Congress, under oath, that our border was secure, and then they blamed Congress that they couldn't do anything else.

How long did it take for President Trump to shut down the border? They have released zero in the last 6 months. Compare those same 6 months to the Biden administration, hundreds of thousands

of people pushed into our country, barely vetted. This is what's happening when we are trying to make sure that our communities are safe.

That is why I am introducing an act called the HALO Act, which would give these men and women, who took an oath to protect our communities and put American safety ahead of their own, a buffer zone while they do their jobs. They should not have to tolerate this. If they tell someone to step away because they are trying to do their duties that we as the American people have asked them to do, that we as the American people have asked them to do and put their lives on the line to do, they shouldn't have to deal with this. And I hope every single one of my colleagues understands that without men and women that take that oath and serve on that very thin line, we don't have a country under a rule of law. We ask them to do incredibly dangerous jobs. We could give them the space to do it.

I also believe there is absolutely no way that these groups should be funded with American tax dollars. Talk about our adversaries laughing. That is like pouring acid on the fibers that bind us together as a Nation, that create that strength. We are now going to take tax dollars and weaken that, going against the men and women trying to ensure safety, funding the people that are threatening and harassing them?

Ms. Cathell, I thank you for your testimony. And what you have said today is that American tax dollars have gone to this subversive network. Is that correct?

Ms. CATHELL. That's correct.

Senator MOODY. And Ms. Carter-Walters, what you are saying today—and thank you so much for being here today. I have often said that the very people that the folks across the aisle profess to want to protect are the very ones they are hurting with their insane, undermining policies. And it is so refreshing to hear someone, a resident of a place where this is happening, speak out and say, if they were looking out for Americans, the country that they swore to come in and represent, the people, and not the criminals, this country would look very different. Thank you for your bravery and your courage to come here today. I don't know if that makes you any more popular in your community, but you are certainly representing what our Founders imagined for a Nation under a rule of law. And I am grateful to you.

Do you believe that Federal funding should go to States and cities that are sanctuary cities, that refuse to enforce the law and refuse to work with Federal law enforcement?

Ms. CARTER-WALTERS. No, I don't believe that. And I just want to say, it's not surprising that we don't see no Democrats here because that's what's happening in Chicago. They don't care about the American citizens or want to hear what we have to say, so thank you for giving us a voice. This right here, what you see is typical. This is what we deal with in Chicago, every day, with the Democratic Party.

Senator MOODY. Well, you know, I think when we watched, under President Biden, the man-made disaster, the man-made emergency that was President Biden and his administration, there was such damage, such recklessness, such incredible policies that

were forced upon the American people that they didn't want and they didn't want in their communities. You had States declaring emergencies. And what did that do when the sanctuary States declared emergencies because of what Biden did? They got more Federal funding.

So you have my commitment. I am going to work on legislation that would restrict and eliminate Federal funding going to sanctuary cities and sanctuary States that will not work with Federal men and women of law enforcement, these States that almost invite a criminal organization to base itself and take over cities and States, like you are experiencing right now. You have my commitment. I am going to file legislation to make sure we put an end to that.

And let me just end—and I know, Chairman, I have gone way over my time, but let me just end by thanking you, Sheriff, for your service. My husband is a career law enforcement officer. What they have had to endure over the last 4 years is unconscionable. It is unconscionable that any person in Congress would allow that to happen. I apologize to you. I thank you for your service, and may your commitment to the rule of law, and what you expect of this great Nation from its leadership, and what you expect in terms of its continued strength in the future for the next 250 years, may your service continue to inspire other men and women to follow in your footsteps. Thank you so much.

Sheriff BOYD. Thank you, Senator.

Chair CORNYN. Senator Cruz.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. TED CRUZ,
A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS**

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thank Senator Moody for her impassioned remarks, with which I fully associate myself.

One year ago this month, the American people delivered a political earthquake, casting off the disaster of the Biden-Harris Democrat administration. There were many aspects in which their policies were harmful, but none more so than 4 years of open borders, more than 12 million people coming illegally into this country, 3 million got-aways. Got-aways, we know, are statistically much more likely to be criminals, to be murderers, to be rapists, to be child molesters, to be gang members, to be terrorists.

[Posters are displayed.]

It was not accidental. It was deliberate. And every single day of the Biden Presidency, Americans were victimized, Americans were murdered, women were raped, children were brutalized by violent, criminal, illegal aliens that our Federal Government deliberately released into our communities.

Ms. Carter-Walters, you pointed out the city of Chicago has been savaged by these policies. And I have to say, this hearing is a powerful illustration of the Democrats. They are AWOL. Every single chair on the Democrat side of the aisle is vacant, and they are representing beautifully what Democrat policy was for 4 years protecting our communities. My home State of Texas saw a greater invasion than any State in the country.

Now, a year ago in January, President Trump came into office, and the result was stunning. This invasion ended not in a year, not in 6 months, but overnight. Illegal border crossings dropped more than 99 percent, instantaneously. All three of us were at the State of the Union address where President Trump pointed out, he said a year ago, Joe Biden said he could not secure the border without new legislation from Congress. Now, we have seen illegal border crossings drop 99 percent. As Trump said, it turns out we didn't need new legislation, we just needed a new President. We needed a President who would follow the damn law and not release violent criminals into our communities.

Sheriff Boyd, it is good to see you. You are the Sheriff of Goliad County in South Texas. You lead Operation Lone Star. Tell us the difference between right now with an administration that follows the law and the preceding 4 years with an administration that released violent criminals in your county and every community across the country.

Sheriff BOYD. It's night and day, Senator. The quality of life for the people of South Texas has drastically improved. And you're absolutely right, the numbers show it. Turns out you didn't need new laws, all you needed to do was have the right people in charge and free up Border Patrol to do what it is that they love to do, and that is protect America.

And under the leadership of Border Patrol Chief Mike Banks, they have gone out and done exactly that, and it has made a world of difference in our lives. We went from arresting smugglers on a regular basis—in my small rural county, we arrested—from 2021 to 2024, we arrested 98 people for smuggling and over 120 people for engaging in organized criminal activity directly tied to the Mexican cartels. We're no longer catching people for smuggling because it's hard to smuggle what Border Patrol won't let across the river.

Senator CRUZ. For the first time in modern history, for the past 6 months, not a single alien apprehended at the border has been released into the interior. Sheriff, has the zero-release policy dramatically reduced the burden on your deputies and on your county?

Sheriff BOYD. Yes, sir, it has.

Senator CRUZ. ICE conducted over 100,000 arrests, arrests of murderers, of rapists, of child predators, of gang members, and beyond them, the gang captains and cartel operatives who spread violence in our communities like a plague. We are systematically apprehending the predators who roamed free, deliberately, under the Democrats' policy.

Sheriff Boyd, in Goliad County, is your county and is South Texas safer with these arrests and these violent criminals being deported?

Sheriff BOYD. It is. In the last 3 weeks alone, we've been working a joint operation with ICE and Border Patrol, and we've picked up 54 people detained for ICE that were in this country illegally. Eleven of those had a criminal history here in the United States of America. Nine of those had been previously deported. And so it has made a world of difference. We have focused from what's coming in to getting what's already here and getting it out.

Senator CRUZ. You know, and I got to say what is amazing. A year into it, the Democrats could have come together and said, you know what? We heard the American people at the ballot box a year ago. We heard that they didn't like violent criminals being released in our communities. They could have showed up at this hearing and said, okay, it was a mistake to ignore Federal immigration law and release criminals. You know what they did instead? Instead, the Democrat base is protesting right now for open borders. It is saying, 'we want to go back to open borders. We want the invasion'.

Put the next poster up.

[Poster is displayed.]

'We want the invasion to come back'. It is difficult to think of a policy that is more harmful to our communities than releasing violent criminals into our communities. And I, for one, am glad we have an administration that will now enforce the law and keep our communities safe.

Thank you to each of the witnesses. Thank you for the work you are doing. I hope and pray we will never go back to another administration that for partisan political purposes says, 'we are going to release gang members and murderers and rapists into your community, and we are going to look the other way as Americans are murdered and sexually assaulted.' I hope never again that happens. Thank you.

Chair CORNYN. Thank you.

I want to explore a little bit more, Ms. Carter-Walters, not only what is happening in Chicago but what is happening in the sanctuary jurisdictions around the country. And I agree with my colleagues. The fact that our Democratic colleagues aren't here, they don't care enough to actually engage but want to just rely on talking points and misinformation about what is going on in your community and other sanctuary communities, that's a telling development here today, but it is consistent in my experience with their attitude about the violence, the crime, the drugs that occurred in communities all across our country but particularly in sanctuary communities.

So in your experience, does the activities of illegal immigrants in sanctuary cities, does it focus on the gated communities, the areas of the affluent and the well-heeled, or rather, does it focus on vulnerable minority communities, for example?

Ms. CARTER-WALTERS. Yes, it's focused on the Black communities, the vulnerable communities, exactly my community, and just—and they were placed all in our buildings. So the place that was on—that happened with the raid—ICE raid happened on 75th and South Shore Drive, Tren de Aragua had taken over that building. And the fake news failed to mention that, prior to that, a couple of months earlier, that one of those Tren de Aragua gang members had shot—executed another illegal alien, shot him in the head and buried his body in concrete in one of those apartment buildings on 75th and South Shore Drive.

But they didn't show that. All the fake news showed was ICE officers coming into the building and saying and lying, saying that they are arresting American citizens. Well, when you saturate our communities, American citizens' communities with Tren de Aragua and illegal alien gang members, then what do you think that's

going to happen? Then when ICE come in and have to do the raid to get them out of our communities because that's what we wanted and that's what we voted for, then you're going to have American citizens that's going to have to be detained for a minute so they can separate us and make sure we are safe.

And I just want to commend the officers because they did a phenomenal job. They made sure that no one was hurt, no American was killed, or they didn't put our lives in danger. They actually helped us. And what the Democratic Party did, Mayor Brandon Johnson did, was put our life in danger when he saturated our community and apartment buildings with illegal alien gang criminals.

Chair CORNYN. Now, Tren de Aragua is a violent Venezuelan gang, correct?

Ms. CARTER-WALTERS. Yes.

Chair CORNYN. And you are saying in the absence of law enforcement by local and State officials in places like Illinois, Chicago, Illinois, that they pretty much rule the roost in those communities. They can do basically whatever they want to do with impunity.

Ms. CARTER-WALTERS. Yes, because the police officers are told to stand down, just like you saw when they were blocking ICE officers in, and the police chief told them to stand down. They wouldn't even allow officers to help Federal officers, ICE officers. They wouldn't even help them. So you can imagine what it's like for just American citizens, regular citizens, what we have to deal with when we call the police and complain about what's happening in our communities with illegal aliens. We don't get no help. The police come, and they say it's nothing they can do about it because they have standdown orders.

Chair CORNYN. So not only are the immigration laws not being enforced, it is actually worse than that. Local law enforcement in these sanctuary jurisdictions are told don't cooperate, even when the life and property and of American citizens is being jeopardized by those illegal immigrants who are not being detained and not being deported. Is that right?

Ms. CARTER-WALTERS. Yes.

Chair CORNYN. And Ms. Cathell, thank you to the Washington Examiner for allowing you to come testify today. And I know you are an investigative reporter, not a political advocate, so but we need accurate information so Congress can decide what the proper policies may be. And I agree with Senator Moody, we need to do even more to make sure that the Federal taxpayer, or the State taxpayer, is not funding organizations which encourage or facilitate attacks on law enforcement, including ICE and CBP officers.

But you mentioned in your remarks the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles. And what is the acronym for that?

Ms. CATHELL. CHIRLA.

Chair CORNYN. Okay. And it sounds like a pretty benign organization, but how are they funded again? Is this a combination of sources, both tax dollars to these so-called NGO's, non-government organizations that are providing services to people who are in the country illegally, or is it more than that?

Ms. CATHELL. In addition to tax dollars, CHIRLA also receives funding through ActBlue as a standing campaign on ActBlue, which is the Democratic Party's primary fundraising platform.

Chair CORNYN. Now, that is news to me. ActBlue is an internet-based fundraising program which allows individuals to contribute money to Democratic candidates for office. But are you saying that the Coalition for Humane Immigration Rights of Los Angeles also raises money on this political fundraising website?

Ms. CATHELL. Yes, many NGO's have active campaigns on ActBlue.

Chair CORNYN. Well, that's news to me, but we will certainly look into it.

I think, Sheriff Boyd, let me go back. You know, even though, as Senator Cruz pointed out, the border is far more secure than it has been in years, there is still a lot of people in the country that don't belong here because they have simply thumbed their nose at our laws and committed various offenses against American citizens and even other illegal immigrants who have been in the country. But I know that on October the 1st, your office and the Splendora Police Department helped ICE locate and arrest an illegal alien female from Mexico who was wanted for intentional homicide in her home country. Could you talk a little bit about that particular case? I think it is a public matter of public record, so maybe you can just fill in some of the details.

Sheriff BOYD. Yes, sir. We sent some of our folks up to assist ICE in the Houston office, to go out into the field and help them out with conducting investigations and identifying and tracking down people that are in the country illegally. One of the individuals that they wanted to track down was a female from Mexico who was wanted for homicide. If I'm not mistaken, she murdered her boyfriend in the front yard of their house. And she had escaped to the United States of America to avoid prosecution. She was here for some time, and in 2024, she was actually apprehended, but the Biden administration ordered her to be released back into the United States instead of deporting her for the Interpol warrant that existed for her murder.

Chair CORNYN. Now, why would they do that?

Sheriff BOYD. Your guess is as good as mine, but I assume cause those were the people they really wanted to, you know, bring into this country. So chaos brings opportunity for more control, so why not have people here that cause chaos? But we were able to locate her and get her identified at a house in the Colony Ridge area, which, of course, Colony Ridge is a community in Texas that is known for a high concentration of people who are gathered here illegally in the country. We were able to get her and take her into custody and so turned her over to the Federal agencies. So under this administration, she will no longer be roaming the streets of Texas as a wanted murderer.

Chair CORNYN. I would like for you to expand a little bit on some of your earlier testimony about the connection between the cartels, which are the criminal organizations that operate, in this case, in Mexico, some of them in Central and South America as well. I once heard somebody explain what their business model is, and they

were called commodity agnostic. Could you explain what that means to you?

Sheriff BOYD. Yes, sir. Basically, if it will make them money, they are willing to do it. They really don't care. They have no conscience. There is no right or wrong in the cartels' world. There is only making money and having power within Mexico, and so that is what they are after. It doesn't matter if it is illicit tobacco products, which is a big deal for the cartels, not only in the United States but in Canada, but if it's stolen vehicles, which in the State of Texas under the Biden administration, we went from about 60,000 stolen vehicles a year to over 100,000 vehicles stolen a year, in an effort to support the smuggling operations of the cartels. It doesn't matter if it's drugs, if it's people, whatever is going to make them money is what they are going to do.

Illegal gambling, many of the eight-liners that we have, they—the gambling rooms that we have across the United States have connectivity to the cartels as part of their money laundering organizations.

Chair CORNYN. And of course, that includes—and you have covered this, but just to emphasize, it also includes smuggling things like fentanyl, which has killed hundreds of thousands of Americans over the years that primarily comes from Mexico and making money with the drugs but also human trafficking. Every individual that they smuggle across the border, they get paid, right?

Sheriff BOYD. That is absolutely correct. They get paid an upfront fee, but they also get paid additional fees while they're here in the United States. And as I've articulated before, you know, we found that it takes about 8 to 13 years for people to pay off that debt once they're here.

One of the things that Senator Moody touched on was about our enemies laughing at us, but that goes right along with, you know, the cartels have been doing the same thing for quite some time. And you bring up fentanyl. You'll notice that our fentanyl deaths have drastically reduced under the Trump administration. The fentanyl coming in this country has drastically reduced, not just because of the fact that Border Patrol has really tightened up the border across the United States and Mexico, but also the fact that the cartels—our intelligence tells us the cartels have curtailed their fentanyl production because they are afraid that the administration may come into Mexico and come after them as a result of killing so many Americans.

And so all the cartel is doing right now is they're biding their time. And if they can get to a point to where Trump is going to be out of office and we're going to have a weak administration, they will immediately fire back up the fentanyl production, and we will see the same tragedy happening over again if we don't fix this problem right now. Now is our opportunity to defund and dismantle the cartels, and if we don't take advantage of it, it's our own fault.

Chair CORNYN. So I think sometimes people think that illegal immigration and smuggling of drugs stops at the border, but you mentioned the logistical support that other criminal organizations and gangs, for example, provide. What happens once the drugs are

smuggled in the United States through this logistical support that you mentioned?

Sheriff BOYD. You have to look at——

Chair CORNYN. And is this isolated in any geographic area, or is it nationwide?

Sheriff BOYD [continuing]. It's pervasive. It's all the way across our Nation. It's in—you got to look at the New Generation Jalisco Cartel is in, I believe, 56 countries at this point in time. But when it comes to the distribution of product, they are pervasive all across the United States and Mexico. They have submitted their organization, solidified their business model. Look at them like you would look at a large department store across the United States. They have employees, they have contract employees, they have distribution networks all throughout the United States. It's like a spider web, and that's the problem. We have to deny them their logistical capacity to conduct their business here in the U.S. if we're going to get rid of the cartels.

Chair CORNYN. Well, for example, Ms. Carter-Walters, I know in Chicago, I either read in the paper or I see on TV or social media the number of violent deaths and murders that occur in Chicago on a regular basis over the weekend. But Sheriff Boyd, would you say that a significant number, some or most or all, perhaps maybe not all of the criminal activity, including violent deaths in places like Chicago, are tied to illegal drug trafficking?

Sheriff BOYD. Absolutely. And if you look across the board in law enforcement, what we know in law enforcement is this, that at least 95 percent of all of the Class 1 crimes in the United States of America that are committed—that's your burglary, robbery, sexual assault, homicide—those things are tied directly to the Mexican cartels and the products they push into this country because people commit crimes based off of greed, based off of their addiction, and based off of territorial disputes. Those things across the United States, doesn't matter where you're at, tie right back to Mexico.

Chair CORNYN. So I think sometimes, people want to differentiate or distinguish between local criminal conduct, particularly by gangs and the like, but what you are saying is there is a direct connection, or even a pipeline, for the criminal conduct of the cartels in places like Mexico and what happens in places like Chicago. And I suppose that these organizations, they fight for market share and fight even among themselves. And is that, in part, responsible for the gun deaths that you see in places like Chicago on a regular basis?

Sheriff BOYD. It is based off of those markets that are going to have a higher value. You're going to have organized crime come in and try to vie for the rights of those territories. And sometimes the only way to get those rights pulled away from one organization is to take them out, and you'll see a lot of that violence.

But like I said, that crime is tied directly back to Mexico. If somebody breaks into your house tonight, they're probably trying to feed an addiction, an addiction, probably, to drugs that they got from a dealer who works for an organization that is a subcontractor for a contractor that works directly for the Mexican cartels. So most of our major crime leads right back to Mexico.

Chair CORNYN. So you really can't separate domestic crime and law enforcement from what is happening at the border and by virtue of these criminal organizations that we call cartels.

Sheriff BOYD. They are one and the same.

Chair CORNYN. Well, let me thank all of you for your willingness and courage to testify. You can tell that this topic is not universally popular because sometimes the truth hurts. People don't want to hear it. And rather than engage in reasoned debate and discussion and trying to drill down to what are the facts and what is disinformation, they just decide to ignore it altogether and stick their head in the sand. And unfortunately, you have seen some of that here today. But I very much appreciate all of you being willing to come and having the courage to tell us what we need to hear in order to help make our communities safe.

And I know sometimes, President Trump gets criticized for dispatching the National Guard or other Federal law enforcement officials to some of these communities to quell the violence and to back up and assist local law enforcement, but it strikes me that the reaction by the residents of those communities is much like that expressed by Mayor Bowser here in Washington, DC, when she welcomed the National Guard coming in and backing up local law enforcement, which has had a dramatic impact and reduction on crime including carjackings, assaults, and robbery and murder in the District of Columbia.

And why it is that political leaders, the governors and mayors in some of these places like Illinois, ignore that and somehow hide behind these well-funded organizations which help sponsor and encourage and facilitate the demonstrations like we have seen against ICE doing the job of enforcing the law that Congress has passed.

If people have a disagreement with the law, then there is a forum for them to come and talk about that and to petition their elected representatives to change the law. But these are laws that have been passed, on a bipartisan basis, by Congress. And these heroic law enforcement officials are doing that in communities all across the country, and they don't deserve to be vilified or attacked or assaulted or even criticized, I believe, for doing the job we have actually asked them to do.

So thank you all for being here. I appreciate your time and your testimony. We are going to leave the record open for a short while here in case there are any other questions that Members of the Committee may have. And they may come your way, so keep an eye out for those if that happens.

I know frequently we have conflicting Committee assignments and other activities, so even some Senators who want to be here couldn't be here, so you may well see those follow-up questions for the record.

So thank you very much. This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:04 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

[Additional material submitted for the record follows.]

Wednesday, November 19, 2025

U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Border Security and Immigration
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

To the Honorable Chair and Members of the Senate Committee on Border Security and Immigration,

My name is Roy Boyd and I am the Sheriff of Goliad County, Texas. Goliad is a rural south Texas county of around seven thousand souls, situated about halfway between Houston and Laredo, along U.S. Highway 59.

I have been a Peace Officer for more than thirty-one years, and retired from the Victoria Police Department and Victoria County Sheriff's Office prior to becoming the Sheriff of Goliad County.

I am here to discuss the current situation with regards to enforcement of the law, and more specifically, the implementation of the 287(g) Task Force Model, and the need to expand the program and change our model of conducting law enforcement operations across the United States.

Here is why these efforts are important to the future of our nation and the safety of our citizens:

While illegal immigration has been a historical issue along the U.S. / Mexico border, this changed more than a decade ago when the cartels seized control of the border regions of Mexico and changed their business model to include the smuggling of people. When this happened, the cartels began controlling who came across the border, and began torturing or killing anyone who attempted to violate their control by crossing into the U.S. without paying for the privilege of doing so.

This control gave rise to a new way for the cartels to conduct their business throughout the United States and beyond. In Mexico, the federal government leases territories to criminal organizations, in what they refer to as the Plaza System. The Mexican government allows cartels to conduct limited smuggling and trafficking activities in exchange for a monthly fee, with any activity above and beyond the agreement requiring additional payments to officials as a tax on excess illicit commerce.

The cartels have replicated the Mexican government's model of geographic control throughout the United States. I witnessed this firsthand when I was the Chief Deputy in Victoria County, which is next door to Goliad. The Gulf Cartel took control of the cocaine trade in Victoria and the surrounding counties. They then leased the sole distribution rights for the dealing of pure cocaine to the Houston chapter of the Mexican Mafia. The Gulf Cartel then sent their people out on the streets to tell the other dealers that unless they were authorized distributors of pure

cocaine, they would have to dilute their cocaine with at least fifty percent inert product. After operations were underway, the cartel sent people out on the street to purchase cocaine from non-authorized dealers for the purpose of testing the product for purity. If the cocaine was without inert product, the dealer was given a warning for violating the Gulf Cartel's control of the product within the plaza. During this time, we began receiving word that local cocaine dealers were disappearing. Many families were not reporting their missing loved ones to authorities out of fear of retribution from the cartel and the Mexican Mafia. In total, our contacts on the streets advised that at least ten drug dealers had refused to dilute their product and were "disappeared", never to be seen again. Only one family went public and sought justice for their son. We never found him or discovered what became of him or his remains.

The other aspect of the new business model was that cartels began using illegal aliens smuggled into the U.S. as part of their logistical workforce. When people are smuggled into the United States, they must pay a fee to the cartels in order to gain safe passage. In our area, most illegal aliens are smuggled to Houston for transport across the eastern half of the U.S. Once in Houston, the smuggled people are given the final amount they will owe the cartels and their contractors for being here. From there, the illegal aliens end up in various forms of indentured servitude across the nation. However, as part of their obligation to the cartels, these people have to be willing to provide labor and other services to pay off their final debt.

We have interviewed many illegal aliens who have been smuggled into Texas during our investigations. What we found is that some will pay off the debt with money over a period of 8-13 years. Some will pay off the debt by smuggling other illegal aliens or drugs into the U.S. Some will move illegal aliens from one interior location to another. Others will be placed into force prostitution, or will be called upon to provide material support in the unloading or moving drugs in the area in which they reside. If you think these indentured people can just decide not to cooperate once they are here, that is not the case. The cartels have a vast intelligence network and keep records on the people they smuggle, to include family member information. I have had illegal aliens involved in criminal activity tell me that they have no choice but to participate to prevent unspeakable acts from happening to family members back in their home countries.

What this means is that the millions of illegal aliens now residing in the United States are part of the logistical support operations for illicit cartel activities throughout our country.

If our goal is to dismantle cartel operations in the United States, we will never be able to do so unless we deny them the logistical capacity to conduct business in a manner that generates an acceptable stream of revenue to be moved from the United States to their home countries.

In order to take the initiative in what can only be deemed asymmetrical warfare against the cartels and their business partners, law enforcement must change their mindset and methodology. We must look at what we have been doing in the past and ask if the billions of dollars we have spent are accomplishing the primary goals of the missions of the programs implemented. In most cases, I will speculate that with an honest assessment, we will find that

most of the federal dollars being pumped into law enforcement programs is remaining in urban areas where expense vs. returns are not in balance.

According to ICE.gov, as of November 14, 2025, there were 1,167 local and state law enforcement agencies in 40 states that had signed a Memorandum of Agreement for at least one of the 287(g) programs. Only 605 of those agreements are for participation in the Task Force Model, which is the model that allows local and state law enforcement to conduct field immigration enforcement under the supervision of ICE. With more than 18,000 local law enforcement agencies in the U.S., 605 agencies assisting ICE in field enforcement operations is insufficient to hinder the profitability of the cartels across the United States.

If we are to succeed in the monumental effort of defeating the cartels, we must restructure our law enforcement efforts. We must disregard those who stand in the way of change, ignore the anti-American media outlets working against the interests of Americans, and create a new chain of command and organizational structure that allows for synergy throughout the full spectrum of law enforcement and streamlines the functionality in a manner that demands results and accountability while ensuring funds are being utilized in accordance with their intended purpose. This purpose must be to defund and prosecute organized criminal activity throughout America, which will not happen if we fail to enforce our immigration laws and deport those who have violated our sovereignty and placed themselves at the disposal of the organizations who victimize our citizens.

The presence of Mexican cartels in the United States has changed how domestic organized crime functions. It has created a negative impact that is becoming more pervasive day by day. Street gangs, motorcycle gangs, and other domestic criminal organizations have all been relegated to the status of mere contractors and subcontractors under the control of cartels. As such, they are beholden to act as they are commanded to do by their masters. Furthermore, hostile foreign governments and organizations have joined to work alongside the cartels in an effort to undermine the safety and security of the United States from within. As a law enforcement professional who has witnessed the evolution of the influence of foreign organized crime in the U.S., I fear that if we fail to act swiftly, and with purpose, we shall find ourselves on a path that mirrors the never ending violence and instability found in Mexico.

"We must have the courage to see things as they are, to look the situation squarely in the face, and be ready for fresh ordeals." – Pyotr Wrangel, General of the White Russian Army, 1919

Thank you for your time and consideration. I yield for any questions you may have.

Humbly Submitted,



Roy Boyd
Sheriff – Goliad County, TX

Testimony of Danielle Carter-Walters

Before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Immigration

Washington, D.C.

November 19, 2025

Good Afternoon Chairman Cornyn and members of the Subcommittee.

My name is Danielle Carter-Walters, Vice President of Chicago Flips Red. Thank you to President Donald J. Trump for giving regular citizens like us the courage to speak up, and thank you to this Subcommittee for letting me share what is really happening in our city.

Chicago Flips Red supports the work the President is doing, and we fight for the people of Chicago every day. We have also been targeted for doing what's right. Our Founder, Zoe Leigh, and our advisor, Jessica Jackson, were attacked after speaking out about stolen property in poor neighborhoods. And I recently faced pushback in Cook County court for trying to protect my community.

Even with all this, we stand with the men and women of ICE — officers who risk their lives daily. These officers get no help from Governor J.B. Pritzker or Mayor Brandon Johnson.

ICE has found dangerous criminals in Chicago — violent felons, child traffickers, drug smugglers, and cartel members — all hiding under "sanctuary" protections. ICE has stopped fentanyl shipments, broken up trafficking groups, and removed criminals who were hurting our neighborhoods. This work is especially needed in Black communities that are still recovering from the crack and AIDS crisis of the 1980s, and from the damage caused by the 1994 Crime Bill.

But instead of helping ICE, our state and city leaders block them. They refuse to share information, ignore detainees, and even threaten to arrest federal officers for doing their jobs.

Some judges have also joined in. They have made unfair rulings meant to scare ICE agents. One of the worst examples was when a judge ordered ICE Agent Gregory Bovino to report to court every day as if he were the criminal. That was not justice — it was political games backed by a one-sided media.

While this is happening, Mayor Johnson and Governor Pritzker are spending hundreds of millions of dollars on illegal migrants, while regular Chicagoans struggle. Schools are crowded, crime keeps rising, and families can't afford food or rent. Yet our leaders still put illegal migrants first.

Over 56,000 illegal immigrants are living in Chicago shelters, while our veterans and homeless sleep outside. Cartel gangs like MS-13 and Tren de Aragua now have a presence in our city. Fentanyl, guns, and human trafficking are flowing through neighborhoods that used to be filled with working families.

ICE tries to stop this, but the judges, the Illinois Attorney General, the Chicago Teachers Union, certain clergy members, the Mayor, and the Governor block them every step of the way.

This is not compassion.

This is failure.

This is betrayal of the people they were elected to protect.

Chicago is broke — a billion-dollar deficit, overpriced contracts, and a shrinking middle class. Mayor Johnson blames the government in Washington, but the truth is simple: sanctuary policies have brought chaos and corruption to our city.

So we, the people of Chicago, demand:

- A federal review of how Illinois blocks ICE from doing their job.
- A criminal investigation into judges who target ICE officers unfairly.
- A full check of all money spent by the state and the city on migrant programs.
- Police, Cook County, and federal agencies working together again.
- An end to all sanctuary policies that put our safety at risk.

Sanctuary should mean safety.

In Chicago, it now means giving up our rights and our security.

To every leader still defending these harmful policies: your time of pretending to serve the people is over. We will speak up. We will stand up. And we will not let corruption decide the future of our city.

Thank you

ICE Under Fire: The Radical Left's Crusade Against Immigration Enforcement
 U.S. Subcommittee on Border Security and Immigration | November 19, 2025
 Testimony of Mia Cathell, investigative journalist at *The Washington Examiner*

My name is Mia Cathell. I am an investigative journalist at *The Washington Examiner*. I have been closely covering civil unrest in the U.S. since the 2020 racial justice riots. Members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to testify about this important issue.

When the uprisings against ICE erupted on the West Coast in June, we saw uniform signage, tactical gear, and boots-on-the-ground activists deployed to Los Angeles, the epicenter of the unrest, almost instantaneously. These certainly were not spontaneous riots. They were well-coordinated and, in fact, well-funded.

What we uncovered was an orchestrated operation, and those at the forefront of the anti-ICE resistance have received ample funding.

Chief among them is the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles, or CHIRLA for short. CHIRLA, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, is part of a sprawling anti-ICE activist network in the Los Angeles area serving as rapid response to deportation sightings.

CHIRLA instructs its followers via Bluesky to report ICE encounters to the Los Angeles Rapid Response Network, abbreviated LARRN. CHIRLA co-launched LARRN in late January with the expressed intent to counter the incoming Trump administration's immigration policies.

Here's how it works: In response to reports of immigration enforcement called in over its hotline, LARRN sends out "cells" comprised of immigration lawyers, legal observers, and activist organizers in order to mobilize counter-efforts against ICE.

This rapid response model is replicated elsewhere across the country, using crowd-sourced surveillance software, some quite sophisticated, or simply social media to track ICE activity in the region and alert activists, as well as illegal immigrants, to nearby ICE agents.

CHIRLA has acquired its funding from federal and state sources. According to CHIRLA's tax filing from fiscal 2023, the group reported receiving about \$34 million in government grants.

In its capacity as a legal services provider, CHIRLA helps illegal immigrants, including those convicted of crimes, avoid deportation. Grant records show that Homeland Security, the very agency CHIRLA's protesting, has awarded the anti-deportation group several six-figure grants since 2014, as part of an immigration aid program that financially supports organizations "actively working to remove barriers to naturalization."

CHIRLA has also received generous taxpayer funding from the state of California. In 2023, the state's Department of Social Services awarded CHIRLA about \$3 million for an initiative providing free legal services to immigrants, such as application assistance in "cases seeking immigration remedies," i.e. deportation relief. In 2022, CHIRLA received \$1.37 million from California's social services department, specifically to provide pro bono defense services in removal proceedings.

CHIRLA's deportation defense team, nicknamed "Warriors for Justice," was bankrolled by the Los Angeles Justice Fund, a public-private partnership between liberal grantmaking foundations, the city of Los Angeles, and Los Angeles County. These grantees formed "a removal defense pipeline" in the county.

Another far-left agitator group fomenting anti-ICE unrest is the foreign-funded Party for Socialism and Liberation, whose chapters mass mobilize their forces in major U.S. cities, many of them so-called "sanctuaries," or safe havens welcoming illegal immigration.

At the time of the Los Angeles riots, PSL activated its followers from all corners of the country to take to the streets, rise up in solidarity, stage parallel protests, and force "ICE Out of LA," a rallying cry that has since been repurposed for cities targeted by federal immigration authorities.

PSL's San Antonio arm explained to local press that the more cities that oppose ICE operations through these pressure campaigns, the more difficult a federal crackdown becomes.

PSL chapters, such as the ones operating in D.C. and Milwaukee, continue to convene massive "ICE Out" rallies to "Stop the Raids." Most recently, PSL led an "emergency" march in Charlotte, where activists were seen waving Mexican flags, to drive out Border Patrol and "defeat the deportation machine." PSL Charlotte began circulating call-to-action material days before Border Patrol made landfall in North Carolina. A coalition of local and national organizations sponsored the protest, including 50501, one of the organizers behind the nationwide "No Kings" movement.

Left unchecked, these powerful actors work in tandem to advance agendas harmful to the safety and security of the nation. Their shared objective is to obstruct the enforcement of U.S. immigration law—legislation that Congress enacted. Simply put, the men and women of ICE are law enforcement officers tasked with carrying out their congressionally mandated duties. They are increasingly under the threat of targeted attacks and hostile demonstrations that often devolve into violent clashes. At this rate, I fear more political violence is to come unless federal officials take further steps to protect our federal officers. Thank you.

A P P E N D I X

The following submissions are available at:

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-119shrg62971/pdf/CHRG-119shrg62971-add1.pdf>

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