

its core, Senator VITTER's bill undermines the ability of local law enforcement officials to police their own communities and ensure public safety. It is then no surprise that the Fraternal Order of Police and Major Cities Chiefs Police Association do not support the Vitter sanctuary cities legislation, and that is an understatement. If implemented, this bill would punish local jurisdictions by withholding Federal community grants that police departments use to enhance public safety and build community trust. Imagine that, holding hostage public safety funding for police as a result of this misguided, farfetched legislation that everyone knows will not pass.

Senator VITTER's legislation would also withhold community development block grants that ensure affordable housing and provides services to the most vulnerable in our communities. The Donald Trump Act would establish new mandatory minimum sentences for those who enter the country illegally. Initial estimates show that new mandatory minimums in this bill would result in the need for nearly 20,000 new prison beds—20,000—requiring the construction of 12 or more huge new Federal prisons, costing billions and billions in taxpayer dollars.

It seems Republicans don't care about the cost to public safety. They don't care about the cost of building new prisons. A few billion here, a few billion there of taxpayer dollars, that is OK. After all, Republicans are not proposing this bill to solve any problem within our immigration system; this Donald Trump Act was designed to demonize immigrants and spread the myth that they are criminals and threats to the public. It promotes discrimination and bias.

Decades—decades—of research demonstrate that immigrants are less likely to commit serious crimes or be jailed than native-born individuals, and high rates of immigration are associated with lower rates of violent crime, not higher. So the notion that The Donald Trump Act is necessary to protect Americans from violent criminals is preposterous.

Violent gun murders are a tragedy our Nation faces far too often. Every year—and it is getting worse, not better—32,000 people are killed by guns in this country. That is how many were killed last year. That is how many are going to be killed this year, but the number is going up. More Americans have been killed by guns since 1968 than in all the wars of our Nation's history—all the wars in our Nation's history. Republicans should direct their energy toward saving the lives of thousands through safer, smarter gun safety legislation instead of capitalizing on hateful political rhetoric to advance their radical agenda, even though almost 90 percent of the American public think there should be a background check for someone who is a criminal or has mental problems, even though over 50 percent of members of the National

Rifle Association believe there should be background checks—but not congressional Republicans. No; they know better than 90 percent of the American people.

Democrats believe local communities and local law enforcement are better judges of what will keep their communities safe than Donald Trump or Bill O'Reilly. The safety of our neighborhoods and local communities should not be a pawn for Republicans' latest gambit to hide their failure to act on comprehensive immigration reform. Local law enforcement officials, domestic violence groups, immigrants' rights groups, mayors, faith leaders, and labor groups all oppose The Donald Trump Act. This bill does nothing to keep Americans safe, and it certainly does nothing to address our broken immigration system.

America is and always has been a nation of immigrants, and we are all the better for having hard-working immigrants as contributing members of our communities. This Nation deserves a commonsense immigration process that works, one that is tough on lawbreakers, fair to taxpayers, and practical to implement, but instead of joining Democrats in passing comprehensive immigration reform that unites families, strengthens communities, and boosts our economy, Republicans remain committed to their only approach to immigration policy: mass deportation. We all know this extreme rightwing approach would hurt our country and simply cannot work. The Donald Trump Act would shatter the trust between law enforcement and communities that keep our Nation safe. Republicans should abandon this shameless attempt to appease the base elements of their party. They should work with Democrats to pass comprehensive immigration reform, which is years overdue.

Sadly, though, until Republicans get serious about immigration reform, the Republican leader shouldn't waste the Senate's time on legislation that he knows will not pass. This legislation is not going to pass. He knows it. We all know it. Instead, he is just treading water, waiting for time to go by. The Republican leader should focus the Senate's time and all of our efforts on the pressing matters we face—such as avoiding a catastrophic default and keeping our government open so we can do the people's business.

Madam President, would the Chair announce the business before the Senate.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

STOP SANCTUARY POLICIES AND PROTECT AMERICANS ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the

Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 2146, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 252, S. 2146, a bill to hold sanctuary jurisdictions accountable for defying Federal law, to increase penalties for individuals who illegally reenter the United States after being removed, and to provide liability protection for State and local law enforcement who cooperate with Federal law enforcement and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRAGEDY OF THE LOST CARGO SHIP “EL FARO”

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, on September 29, an almost 800-foot cargo container vessel, the *El Faro*, a cargo ship carrying 33 men and women from Florida, left port in Jacksonville, FL, bound for Puerto Rico. There is a regular trade route between San Juan and Jacksonville, and a lot of the goods the Puerto Rican Commonwealth receives are shipped by cargo container from the Port of Jacksonville.

Three hours before it left port, the tropical storm that had been brewing had changed its status from a tropical storm to a hurricane, and over the course of the next 2 days, with communications from the ship, that hurricane started to intensify, starting out as a category 1, category 2, and later a category 3.

On the morning of the third day, October 1, at 7 a.m., there was a communication from the captain of the ship, first left on a voice mail and then he immediately called back the person in the communications department of the shipping company who talked to the captain. The captain, in a very calm voice on both the telephone message voice mail and his communication with the person, said they had taken a position where the ship was leaning 15 degrees. They were in rough seas, and they had lost power. Apparently in that communication, his voice was very calm and had some degree of confidence that he was going to be able to get the ship back underway, under power.

It is not good to have a ship that is tilting 15 degrees in the middle of a storm, much less an oncoming hurricane, and with no power because that does not allow you to keep it directly into the waves or going away from the waves. Instead, the ship is going to turn broadside, with the full force of the waves hitting the side of the ship, and the ship was already listing 15 degrees to one side.

Well, that was the last communication. The hurricane had turned in a

southwesterly direction, and eventually, according to the forecast, it finally made that turn to the right to start taking it north, and as a result it did not hit the continental east coast of the United States. It was out to the east of the Bahama Islands.

The hurricane was still in the vicinity, so it was another 2 days before the hurricane subsided enough that the U.S. Coast Guard could get in there, supplemented by the U.S. Navy, to start looking for survivors.

Let me say something about the Coast Guard. We have the Coast Guard in our jurisdiction in the Commerce Committee. It is an extremely professional military operation. I spent time this past summer with the Coast Guard up in Alaska. They are so good at what they do that the U.S. Navy can take its resources and use them elsewhere on the Alaska coast, which includes the Bering Sea and the Bering Strait, which we share with Russia, and the Coast Guard does an extraordinary job. Of course, throughout the Caribbean and all around my State of Florida, the Coast Guard stands tall. They rescue folks.

It took them some time before they could get their C-130s flying in—and some of those may well have been Air Force. Until the Coast Guard could get their C-130s and H-60 helicopters with the swimmers who propel down from the helicopter to rescue survivors—it took them that long, and they started seeing debris.

I have seen a picture of the lifeboat. It is an old lifeboat, an open lifeboat. If you saw the movie “Captain Phillips,” Captain Phillips and the people who had taken over the ship went in that covered orange lifeboat. They propelled it off the back of the ship, and it dove into the water. These were just plain lifeboats. They found a life preserver floating. Indeed, they found a life preserver suit, which is a body suit that inflates when in the water. When the helicopter finally got there and checked it, they found no survivor in it. They saw remains. They were still actively searching for any survivors. In this particular case, when the swimmer went into the water, there were only remains left in the body suit, partially decomposed and so forth. This Senator cannot say enough about the Coast Guard.

Those who were on that ship were from the State of Florida. Maritime work is a part of our culture, and we know the extreme importance of these jobs and the very real risk mariners face in their tough jobs. They are taken away from home for weeks and months to do hard work. Without our maritime efforts, we could not survive. That is where the biggest part of our shipping from other places is, on the sea, and our mariners provide this critical service. They move products and cargo that drive our economy. Look at the economic engines of the seaports.

This has been a tremendous loss for us—not the loss of the cargo, which

was certainly an economic loss, but the loss of 33 lives. It is especially a loss for the families and friends who knew and loved the crew of the *El Faro*. We share their grief.

The loss of this ship raised many questions, so over the recess I went to Jacksonville. I went to the port. I talked to the National Transportation Safety Board. I talked to the Coast Guard. They have opened an investigation. I am giving these remarks to the Senate at this time because tomorrow we expect a preliminary report from the National Transportation Safety Board.

In dock is the sister ship, the *El Yunque*. One ship would be in one port and the other ship in the other port, and they would cross. In fact, those two ships crossed in the Caribbean within sight of each other before the *El Faro*, heading southeast, got into trouble. So I wanted to go there because it is our Commerce Committee that has the job of seeing that these agencies are doing as thorough a job as possible.

We expectantly await that report. I know we want all of the answers right now. It is important that a thorough examination is conducted to find out exactly what happened. For the families and friends of those lost on the *El Faro*, and for the safety of all mariners, we are going to make sure that we get the answers.

What would I speculate? Well, I certainly do not have the expertise in the sea. But if you get a call and the captain's voice is calm, and he says that we are listing 15 degrees, then there has been some breach of the ship. Likely, there is water inside of the ship. If in that same phone call that you get he is saying that we have lost power, then we know that there is the making of a disaster. Why didn't the captain and the crew know that the hurricane had become a hurricane that was announced by the National Weather Service and the National Hurricane Center 3 hours before they left the Port of Jacksonville? What caused the captain to think he could sail, and sail in the direction of an oncoming hurricane, and that he would not get into its effects? Why did the engines cut off so that he lost power? All of these things we don't know, but we expectantly look forward to getting some answers maybe in this preliminary report tomorrow.

So, in honor of those lost on board the *El Faro*, I would simply conclude my remarks by asking for a moment of silence.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I can still remember the day in June a few years ago, June 27, 2013—2½ years ago. The Senate gathered and voted on comprehensive immigration reform. The vote was 68 to 22. The bill meant a lot to many of us. Eight of us—four Democrats and four Republicans—had literally worked for months trying to craft a bill to address the massive immigration system in America, a system that is terribly broken.

I think it surprised a lot of people, but we did it. Democrats and Republicans agreeing on something—there is a headliner. Who sat across the table? Not an easy jury to decide any issue when it came to Senate business. On our side of the table were CHUCK SCHUMER of New York, chair of the Senate immigration subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee at that point; myself; BOB MENENDEZ, Hispanic American Senator from the State of New Jersey; and MICHAEL BENNET of Colorado—four of us.

On the opposite side of the table, JOHN McCAIN led the effort on the Republican side, along with LINDSEY GRAHAM of South Carolina, who had a background in law enforcement in the military and is currently running for President. Next to him, MARCO RUBIO from the State of Florida, Cuban American, came to this undertaking. He, too, is running for President of the United States; and JEFF FLAKE of Arizona, a conservative Republican.

We worked for months. We went through every provision and came to a bipartisan agreement to move the bill forward. We passed it 68 to 22. I think it would have been a dramatic improvement over the current laws or lack of laws in America.

The House of Representatives refused to call it up, wouldn't even bring the matter before its committees, and never had a debate on any immigration issue in the 2½ years since. They missed an opportunity, an opportunity to do something important and a rare opportunity where Democrats and Republicans happened to agree on a solution. That is hard to come by in this place.

This bill would have strengthened border security, cracked down on illegal immigration, protected American workers, and established a tough but fair path for 11 million undocumented immigrants in this country who are currently living here, and it gave them a path to legal status. They would pay their taxes, pay their fines, go through a criminal background check, and then they would be eligible—not before then.

Democrats were in the majority of the Senate at that moment. We reached across the aisle to work with Republicans, so the bill was truly bipartisan. Well, it is a shame that the Republican-controlled House of Representatives would not even consider the bill. We asked them: Just call the bill. If it is going to be defeated, call it.

No, we are not going to consider any immigration reform—and they have not.

We are in a new Senate now, a new Senate under control of the other party, and what has been the approach to immigration? Unfortunately, little time has been spent trying to find common ground. First, some Senate Republicans threatened to shut down the Department of Homeland Security. This is the Department that not only has us take our shoes off at the airport, they are literally trying to protect us from another act of terrorism in the United States. For months, the Senate Republicans refused to pass an appropriations bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security until the Democrats would accept anti-immigrant amendments. After we repeatedly rejected this approach, they finally relented and passed a clean appropriations bill for this important Department for America's security.

Now here we go again. Some Senate Republicans have brought partisan legislation to the floor—and understand this—to defund, remove the funding from law enforcement efforts in this country. I don't know what is happening in many places, but I do know what is happening in the Midwest. We have seen violent crime, gun-related crime, go up dramatically, a 20-percent increase in gun-related deaths this year in Chicago over the previous year. In the city of Milwaukee, there is a 100-percent increase in gun-related crime this year.

So why would we even consider a bill that is before us on the floor of the Senate, offered by the Senator from Louisiana, to reduce funding for law enforcement and police departments? Senator VITTER has offered a bill that would block important police, disaster relief, and other funding from communities that do not share immigration information with the Federal Government or don't hold a detainee at the behest of Federal immigration authorities. My Republican colleagues know this bill has no chance to become law. They have made no effort to engage the Democrats in a bipartisan conversation. It may pass the Senate—but I doubt it—and if it does, the President would veto it. This is done for reasons other than passing a bill and creating a new law.

Some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle claim they were responding to the tragic—and, yes, it was tragic—death of Kate Steinle, a young woman who was allegedly shot and killed by Francisco Sanchez, an undocumented immigrant with a long criminal history. Mr. Sanchez had several drug convictions. He illegally re-entered the United States several times after he was deported. Earlier this year, he finished his third prison sentence for illegal reentry.

The Bureau of Prisons should have turned Mr. Sanchez over to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Department to be deported, but instead

they sent him to San Francisco to face a 20-year-old marijuana charge. Not surprisingly, local authorities decided not to prosecute this old charge, so sadly, unfortunately, tragically he was released. This never ever should have happened. Federal and local authorities must do a better job of communicating and coordinating so undocumented immigrants with serious criminal records are detained and deported, period.

The bill before us doesn't solve the problem which I have just described. It wouldn't have prevented the tragic death of this young woman. In fact, this legislation would actually make us less safe by threatening communities with the loss of millions of dollars in critical Federal funding for local law enforcement, as well as discouraging immigrants from cooperating with local police.

The Chicago Tribune—not known as any liberal publication—published an editorial opposing the bill that is coming before us. They said: "Threatening to take money away from local police is a sound bite, not a solution."

Republican Congressman BOB DOLD, from my home State of Illinois, was one of five Republicans who voted against the House version of the bill. He said: "Cutting funding for local law enforcement would not have prevented this horrible crime."

What would the consequences be of passing the Vitter bill that is pending before the Senate? At risk are tens of millions of dollars in funding from several programs. The State Criminal Alien Assistance Program, also known as SCAAP, helps cover the costs for States and localities to detain undocumented immigrants with serious criminal records; the Community Oriented Policing Services Grant Program—which we all know about from serving in the Senate because our local police departments benefit from COPS funding; and the community development block grants provide critical funding for local communities for disaster relief and other priorities.

I wish to give some examples from Illinois of the impact of the Vitter bill. In fiscal year 2014, Cook County—our largest county—received \$1,381,552 in SCAAP funding, and in fiscal year 2015, Chicago received \$72,477,673 in CDBG funding, and \$3,125,000 in funding through the COPS Hiring Program to address gun violence.

The Fraternal Order of Police sent a letter opposing the Vitter bill—which is before the Senate—on behalf of its 330,000 police members who belong to that fraternity. This is what it said: "It is wrong and a gross unfairness to punish these brave men and women, or the citizens they serve, because Congress disagrees with their enforcement priorities with respect to our nation's immigration laws."

This bill is supposedly an effort to punish so-called sanctuary cities—including some in my own home State—that have policies limiting dealings be-

tween Federal immigration authorities and local law enforcement, but the goal of these policies is to promote effective community policing by encouraging immigrant communities to trust local police. Many of these policies were established in response to Secure Communities, a program created by the Bush administration and a program which badly damaged the relationship between immigrant communities and local law enforcement around the country.

My State police signed a memorandum of agreement with immigration authorities to participate in Secure Communities. The agreement said the goal of the program was to "identify, detain, and remove from the United States aliens who have been convicted of serious criminal offenses."

However, it turned out more than 30 percent of those deported from Illinois in the program had no criminal record. Less than 20 percent had been convicted of a serious crime. Illinois law enforcement officials say the program eroded trust in law enforcement in the Hispanic community. Their conclusion is backed up by polling data. A 2013 University of Illinois study found that 44 percent of Latinos report being less likely to contact the police if they are a victim of crime out of fear that police will inquire about their immigration status or people they know.

The Vitter bill makes this problem even worse by forcing local law enforcement to become enforcers of immigration laws. I received a letter opposing the Vitter bill from the Law Enforcement Immigration Task Force, a group of more than 30 law enforcement officials, including Republican Lake County Sheriff Mark Curran, a local law enforcement official from my home State whom I have worked with in the past. These officials are very concerned that this bill will make our communities less safe by discouraging immigrants from cooperating with law enforcement.

This is what the local law enforcement in Illinois said:

When state and local law enforcement agencies are required to enforce federal immigration laws, undocumented residents may fear that they, or people they know or depend upon, risk deportation by working with law enforcement. This fear undermines trust between law enforcement and the communities we serve, creating too much room for dangerous criminals and violent crime.

The Vitter bill also dramatically increases penalties for illegal entry, including two new mandatory minimum criminal sentences. Estimates are that these new penalties created by the Vitter bill would require approximately 18,600 new prison beds and up to 12 new Federal prisons. New Federal prisons cost several hundred million dollars to construct, tens of millions of dollars to operate. In sum, these new mandatory minimums will cost taxpayers billions of dollars. There is no suggestion in this bill of how we would pay for that.

The real solution to this problem is smart and targeted immigration enforcement that encourages cooperation

with local law enforcement. The Homeland Security Department only has enough funding to deport a small fraction of the undocumented immigrants in our country. President Obama has wisely said we should focus on those who could do us harm. In fact, 85 percent of those deported from the interior of our country in fiscal year 2014 had a criminal conviction—and they should have been deported—compared to only 38 percent in 2008 under the previous President. This President's policies has focused our limited resources on deporting dangerous people, deporting felons, not families; criminals, not children.

As part of the effort to target immigration enforcement, Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson has established the Priority Enforcement Program, also known as PEP, to replace security communities. PEP is designed to protect our safety while improving trust between local police and communities they serve. The program enables DHS to work with State and local law enforcement to take custody of individuals who pose a danger to public safety before they are released. PEP has only been operational for a short time. We need to give it a chance to work before we rush in to pass this legislation which could only make the problem worse.

The best way to fix our broken immigration system, incidentally, and make our communities safer is to pass comprehensive immigration reform once and for all. The bill the Senate passed in 2013 would have made unprecedented investments in border security, would have cracked down on employers who hire undocumented immigrants, and ramped up interior enforcement of immigration laws.

The bill would have invested \$46 billion in new resources in border security, including no fewer than 38,405 U.S. Border Patrol agents along the southern border, enhanced penalties for increased immigration violations with sentences of up to 20 years for those with criminal histories, and increased penalties for passport and immigration document trafficking and fraud.

Most important, this bill would bring millions of people out of the shadows and require them to prove their identity, pass a criminal background check, and pay all fines and taxes. This would allow immigration enforcement to focus on the people who are truly a public safety threat.

So instead of this Senate taking up a bipartisan bill for true immigration reform, we have this bill, a bill not likely to go much further than this procedural motion which we will face tomorrow.

This bill on the floor would not have prevented Kate Steinle's tragic death. Here is the reality: The vast majority of immigrants are hard-working, law-abiding individuals with strong family values. I work with them, I know them, I trust them, and I believe they have an important role to play when it comes to this country's future.

Many studies have shown that immigrants are less likely to commit serious crimes than native-born individuals. This bill unfortunately focuses on the violent acts of the few to scapegoat an entire community. This is dangerous and irresponsible. This bill continues down a dangerous path by promoting the myths that immigrants pose a threat to our Nation's safety.

I urge my colleagues to reject this legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNIZING HOSPICE OF THE WESTERN RESERVE

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, both of my parents spent their final days in hospice care. My father passed away a decade and a half ago at the age of 89. My mother was in hospice care for a few weeks—seemed to be long weeks, but a few weeks—and died at 88 6½ years ago.

I saw firsthand how home care workers and hospice workers make a difference in someone's final days and the comfort they bring to families. During the last moments of my mom's life, people who didn't even know her showed incredible care and kindness, and helped to bring peace to her, comfort to her, and to our family.

Last week I visited in my home city of Cleveland. Only a few miles away is the hospice Western Reserve, one of the best not-for-profit hospices in the entire Midwest. I held a roundtable with a number of employees who have made a career of caring for Ohioans reaching the end of their lives.

Western Reserve's core values are: compassion, excellence, quality, integrity, service, and stewardship. Each worker there—from social workers to cooks to maintenance workers to nurses—embodies these traits. They work in what some might assume to be a sad environment. Many of the patients they care for die in a matter of days or weeks. Each day they encounter not only Ohioans who are near the end of life but they spend time with family members who are preparing to grieve for a loved one.

Yet Hospice of the Western Reserve is far from being a depressing workplace. The staff is committed to caring for parents and families, and they imbue their work—and their patients and their workplace—with a fascinating joy of serving others.

Hospice nursing assistant Audrey Boylan said to me: "It's an honor to be here." Laquita Bradford, a dietary server, talked about the sense of "togetherness" among the staff. She compared it to an extended family.

Workers spoke about other jobs they had elsewhere and all echoed the same sentiment: "It's different here" at the

Hospice of the Western Reserve. As I said, it is one of the best not-for-profit hospices in the Midwest. Their compassion and commitment has a deep impact on their patients and their families and, frankly, on me in my visit.

One of the social workers, Jennifer Stevens, spoke about how she helps families and patients understand where they are in their journey. A volunteer, Roz Fabrotta, a longtime teacher and now a volunteer for Hospice of the Western Reserve, spoke with passion about her work in the bereavement camp that the hospice runs for 6- to 12-year-olds who have lost loved ones. There is not any real revenue for that bereavement camp. That is what not-for-profit hospices often do.

Western Reserve's Elisabeth Severance Bereavement Center is funded by raising money and is dedicated to helping families through these heart-wrenching situations. Its staff, for instance, provided counseling to families after the senseless shooting at Chardon High School in February of 2012, where several students were killed, and their practices were used as a model by counselors after the tragic shooting at Sandy Hook.

Through all this work, these men and women maintain a positive atmosphere for each other and for those they serve.

Keli Keyes is a nurse at the hospice. Her coworker and pet, Linus the therapy dog, who was with us at our roundtable, is a beautiful golden retriever who accompanies her to work each day. All he has to do to bring a smile to patients and family members is to snuggle up to them or put his nose up to their hands.

Western Reserve has more than 3,000 volunteers. I think that tells you all you need to know about this place—that so many Ohioans are willing to take time out of their busy lives to be part of their community and to care for their fellow citizens.

Alvin Fomby, who used to work at Quicken Loans Arena and used to know LeBron James, decided he would rather work at the hospice, where he could make a real difference in preparing food for families and people in hospice care.

Janet Bildstein, who works at the Hospice of Western Reserve, grew up only a few blocks from there and has spent many years working at the hospice.

Joe Tyler, who makes things work, reminded me of my father-in-law, who was a maintenance worker at Electric Utility Company in Ashtabula, OH, and he could fix anything. He carried a 12-foot wrench around with him at the powerplant and he could fix anything. Joe Tyler reminded me of that. He said he works under more pressure, which he loves, to fix something in a room immediately. If the air-conditioning or the heating or the electricity goes out or if something happens to a lamp, he needs to take care of these families right away.

The men and women at this hospice are an inspiration to all of us, but they are not alone.

RECOGNIZING MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

Mr. President, last year President Obama launched the My Brother's Keeper challenge to expand opportunities for a group that is far too often left behind in this country—African-American boys and young men.

The President reached out to cities across the country to find people committed to ensuring all Americans have access to the opportunities they deserve. One of the cities that rose to the occasion is Dayton, OH.

I had the privilege last week of visiting one of America's great cities—Dayton—with its mayor, Nan Whaley, a young bright mayor. I also visited with Broderick Johnson, who is the chair of the My Brother's Keeper Task Force, and works in the White House with the President. We held a round-table with policymakers and activists and citizens who had heeded this call to action.

Dayton already, with Mayor Whaley and others, has a number of successful programs in place: Learn to Earn, City of Learners, and several mentorship programs. I heard the stories of mentors and their mentees, who make a real difference in the lives of so many.

I met Belmont High School senior Miles Tidd. Miles grew up with a single mother and had a tough time early in high school. He wanted to drop out. Miles was matched with mentor Quinn Howard. Quinn wouldn't let Miles drop out. He was the stable figure in Miles' life, who clearly loves him and cares about him, and he pushes him to do better. Miles is close to graduating. After 3 years of Junior ROTC, he wants to join the Air Force Reserves and to go to the Citadel.

I met Miles and Quinn at our round-table at the Dayton Boys Preparatory Academy. Miles said that "the best way to make yourself feel better is to look outside yourself, and go out of your way to help others."

That seemed to be the theme of these young men, ages 15 to 20, who had been helped by a mentor. Their goal in life is to now turn around and help somebody younger than they are.

Also at the roundtable was Alexander Worthy, who wore a Dayton "Live With Honor" T-shirt, referring to the campaign launched by the Dayton Community Police Council. The campaign asks Dayton residents to come together to combat a culture of violence and rethink what it means to live with honor.

Alexander learned discipline and work ethic from his mentor, Bishop Mark McGuire. Bishop McGuire worked with Alexander to help him keep his summer job at their church, and Alexander now participates in the church's Young Life youth group.

We also heard from mentor Terry Purdue. Terry is a Dayton native. He grew up with a lot of good folks around him, a strong father and mother, but

still made plenty of mistakes. He now serves as a mentor and a police officer on Dayton's West Side. He formed a group called the Unit. The Unit holds free work-out classes 3 days a week downtown. Thousands have joined the Unit for a class, and at each one he asks participants to volunteer to help the Dayton community. The Unit takes on a new project each month.

At one roundtable the mentors and mentees told their stories. One middle schooler, James Carr, was, at first, too shy to speak. Finally, after seeing other boys speak up, James raised his hand and talked about how he picks up trash around his school to keep it clean and helps special ed students at school. There is a boy in his class who is blind, and he helps him walk to lunch and to the bathroom. James talked about wanting to make good grades and most of all, he said, he just wants to "stay normal."

Think about that. This child wasn't even in high school yet, and for him it is a struggle to stay normal. That is why the work of My Brother's Keeper is so important. Mentors can provide a steady influence in the lives of children for whom living a stable life—one that those of us privileged enough to serve in this body would consider "normal"—is a daily struggle.

Frederick Douglass said that it is "easier to build strong children than repair broken men." We need a strategy to allow our children to reach their full potential, not one that accepts that an entire segment of our citizens will grow up with limited options. It means ending disparities in our education system. It means continuing to work to reform our criminal justice system. It means working to rebuild the broken relationship between police departments in far too many cities and the communities they serve. It means taking steps to address the employment gap that exists between young men of color and other Americans. It means working to end the scourge of gun violence in our communities. It means providing those in our society who have made mistakes a second chance.

I encourage all of my colleagues to support the work My Brother's Keeper is doing. We also have one in Columbus. We hope to see more of those in Ohio. It is up to all of us to ensure that all of our children, regardless of their ZIP code or the color of their skin, have the opportunity to succeed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I rise today in support of an important piece of legislation that I have introduced that would bring an end to the dangerous existence of sanctuary cities—the Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act.

The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 included language that specifically prohibits State and local governments

from enacting sanctuary policies. Despite this, cities continually violate that provision by having sanctuary policies in place. If these cities and localities want to continue to blatantly disregard Federal law, they should no longer receive certain Federal funds.

Now, the sanctuary policies that we are talking about fall into two categories: one, ordinances that bar city employees from asking about a person's immigration status under any circumstances; and two, policies that prevent them from reporting a suspected illegal alien to Federal immigration law enforcement authorities. These sanctuary policies and sanctuary cities that enact them are dangerous and counterproductive to both law enforcement efforts and reducing illegal immigration.

We know there are many instances in which an illegal alien is released by local authorities and then commits a very serious crime—sometimes a murder or a fatal crime. By now we all know of the tragic event that renewed our focus on this issue back in July—the murder of a 32-year-old woman named Kate Steinle in San Francisco.

Kate's suspected murderer was an illegal immigrant who had been deported 5 times previously and was released this past April by local law enforcement, specifically citing San Francisco's sanctuary city laws, defying a request by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials to hold him for deportation proceedings. If this illegal immigrant had been held for deportation proceedings instead of being set free, Kate Steinle would be alive today—period, end of story.

Unfortunately, San Francisco is far from the only city in the country carrying out this dangerous policy, and Kate Steinle is far from being the only victim of a serious crime committed by an illegal immigrant under these sorts of circumstances.

On July 24, 2015, Marilyn Pharis was brutally raped, tortured, and murdered in her home in Santa Maria, CA, by an illegal immigrant who was released from custody because the county sheriff does not honor detainment. Again, this is a clear instance that would be stopped but for sanctuary policies.

On July 27, 2015, an illegal immigrant was arrested and accused of killing 60-year-old Margaret Kostelnik in Ravenna Road, OH. Before murdering Ms. Kostelnik, the man allegedly attempted to rape a 14-year-old girl and shoot a woman in a nearby park. The suspect also was previously in the custody of law enforcement but was released because the Department of Homeland Security refused to issue a detainer and take custody of the suspect—a related problem.

On July 30, a 2-year-old girl was brutally beaten by an illegal immigrant in San Luis Obispo County, CA. He was released from local custody despite a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement detainer and extensive criminal history.

Other cases include last year, when a Virginia man who killed a Catholic nun in a drunk-driving crash was revealed to be an illegal alien who had been previously arrested.

An illegal alien committed a shocking execution-style murder of three college students in the sanctuary city of Newark, NJ, several years ago. He had been arrested twice before this grizzly crime. In the aftermath of the murders, the attorney general of New Jersey effectively eliminated Newark's sanctuary city policy.

Now, according to documents uncovered by a Freedom of Information Act request by the Center for Immigration Studies, ICE lists at least 340 cities defying Federal law, providing safe haven to illegal immigrants, including my original hometown of New Orleans. These policies, again, are a direct infringement of Federal law, and it is simply unacceptable.

Worse still, these cities are actively releasing criminal illegal immigrants back into our communities instead of working cooperatively with Federal officials to deport them or lock them up. I firmly believe it is time to reverse these illegal policies, to bar them once and for good. That is why I have joined on this crucial piece of legislation with Senators TOOMEY, GRASSLEY, CRUZ, JOHNSON, CORNYN, SULLIVAN, PERDUE, ISAKSON, RUBIO, BARRASSO, and THUNE. We are introducing this legislation and we are getting a vote tomorrow to end the practice of sanctuary cities violating existing Federal immigration law.

This legislation takes a common-sense approach to this problem, and there are three key parts to the bill.

First, this bill changes the incentives for cities by creating penalties for States, local governments, and law enforcement entities that choose to have these policies in place. These penalties come in the form of the removal of certain streams of Federal funding for sanctuary jurisdictions, and the penalties apply to whatever government entity is actually making that bad decision.

In cases where a law enforcement entity, such as a jail or a police department, has a policy or practice that refuses to comply with Federal immigration law, it will be prevented from receiving community-oriented policing services grants or State Criminal Alien Assistance Program grants. So that entity directly will be penalized; it is making the bad decision. On the other hand, if a State or city council or executive passes a resolution or implements a policy or practice that refuses to comply with Federal immigration law, then that city or entity will no longer be available for community development block grant funds.

Again, we penalize the specific entity or public official involved. It is important that Federal funds are withheld from the entity that makes the dangerous decision to allow dangerous illegal immigrants to walk free rather

than turning them over to the Department of Homeland Security.

Second, we have seen the willingness of jurisdictions to comply with immigration detainees decrease in recent years due to litigation pursued by the ACLU. We know dozens of jurisdictions that want to cooperate and were cooperating but became sanctuary cities in reaction to these lawsuits. Our legislation deals with this threat head-on and grants local law enforcement the clear authority to always comply with ICE detainees. However, it is important to note that we have been very careful to protect individual rights and have preserved an individual's right to sue for a violation of their civil or constitutional rights. But if the problem was with the detainer, then individuals sue ICE and not the local law enforcement officials.

The third and final part of this legislation deals directly with those who continue to cross our border illegally, and it establishes Kate's Law—appropriately named after Kathryn Steinle, whom I mentioned earlier. Kate's Law increases mandatory minimum sentence requirements for people who continue to cross the border illegally. Kate's Law will increase the maximum penalty for illegal reentry from 2 years to 5 years. It also creates a maximum penalty of 10 years for illegal immigrants who have been denied admission, excluded, deported, or removed three or more times and then illegally reenter the country.

In order to ensure appropriate treatment of criminal illegal immigrants, Kate's Law creates a mandatory minimum sentence of 5 years for any illegal immigrant who illegally reenters the country and has been convicted of an aggravated felony prior to removal or has been previously convicted twice of illegal reentry. Right now, there are nearly 170,000 convicted criminal aliens who have been ordered deported but remain at large in our country. This is a direct result of nonenforcement policies and failed leadership.

Last year, ICE responded to a request, disclosing that it released 169 convicted illegals from over 130 ZIP Codes in 2013. At least two of the ZIP Codes mentioned are in Louisiana—Kenner and Baton Rouge—and dangerous criminals were released through the South Louisiana Detention Center. This year alone, ICE reported releasing 30,558 unique criminal illegal immigrants from their custody. Some of the crimes committed by these criminal aliens include arson, assault, burglary, kidnapping, larceny, robbery, sexual assault, drunk driving, weapons offenses, and 20 other serious crimes. Why would we ever want to provide safe harbor to these people? That is what sanctuary cities are doing.

This legislation is supported by a wide range of organizations to crack down on this problem: the Remembrance Project, NumbersUSA, Federation for American Immigration Reform, the Federal Law Enforcement Of-

ficers Association, the International Union of Police Associations, AFL-CIO, the National Association of Police Organizations, the National Sheriffs' Association, America First Latinos, and letters from the McCann, Rosenberg, Ronnebeck, Oliver, and Wilkerson families, all of whom tragically had family members murdered by illegal aliens.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD letters of support.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NUMBERSUSA
Arlington, VA, October 14, 2015.
Hon. DAVID VITTER,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR VITTER: As President of NumbersUSA, a non-partisan activist network of more than 3 million citizens, I am writing to express our support for the Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act.

Following the murder of Kate Steinle, the American people became acutely aware that while many States and localities blatantly violate Federal law and release criminal aliens onto their streets, the Federal government does absolutely nothing to stop them. Kate's death was far from the first instance of a murder by a criminal alien that could have been prevented, and more lives will be lost until Congress finally acts. We believe that this piece of legislation, S. 2146, is an appropriate and much needed first step.

According to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), there are currently 340 "sanctuary jurisdictions" in the United States. Over a 9-month period last year, these jurisdictions released 9,295 aliens that ICE was seeking to deport. It is unconscionable that Congress would continue to provide taxpayer money to these jurisdictions and subsidize their willful disregard of the law and public safety.

The Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act first restricts funding from the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP), from Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), and from Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) for sanctuary jurisdictions. It reallocates those funds to jurisdictions that cooperate with ICE. The bill also requires the Department of Homeland Security (OHS) to publicly post a list of sanctuary jurisdictions online, including the number of ICE detainees ignored by each jurisdiction. These provisions would appropriately punish sanctuary jurisdictions, encourage further compliance with the law, reward those jurisdictions already in compliance, and ensure that the public knows where their local governments stand.

Another critical element of this legislation is that it protects local officers while they carry out ICE detainers, clarifying that they are acting as agents of ICE with all of the necessary authority and protection from liability granted to a Federal law enforcement officer. No law enforcement officer should fear retribution for following the law.

Finally, this bill increases the maximum penalties for aliens who illegally reenter the country following denial of admission, exclusion, deportation, or removal, and creates a mandatory minimum sentence for those who are convicted of an aggravated felony or two instances of illegal reentry, all of which would help protect the public from criminal aliens.

NumbersUSA applauds your leadership on this issue and stands eager to assist you in

advancing the Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act.

Sincerely,

ROY BECK,
President and Founder, NumbersUSA.

FEDERATION FOR AMERICAN
IMMIGRATION REFORM,
October 19, 2015.

Hon. DAVID VITTER,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR VITTER: I am writing to thank you for your efforts as a United States Senator to end “sanctuary cities”—State and local jurisdictions with policies that obstruct immigration enforcement and compromise public safety.

Your bill, the Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act (S. 2146), is a commonsense measure that denies certain federal grants to jurisdictions that obstruct efforts by the Department of Homeland Security to identify and remove illegal aliens, including criminal aliens. Jurisdictions that interfere with immigration enforcement should not benefit from federal funds. Additionally, your bill increases penalties for illegal reentry and sends a message that we take the enforcement of the nation’s immigration laws seriously.

The tragic death of Kate Steinle over the summer in the sanctuary city of San Francisco illustrates the necessity of your bill. As you know, the suspect, Francisco Sanchez, was in San Francisco law enforcement custody but was released him back onto the streets—ignoring an ICE detainer request in the process—because of the sanctuary policy. Ms. Steinle’s death was preventable and the public expects the U.S. Congress to hold these jurisdictions accountable.

Tuesday’s vote on your bill is straightforward. A vote for S. 2146 shows that Senators want to protect law-abiding citizens. A vote against S. 2146 means they want to protect criminal aliens—individuals who not only violate our immigration laws but our criminal laws as well. I trust that the Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act will enjoy broad bipartisan support.

Sincerely,

DAN STEIN,
President.

[From the Federation for American Immigration Reform Press Release, Oct. 15, 2015]

FAIR URGES SENATE TO PASS THE STOP SANCTUARY POLICIES AND PROTECT AMERICANS ACT (S. 2146)

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) is urging the U.S. Senate to act swiftly to pass S. 2146, the Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act. The bill would cutoff certain federal grants to jurisdictions that defy federal immigration laws and refuse to honor requests to detain illegal aliens who are sought by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). There are currently some 300 jurisdictions that harbor illegal aliens.

“Policies that protect people who are breaking U.S. immigration laws, including criminal aliens who have been arrested for other offenses, jeopardize the lives and safety of Americans. They also violate federal law. It is essential that Congress act immediately to end these policies,” declared Dan Stein, president of FAIR.

The House of Representatives already passed legislation in July to cut off federal funds to sanctuary jurisdictions. While the Senate has delayed action, Americans continue to be victimized by state and local policies that result in deportable criminals being returned to our streets.

S. 2146 would take concrete steps to rein in local jurisdictions that impede immigration enforcement. The bill:

—Creates a uniform national definition of what constitutes a “sanctuary jurisdiction.”

—Denies SCAAP, COPS and HUD grants to sanctuary jurisdictions and redirects those funds to compliant jurisdictions.

—Increases penalties against illegal aliens who reenter the country after deportation.

—Protects individuals who are victims of crimes, or who provide information to police. Such individuals cannot be asked about immigration status or have their immigration status investigated.

“The Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act is commonsense legislation designed to deter local government officials that actively shield illegal aliens from being removed from the United States,” Stein said. “Jurisdictions that thwart even the minimal immigration law enforcement being carried out by the Obama administration should not expect to be the beneficiaries of federal law enforcement grants.

“FAIR urges the Senate to act responsibly to protect the safety of the American public by approving S. 2146 and to work with the House to send a final bill to the president’s desk. If President Obama decides to veto the bill it is up to him to explain to the American people why he is refusing to act against reckless policies that have resulted in needless deaths of innocent citizens,” concluded Stein.

ABOUT FAIR

Founded in 1979, FAIR is the country’s largest immigration reform group. With more than 250,000 members nationwide, FAIR fights for immigration policies that serve national interests, not special interests. FAIR believes that immigration reform must enhance national security, improve the economy, protect jobs, preserve our environment, and establish a rule of law that is recognized and enforced.

[October 16, 2015]

ANALYSIS OF SENATE ANTI-SANCTUARY BILL
BILL SEEKS TO BRING SAFETY TO COMMUNITIES
AND ENCOURAGE ENFORCEMENT OF FEDERAL
LAW

WASHINGTON, DC.—The Center for Immigration Studies has published an analysis of Senate Bill 2146, the “Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect American Act” introduced by Senator David Vitter. This sanctuary legislation is designed to block state or local governments from enacting or continuing sanctuary laws or policies that protect aliens from the reach of federal immigration authorities, most especially with regard to aliens arrested and convicted for criminal offenses.

Recent data reveals an estimated 1,000 criminal aliens a month are being released due to sanctuary policies, making congressional action imperative. The bill seeks to incentivize state and local governments to cooperate with federal authorities by continuing existing grants to those which exchange information and comply with detainers; cutting federal funding to sanctuary governments which refuse to cooperate, that is then distributed to jurisdictions that do cooperate; and by providing immunity to officers when engaging in cooperative efforts, including complying with detainers or providing information.

View the entire report at: <http://cis.org/Analysis-of-S2146-the-Stop-Sanctuary-Policies-and-Protect-Americans-Act>

“The Obama administration refuses to deal with the sanctuary problem, which has led to crimes such as the murder of Kate Steinle by a five-times-deported illegal-alien felon,” said Dan Cadman, a Center fellow and author of the report. “This bill addresses the sanctuary policies which result in thousands of

criminal aliens being released into our communities to reoffend. Unfortunately, it is not as comprehensive as the Davis-Oliver Act, which would deal with the sanctuary policies and the administration’s deliberate suppression of enforcement.”

OCTOBER 16, 2015.

Re Support of “Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act”

Hon. DAVID VITTER,
Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.
Hon. CHUCK GRASSLEY,
Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.
Hon. RON JOHNSON,
Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.
Hon. TED CRUZ,
Russell Senate Office Building, Washington,
DC.
Hon. PAT TOOMEY,
Russell Senate Office Building, Washington,
DC.

DEAR SENATORS: My name is Brian McCann and I testified at the Senate Judiciary Committee on behalf of the McCann family and all Americans on July 21, 2015. You will recall the tragic death of my brother Dennis was outlined in my remarks and official witness document. I have read the measure you are sponsoring and I offer my complete support. I have tried to amend the cruel and unsafe ordinance passed in Cook County without success due to the peculiar nature of Illinois and Cook County politics. I remain convinced that your approach to limit grants to sanctuary jurisdictions to include SCAAP, CDBG and COPS will be an effective lever to improve safety to these over 300 sanctuary jurisdictions. Moreover, your language relative to Kate’s law also has our support.

I will listen to the debates next Tuesday and will begin my day with a prayer for the thousands of family victims suffering daily because of these sanctuary jurisdictions. I remain ready and willing to help in these matters and please do not hesitate to call or write.

Sincerely,

BRIAN McCANN.

DONALD ROSENBERG,
Westlake Village, CA, October 15, 2015.
Subject: Support of “Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act”

Hon. DAVID VITTER,
Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.
Hon. CHUCK GRASSLEY,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Hart
Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.
Hon. RON JOHNSON,
Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.
Hon. TED CRUZ,
Russell Senate Office Building, Washington,
DC.
Hon. PAT TOOMEY,
Russell Senate Office Building, Washington,
DC.

DEAR SENATORS: On behalf of my son killed by an illegal alien in San Francisco almost 5 years ago I want to thank you for introducing and advancing the Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act. This legislation that will address the reentry of illegal aliens, restrict federal funding of cities that operate as “sanctuary cities”, and also support and protect our law enforcement officers is long overdue.

Quite frankly it is hard to believe that in a nation founded on the rule of law this legislation is even necessary. Since my son’s death at least 25,000 people have been killed by illegal aliens. Many have been killed by illegal aliens who have been deported multiple times. Many have been killed by illegal

aliens who are actually living and being protected by sanctuary cities.

There are over 135,000 convicted illegal alien criminals currently roaming our streets. That number is growing by 1,000 every week as so many of our cities are refusing to honor detainees resulting in convicted illegal alien felons first to be released into the general population and then being protected by sanctuary cities. How many more Americans have to die before our "leaders" put the safety of our citizens above votes and cheap labor?

Nothing I can do will bring my son back to life. But I ask you to do all that is possible to make sure no other American family has to suffer the real separation of families and the never ending nightmare of losing a loved one, I wonder every day why our government has betrayed us and cares more about illegal aliens than law abiding American citizens.

Sincerely,

DON ROSENBERG,
Victim.

OCTOBER 16, 2015.

Subject: Support of "Stop Sanctuary Cities and Protect Americans Act"

Hon. DAVID VITTER,
Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. CHUCK GRASSLEY,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary,

Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. RON JOHNSON,
Hart Office Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. TED CRUZ,
Russell Senate Office Building, Washington,

DC.

Hon. PAT TOOMEY,
Russell Senate Office Building, Washington,
DC.

DEAR SENATORS: On Behalf of the Ronnebeck Family, in memory of our beloved family member Grant Ronnebeck, I thank you for introducing and advancing the Stop Sanctuary Cities and Protect Americans Act. We support this legislation that will address the reentry of illegal aliens, restrict federal funding of cities that operate as "Sanctuary Cities", and that also supports and protects our law enforcement officers.

You might remember my testimony before the Judicial Committee in July 2015, relating how my nephew Grant was killed. He was working at his job when an illegal alien shot him in the face, killing him, seemingly doing nothing more than counting his change too slowly. You also heard the compelling stories of Susan Oliver, Jim Steinle, Laura Wilkerson, and Dennis McCann. We have all lost family members due to illegal aliens.

Unfortunately, since that hearing, several more Americans have been murdered at the hands of illegal aliens drawn to sanctuary cities. Those include Margaret Kostelnik of Lake County Ohio, and Marilyn Pharias of Santa Maria, California. In fact, the Government Accountability Office data shows that illegal aliens are committing murders of Americans at the rate of over 5000 per year. Sanctuary cities can only create an incentive for illegal aliens to enter our Country, and stay with impunity from deportation. The Stop Sanctuary Cities and Protect Americans Act will help save American Lives, and send a message to all Americans that we are your priority.

I ask each of you to do everything in your power to pass this important legislation, for Grant, Kate, Josh, Brian, Margaret, Maria, and the thousands of others who have lost their lives due to this issue.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL RONNEBECK.

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR COMMITTEE MEMBERS: The legislation addressing sanctuary cities and Kate's law

are of paramount interest to me because I am a widow of a law enforcement officer killed by an illegal immigrant previously deported several times for other felonious acts. This issue has directly affected my life and the lives of my children.

I am primarily concerned about violent illegal immigrants being allowed to return to our country with little consequence. Every single day, law officers are forced to release criminal aliens who pose a threat to community safety—in violation of current laws that require deportation. Additionally ICE released back onto the streets 76,000 convicted criminal aliens in the last few years. Currently there are over 150,000 criminal aliens at large in the United States who have criminal convictions and were formally and lawfully ordered to be deported. The Administration's tolerance of sanctuary cities has also resulted in more arrested aliens being released by local law agencies. And, more than 120 of the criminal aliens who've been ordered deported in the last few years were released by ICE have now been charged with additional homicide offenses. The man that killed my husband, Deputy Danny Oliver, was deported several times for various felonies. However, due to the lack of coordination between law enforcement agencies, his killer was allowed back into this country.

I have read reports of various positions on these matters, and I realize that not all fully support the changes. Therefore, I am asking for only one thing. I do not want your sympathy, I want change so others will not have to endure the grief we have in our lives every day.

Thank you for your consideration of my viewpoint on this matter. I believe it is an important issue, and would like to see the legislation passed to ensure felons are not allowed to continue to commit serious felonies such as homicide.

Sincerely,

SUSAN T. OLIVER,
Widow of Deputy Danny P. Oliver.

OCTOBER 18, 2015.

Re Support of "Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act"

Hon. DAVID VITTER,
Washington, DC.

Hon. CHUCK GRASSLEY,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary,

Washington, DC.

Hon. RON JOHNSON,
Washington, DC.

Hon. TED CRUZ,
Washington, DC.

Hon. PAT TOOMEY,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS: On behalf on Joshua Wilkerson, I want to send my support of "Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act".

On November 16th, 2010, Joshua was brutally murdered and then his body was set on fire. Per the Medical Examiner it was torture. He was murdered by an Illegal Alien, Hermilo Morales, brought to this country by his Illegal Alien Parents, when he was 10 years old. He came to America from Belize. Our Family has been crushed, overwhelmed, lost, and irretrievably broken. As a mother I assure you there is nothing like the pain of what I have been through.

This is just "my" story. There are so many families in every state in America that have suffered loss of life just as we have. Sanctuary City Policies invite the criminal element of Illegals to that City.

I want to say Thank you for bringing this key legislation, that will be beneficial to all American Families.

Sincerely,

LAURA WILKERSON.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, in closing, I refuse to simply stand by and re-

ward jurisdictions around the country with Federal funding, with taxpayer funds, when they are in clear violation of the law and are actively making our communities more dangerous rather than safer. I have offered similar versions of this legislation many times in the past. We cannot wait any longer to tackle this problem head-on.

While President Obama continues to let the world know he will not be enforcing the current immigration laws or taking action against these jurisdictions, we here in Congress have an absolute duty to act otherwise. I believe this legislation will absolutely benefit all Americans by keeping us safe here at home. I strongly urge all of our colleagues to support it in votes tomorrow on the Senate floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, tomorrow we are going to be voting on a very important bill. We will have the opportunity to vote to proceed to a bill that deals with sanctuary cities and immigration policies that are a serious threat to the public safety. We will move to take up the Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act—a bill that should put an end to sanctuary jurisdictions, give law enforcement important tools they need to detain criminals, and increase penalties for dangerous and repeat offenders of our immigration laws.

Some of these sanctuary policies are created when a local government unit, such as a city or county executive body, passes an ordinance prohibiting their officers from communicating with Federal immigration and law enforcement officials. Now, there is another way: Some sanctuary policies come about simply because local law enforcement initiates its own policies of providing safe harbor for undocumented immigrants. And then another way: Some sanctuary policies develop because law enforcement officers are afraid they will be sued if they enforce immigration laws and detain an individual for their unlawful immigration status.

In summation, these policies and practices have allowed thousands of dangerous criminals to be released back into the community, and the effects have been disastrous. I am going to speak about those effects. America saw these policies play out in July when Kate Steinle was innocently killed while walking along a San Francisco pier with her father. The murderer, who was illegally in the country and actually deported five times prior

to that day, was released into the community by a sanctuary jurisdiction that did not honor the detainer issued by Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The suspect in Kate's death admitted he was in San Francisco because of its sanctuary policies. That sums up the problem our bill addresses.

Here is Kate—no longer with us—as one example. I have several other examples because people tried to tell us you should not change policy based upon one murder. Maybe so, maybe not, but 5 years of statistics shows about 121 people killed by people that have been deported for criminal activities in this country and then come back in. I want to tell you what our bill does about that, but I want to first tell you about some examples.

In July, our Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing called “Oversight of the Administration’s Misdirected Immigration Enforcement Policies: Examining the Impact on Public Safety and Honoring the Victims.” That is the committee’s hearing title. This hearing was an opportunity to hear the voices of Americans who have been impacted by these very indefensible policies while also conducting oversight of the administration’s policies and tolerance toward sanctuary jurisdictions.

Jim Steinle, Kate’s father, expressed his family’s desire to see legislation enacted to take undocumented felons off our streets. The committee was very moved by his presence and testimony—obviously something that wasn’t very easy for him. He talked about how Kate “had a special soul, a kind and giving heart, the most contagious laugh, and a smile that would light up a room.” He told us how she died in his arms that day, despite her plea in her dying words of “Help me, Dad.” The suspect in Kate Steinle’s murder had seven prior felony convictions and had been deported five times. Yet he was shielded—protected, in other words—by San Francisco’s sanctuary policy.

The Kate Steinle story is not a singular case. Too many Americans have lost their lives, and too many families have had to feel the real and devastating impact caused by sanctuary cities and lax enforcement policies.

Our committee heard powerful testimony from families other than Kate Steinle’s father. We heard from Mrs. Susan Oliver. She is the widow of Deputy Danny Oliver. This is the family. He was a police officer in Sacramento, CA. Danny was killed while on duty by an illegal immigrant who was previously arrested on two separate occasions for drug-related charges and twice deported. Mrs. Oliver spoke of the daily loss she experiences without her husband in everything from raising her children to the milestones he will miss, including their daughter’s upcoming wedding.

We also heard from Michael Ronnebeck, the uncle of Grant Ronnebeck. You are seeing Grant’s pic-

ture here. Grant was a 21-year-old convenience store clerk who was gunned down earlier this year by an undocumented immigrant. The Obama administration released Grant’s alleged murderer, who was in removal proceedings. Grant was born in my State of Iowa but resided in Arizona. He had two brothers and a sister. Mr. Ronnebeck expressed his family’s desire to see Grant’s legacy be a force for change, imploring us as lawmakers to “rise above political differences, to set aside personal interests, and to use your resources to make sensible immigration reform a reality in the coming months, with the safety and security of American citizens first and foremost in mind.” Think of that tomorrow and think of the Ronnebeck family losing their son. They are asking us to keep the safety and security of American citizens first and foremost in our minds.

We also heard from Brian McCann. Mr. McCann’s brother, Dennis McCann, was killed in 2011 by a drunk driver who was in the country illegally and driving without a license. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement had placed a detainer on the drunk driver, but he was released under Cook County, IL, sanctuary city policies. Mr. McCann expressed his anger at the sanctuary city policies of Cook County, which allowed his brother’s killer to be free, and at a system that failed to communicate with him and his family when the suspect was released by the locals.

We also heard from Laura Wilkerson of Pearland, TX, the mother of Josh Wilkerson. Josh was 18 years old when he was murdered by his high school classmate, an undocumented immigrant, after Josh offered him a ride home from school. Josh’s murderer was sentenced to life in prison and will be eligible for parole in 30 years. Mrs. Wilkerson spoke of the gentle soul of her son, the brutal torture that he endured, and actually watching an unapologetic 19-year-old brag about his killing skills during trial and talking about how things were done in his country.

These stories are heartbreaking, but nothing has changed. I want to talk about what has happened since Kate’s murder. We have seen more fall victim to sanctuary jurisdiction policies.

Shortly after Kate’s death, Marilyn Pharis was brutally raped, tortured, and murdered in her home in Santa Maria, CA, by an undocumented immigrant who was released from custody because the county sheriff does not honor Federal enforcement detainers.

A 2-year-old girl was brutally beaten by an undocumented immigrant in San Luis Obispo County, CA. He was released from local custody despite a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement detainer and an extensive criminal history, and he is still at large.

Margaret Kostelnik was killed by an undocumented immigrant who alleg-

edly attempted to rape a 14-year-old girl and shoot a woman in a nearby park. He was released because Immigration and Customs Enforcement refused to issue a detainer and take custody of that suspect.

These are a very few of the stories that could be told on this Senate floor. There are many more families who are hurting today because of lax immigration policies and the lack of willingness by President Obama’s administration to do something about sanctuary cities.

But don’t take it from just me. Even the Secretary of Homeland Security acknowledges that sanctuary cities are “counterproductive to public safety.” He said these policies were “unacceptable.” Yet this administration has not taken demonstrable action to address the unwillingness of sanctuary jurisdictions to work with Federal immigration authorities. More than 12,000 Federal detainer requests were ignored by State and local jurisdictions in 2014.

Moreover, in June of this year, the administration rolled out a new program that reduces the enforcement priorities and announced it would not seek the custody of many criminals who are in the country illegally. This is called the Priority Enforcement Program, PEP for short. That program actually gives sanctuary jurisdictions permission to continue ignoring Immigration and Customs Enforcement detainees. PEP even discourages compliant jurisdictions from further cooperation with Immigration and Customs Enforcement because it now only issues detainers for individuals who are already convicted of certain crimes deemed priorities by the Department of Homeland Security.

Many local jurisdictions want to work with the Federal Government and protect their communities but are frustrated when the administration refuses to work with them. Think of Arizona trying to protect its own citizens from the crimes committed by undocumented immigrants in that State. The State legislature passes laws. The administration goes to court and gets those laws declared contrary to the Constitution or our only immigration laws. Why? Because under the Constitution, one of the 18 powers of Congress happens to be the enforcement or the writing of the immigration laws so they are uniform. So when this administration will not enforce immigration laws in Arizona, and Arizona decides under the Tenth Amendment, under the police powers of the State, to do it for the Federal Government, then it is wrong for that State to do it. But this administration will not take action against the sanctuary cities that are violating the same immigration laws.

I want to continue with some examples where the administration refuses to work with local officials. Sheriff Cummings in Cape Cod, MA, recently explained his frustration with Immigration and Customs Enforcement when an immigrant who had overstayed his visa was arrested for battery

with a dangerous weapon and child pornography. Sheriff Cummings said that when he learned that this individual who had a long criminal history was in the country illegally, he asked Immigration and Customs Enforcement for a Federal immigration detainer “so that if someone came up with a bail we could then turn him over to ICE and we wouldn’t release him back into the community.” So then what happened? ICE—Immigration and Customs Enforcement—never issued the detainer.

Sheriff Cummings noted that before PEP, immigration authorities would issue a detainer pretty quickly but not anymore. He commented:

It just shows how they’ve relaxed their policy so there are more criminal illegal aliens in our communities right now. Those are the ones I’m concerned with. I’m concerned with the individuals that have committed crimes. They are here illegally to begin with and they’ve committed crimes while they’re here. To me it makes no sense to allow these people to stay in our communities.

I very much agree. It makes no sense that people who do not belong here and commit crimes are allowed to return to our communities and cause further harm.

Getting back to the bill we will be voting on tomorrow, the Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect America Act addresses the problem of sanctuary jurisdictions in a very commonsense and balanced way. There seems to be consensus that sanctuary jurisdictions should be held accountable, and we do that with the power of the purse. And now I am beginning to explain our bill.

This bill limits the availability of certain Federal grants to cities and States that have sanctuary policies. We limit funding through the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program. This is a grant program run by the Department of Justice that is designed to reimburse part of the cost incurred by local jurisdictions that detain undocumented criminal aliens. Sanctuary cities receive these funds despite their refusal to detain suspects who are wanted by immigration authorities.

In this year alone, California received a total of \$44 million in these State Criminal Alien Assistance Program funds even though the State has a sanctuary law. New York City, a sanctuary city, received \$11.6 million in taxpayer funding. To fund sanctuary cities with State Criminal Alien Assistance Program money essentially subsidizes these jurisdictions for their lack of cooperation.

As Former Assistant Secretary Morton stated in a letter to Cook County, a well-known sanctuary city, “It is fundamentally inconsistent for Cook County to request federal reimbursement for the cost of detaining aliens who commit or are charged with crimes while at the same time thwarting ICE’s efforts to remove those very same aliens from the United States.”

The bill that will be before us tomorrow morning when we vote responds to this hypocrisy by making sanctuary jurisdictions ineligible for the State

Criminal Alien Assistance Program. Another grant program limited to sanctuary jurisdictions is the community-oriented policing services or, as it is known around this town and locally, the COPS Program. These grant dollars help fund community-oriented policing programs for local law enforcement agencies. Our bill makes sanctuary jurisdictions ineligible for these taxpayer dollars if they have a policy or practice in place despite the lack of any statute, ordinance, or policy directive from their unit of local government. Finally, the bill limits taxpayer dollars through the community development block grant for sanctuary jurisdictions when a county, city, or State has in effect a statute that clearly defies information sharing as required by Federal law or has a statute that prohibits any government official from complying with a detainer request issued by the Department of Homeland Security. Those are the funding parts of our bill.

In acknowledgement of the bill’s fairness in targeting certain grants, the National Sheriffs’ Association writes:

The grant penalties you would impose also acknowledge that our public safety entities should not be punished for the actions of a state or local subdivision over which they may not have control. I appreciate the careful consideration you clearly gave that issue.

The second part of the bill deals with lawsuits that local law enforcement people might be faced with, so the second thing our bill does is provide protection for law enforcement officers who do want to cooperate and comply with detainer requests from the Federal Government. It would address the liability issue created by recent court decisions by providing liability protection to local law enforcement who honor Immigration and Customs Enforcement detainees.

The Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association explains in a letter of support for the bill:

Unfortunately, at least four courts have ruled that local law enforcement officers may be sued for violating the Fourth Amendment if they comply with an immigration detainer, even if the detainer was lawfully issued and the detention would have been legal if carried out by DHS. This means that our local counterparts are exposed to potential civil liability and it disables their ability to detain dangerous criminals scheduled for release. The Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act solves this problem by explicitly stating that local law enforcement officers have legal authority to comply with immigration detainees.

While preventing restrictive liability to law enforcement, the bill also ensures the protection of civil liberties and the rights of individuals. The Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association noted that “the bill protects civil liberties, ensuring that someone who has had their constitutional rights violated may sue.”

Finally, the bill addresses criminals attempting to reenter the United States and habitual offenders of our immigration laws. The bill creates a mandatory minimum sentence of 5

years for any alien who is an aggravated felon or has been twice convicted of illegal reentry. Thanks to many people, including TV’s Bill O’Reilly, for keeping this issue constantly before the people of this country. This part of the bill—named by Bill O’Reilly and commonly referred to as Kate’s law—has become so important to many Americans. You can only imagine how important it is to the families of those who were killed by these murderers, the people whose pictures I had up here. This bill is very important to those families. Kate’s Law is necessary in order to take those who are dangerous to our communities and have no respect for our law off our streets.

This bill has broad support from law enforcement groups. It also has the support of groups who want enforcement of our immigration laws. It has the support of the Remembrance Project, a group devoted to honoring and remembering Americans who have been killed by undocumented immigrants.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that letters of support be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

THE REMEMBRANCE PROJECT.

Houston, TX, October 14, 2015.

Subject: Support of “Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act”

Hon. DAVID VITTER,
Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.
Hon. CHUCK GRASSLEY,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary,
Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Hon. RON JOHNSON,
Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.
Hon. TED CRUZ,
Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Hon. PAT TOOMEY,
Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS: On behalf of Americans killed by illegal aliens, and their surviving families, I thank you for introducing and advancing the Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act. We support this legislation that will address the reentry of illegal aliens, restrict federal funding of cities that operate as “sanctuary cities”, and that also supports and protects our law enforcement officers.

It is now known that approximately 1,000 criminal illegal aliens are released back into our communities from our prisons each month, of which over 60% have “significant prior criminal histories . . .”, most of which include serious felonies! Add this to the rampant crime perpetrated by other illegal aliens in our country, and we have a matter of national urgency.

Violent illegal alien crimes resulting in the deaths of American citizens, are unlike other killings. In every case, Americans were killed by those persons who should never have been in our country. This legislation will send a powerful message that the safety of Americans is the priority. Most importantly, this legislation will save American lives!

I ask that each of you do all humanly possible to end these deliberate and unsafe community law enforcement practices wherein

the killings of Americans is not only enabled but is also well-known and documented.

Sincerely,

MARIA ESPINOZA,
Co-founder and National Director.

AMERICA FIRST LATINOS,
Houston, TX, October 16, 2015.

Subject: Support of "Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act"

Hon. DAVID VITTER,
Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Hon. CHUCK GRASSLEY,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary,
Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Hon. RON JOHNSON,
Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Hon. TED CRUZ,
Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Hon. PAT TOOMEY,
Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS: On behalf of Latino voices in America, I write this letter in support of legislation that will address the reentry of illegal aliens, restrict federal funds to cities that refuse to enforce laws that creates "sanctuary city policies", and that also supports and protects law enforcement officers.

America First Latinos are proud to be Americans and proud to live in this great country. We are activating nationwide to remind public servants that the safety and well-being of Americans must be the priority in America. Enforcing laws is not racist, in fact, it is offensive for anyone to think that Latinos approve of illegal immigration. Illegal immigration is wrong. Sanctuary city policies condone lawless behaviors and encourages more of the same behaviors, which reaches deeper into our communities.

Each day Americans are being killed and harmed by individuals who should not be in our country. It is up to you to stop this epidemic of killings and crimes against the citizenry. I ask that each of you do all humanly possible to end these dangerous sanctuary practices. Americans must be the priority in America!

Sincerely,

PEDRO RIVERA,
Texas State Coordinator.

NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION,
Alexandria, VA, October 6, 2015.

Hon. DAVID VITTER,
U.S. Senate, Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Hon. CHUCK GRASSLEY,
U.S. Senate, Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Hon. RON JOHNSON,
U.S. Senate, Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Hon. PATRICK TOOMEY,
U.S. Senate, Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Hon. TED CRUZ,
U.S. Senate, Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR VITTER, SENATOR TOOMEY, SENATOR GRASSLEY, SENATOR CRUZ, AND SENATOR JOHNSON: On behalf of the National Sheriffs' Association and the more than 3,000 sheriffs nationwide, I write today in support of legislation you intend to introduce, the "Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect American Act." This bill takes an important step in clarifying the definition of sanctuary jurisdictions while also offering additional protections for state and local officers.

As you all know, state and local law enforcement agencies are critical partners in

immigration and border security efforts all across this country. For too long, however, those officers had little to no liability protections when lawfully enforcing Federal immigration detainees on behalf of the Department of Homeland Security. Your bill takes the important step of clarifying those protections so that deputies acting within the bounds of the law will not be held personally liable in future court actions. The grant penalties you would impose also acknowledge that our public safety entities should not be punished for the actions of a state or local subdivision over which they may not have control. I appreciate the careful consideration you clearly gave that issue.

On behalf of the National Sheriffs' Association, I applaud your efforts on this important issue and look forward to working with you on passage. If the National Sheriffs' Association can be of assistance this or any other issue, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jonathan F. Thompson.

FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT
OFFICERS ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, October 6, 2015.

Hon. DAVID VITTER,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. CHUCK GRASSLEY,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. RON JOHNSON,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. PAT TOOMEY,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. TED CRUZ,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS VITTER, TOOMEY, GRASSLEY, CRUZ, AND JOHNSON: On behalf of the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association (FLEOA), I thank you for introducing the Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act, which will empower federal and local law enforcement officers' cooperative efforts to better protect our communities and our citizenry. Your proposal will ensure we do not dishonor the memory of Kate Steinle and the immeasurable grief her family is enduring. It is critically important that all our law enforcement assets are synchronized in pursuing our shared responsibility of policing violent illegal aliens.

Federal law enforcement officers rely on their state and local counterparts to assist in keeping America's borders secure and keeping criminal illegal immigrants off of the streets. It's one team, one fight, as we all took the same sacred oath to protect and defend the Constitution and the American citizenry. We've been relying upon immigration detainees—requests from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for local law enforcement to hold an illegal immigrant temporarily, to give federal law enforcement an opportunity to take the individual into custody.

Unfortunately, at least four courts have ruled that local law enforcement officers may be sued for violating the Fourth Amendment if they comply with an immigration detainer, even if the detainer was lawfully issued and the detention would have been legal if carried out by DHS. This means that our local counterparts are exposed to potential civil liability and it disables their ability to detain dangerous criminals scheduled for release. The Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act solves this problem by explicitly stating that local law enforcement officers have legal authority to comply with immigration detainees. The bill protects civil liberties, ensuring that someone who has had their constitutional rights violated may sue.

The Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act takes crucial steps to elimi-

nating sanctuary jurisdictions, which serve to shelter illegal aliens while posing real threats to the American people. We must reassess our priorities and remain committed to the unwavering premise of the safety of the American citizenry is our top priority. The proper response to Kate's tragic death is not to point fingers at each other. Ms. Steinle was killed in San Francisco by an illegal immigrant who had previously been deported from the United States five times, and had been convicted of seven felonies. The shooter chose to live in San Francisco because he knew it was a sanctuary city that would shield him from federal immigration law. Tragically, his "sanctuary" gambit proved fatal for the Steinle family. Federal officials requested that San Francisco detain the shooter until immigration authorities could pick him up, but San Francisco officials refused to cooperate and released Sanchez three months before Kate's murder. We owe it to Kate and the American citizenry to fix this critical community safety issue now.

We commend you for preserving flexibility for law enforcement, so that victims of crime and witnesses to crime who are in the U.S. illegally may come forward and cooperate with police. FLEOA especially recognizes and appreciates Senator Toomey's leadership and unwavering support for all law enforcement officers. Both Senator Toomey and Vitter understand that in America, the safety of Americans comes first!

FLEOA strongly supports the Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act, and we look forward to working with your offices to have this important legislation enacted into law.

Respectfully yours,

JON ADLER,
FLEOA National President.

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF POLICE
ASSOCIATIONS AFL-CIO,
October 8, 2015.

Hon. PATRICK TOOMEY,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR TOOMEY: The International Union of Police Associations is proud to add our name to the list of supporters of the bill addressing "Sanctuary Cities" titled Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act. As it now stands, our officers can be held liable for sharing relevant information and honoring immigration detainees, even when they are from federal immigration officials. This legislation remedies that.

Additionally, the bill provides a financial disincentive for cities to become or remain "sanctuary cities" by removing State Criminal Alien Assistance Program Funds which were originally designated to provide financial assistance to those counties and cities housing unlawful entrants. It also restricts Community Block Grants. COPS grants are restricted only if the law enforcement agency is the source of, and has the power to change sanctuary city policy. It makes sense to us that a political entity cannot expect funding from the federal government when that city or county has made a decision to ignore federal laws involving the very issues for which these funds were prescribed.

Finally, this legislation will provide a five year mandatory minimum sentence for those illegal aliens who have aggravated felony convictions and at least two prior convictions for unlawful reentry. It is long past time to end the revolving door of criminal aliens, who, even though convicted of felony criminal activity and deported, unlawfully return to prey upon our citizens.

We both thank and applaud you for this thoughtful and timely piece of legislation

and we look forward to working with you and your staff to see it signed into law.

Very Respectfully,

SAM A. CABRAL,
International President.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.,
Alexandria, Virginia, October 7, 2015.

Senator DAVID VITTER,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Chairman CHUCK GRASSLEY,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Senator RON JOHNSON,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Senator PAT TOOMEY,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Senator TED CRUZ,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS VITTER, TOOMEY, GRASSLEY, CRUZ, AND JOHNSON: On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), I am writing to you to express our support for the Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act, which will enable federal and local law enforcement officers to work together to protect our communities.

NAPO is a coalition of police unions and associations from across the United States that serves to advance the interests of America's law enforcement through legislative and legal advocacy, political action, and education. Founded in 1978, NAPO now represents more than 1,000 police units and associations, 241,000 sworn law enforcement officers, and more than 100,000 citizens who share a common dedication to fair and effective crime control and law enforcement.

The system relies on local law enforcement complying with immigration detainers—requests from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for local law enforcement to hold an illegal immigrant temporarily, to give federal law enforcement an opportunity to take the individual into custody.

Unfortunately, several courts have ruled that local law enforcement officers may be sued for violating the Fourth Amendment if they comply with an immigration detainer, even if the detainer was lawfully issued and the detention would have been legal if carried out by DHS. This means that dangerous criminals cannot be held and must be released. The Stop Sanctuary Policies ad Protect Americans Act solves this problem by explicitly stating that local law enforcement officers have legal authority to comply with immigration detainers. The bill also protects civil liberties, ensuring that someone who has had their constitutional rights violated may sue.

Furthermore, the Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act takes crucial steps to eliminating sanctuary jurisdictions, which pose real threats to the American people, and increases penalties for criminals who re-enter the United States illegally, providing federal, state and local law enforcement vital tools to help keep our communities safe.

NAPO also commends you for preserving flexibility for law enforcement, so that victims of crime and witnesses to crime who are in the U.S. illegally may come forward and cooperate with police.

We look forward to working with your offices to pass this important legislation. If we can provide any assistance, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. JOHNSON,
Executive Director.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Some on the other side of the aisle are criticizing us for politicizing these recent attacks by criminal aliens and releases by sanctuary jurisdictions. We are being ac-

cused of attacking immigrants. However, I just want to note that the Democrats take no shame in politicizing the recent gun violence and promoting legislation that would not have stopped some of the shootings, from Newtown, CT, to Roseburg, OR.

This is not a partisan issue. This bill protects law-abiding people and improves our public safety. Had it been enacted before July 1, individuals like Kate Steinle might still be with us.

I would think we should all be able to agree that people who are in the country illegally and committing crimes should not be released back into the community. There has to be accountability and a commitment to uphold the rule of law. For too long we sat by while sanctuary jurisdictions released dangerous criminals into the community to harm our citizens. It is finally time that we put an end to it, and tomorrow we will have that opportunity. It is time we work toward protecting our communities rather than continue to put them in danger.

I hope all of my colleagues will support this bill and vote to proceed to it tomorrow.

I yield the floor.

STOP SANCTUARY CITIES POLICIES AND PROTECT AMERICANS ACT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, for the first time in more than 2 years, the Senate is turning its attention to an issue related to our broken immigration system. But in stark contrast to the comprehensive, hopeful legislation last reported by the Senate Judiciary Committee, the majority is simply scheduling a show vote today on a divisive, partisan proposal that has not even been considered in the Judiciary Committee. What a difference a change in leadership makes.

There are few topics more fundamental to who we are as a Nation than immigration. A consistent thread through our history is the arrival of new people to this country seeking a better life. Immigration has been an ongoing source of renewal for America—a renewal of our spirit, our creativity, and our economic strength.

Two years ago, the Senate reaffirmed its commitment to these ideals when we approved S. 744, the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act. That legislation, which was supported by 68 Senators from both parties, would have meaningfully improved our great country by making our communities safer, strengthening our economy, improving border security, and keeping families together. It was a remarkable, bipartisan effort that was made better through the extensive amendment process in the Senate Judiciary Committee. It was an example of all that we can accomplish when we actually focus on the hard job of legislating.

The bill we are considering today could not be more different. This legis-

lation is not bipartisan. It does not reflect a desire to meaningfully improve what we all agree is a broken immigration system. Instead, this bill is, as the New York Times editorialized on Saturday, “a class-action slander against an immigrant population that has been scapegoated for the crimes of a few, and left stranded by the failure of legislative reform that would open a path for them to live fully within the law.”

Those who support this bill point to a tragedy that captured our attention this summer. Any time an innocent person is killed, we have an obligation to understand what happened and try to prevent similar tragedies in the future. We all feel that way about the senseless and terribly cruel death of Kate Steinle. Her death was avoidable. Our system failed, period. And it is heart-wrenching that such a beautiful, young life was taken by a man who should never have been free on our streets.

We are motivated to do something in the wake of her death. Just as we are motivated to act in the wake of the senseless killings of nine men and women attending a Bible study class in Charleston, SC. Or the nine innocent people brutally murdered at an Oregon community college. These are moments that demand leadership. We should roll up our sleeves and start to address the problems that led us here. We should address gun violence and the criminals who threaten our safety instead of characterizing entire immigrant communities as criminals.

Unfortunately, it does not appear that we will be given that chance. Rather than marking this legislation up in Committee with input and amendments from both sides, the bill before us was yanked off of the Judiciary Committee agenda once the majority leader decided to bring it straight to the floor. Others can speculate about what motivated the timing of today's vote. What we know for sure is that this action goes against precisely what the majority leader promised last year when he said that “[b]ills should go through Committee. And if Republicans are fortunate enough to gain the majority next year, they would.” It is disappointing that he has broken his promise on legislation of such importance.

If this bill were to become law, it would create two new mandatory minimums and cost us millions of dollars that we do not have. This would deny funding for critical services in local communities and do nothing to fix the broken immigration system we have today. At a time when the Judiciary Committee is engaged in a thoughtful, bipartisan effort to reform our criminal justice system and save taxpayers money in the process, it makes no sense to forgo that process for considering this immigration bill.

If we are really trying to make our communities safer, we should listen to the police officers and law enforcement officials who dedicate their lives to