



January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020

Chairman Lang, Vice Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Leland, & Members of the House Criminal Justice Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity today to speak on behalf of HB 169—Ohio’s Anti-Sanctuary Cities Act. Colleagues, this is the bill that is the will of the people of Ohio—the people we claim to represent. During my time working on this legislation, I have not only received calls and emails of support from my own constituents, I’ve received supportive calls, emails, and letters from almost every corner of Ohio. I’ve received them from the big cities, such as Cincinnati, Dayton, Columbus, and Cleveland. Not only that, but I’ve received them from the suburbs and villages as well from places such as: Hamilton, Sunbury, New Lexington, Fairfield, Oakwood, Philo, West Chester, Utica, Leesburg, & Reynoldsburg, just to name a few.

No matter what corner of Ohio these citizens are from, their cry is the same—sanctuary cities are making our communities *less* safe. These citizens trusted their local elected officials to uphold the law and keep their communities safe. However, instead of becoming beacons of inclusivity and diversity, sanctuary city policies have become beacons for criminal illegal aliens. Many times, these criminals will have entered illegally several times, committed several crimes, yet the sanctuary city simply releases them back into the community.

That brings me to my next point. I am glad that HB 169 is being heard before the Criminal Justice Committee today as it is truly a *criminal justice* bill. We’re not

**Committees:**

Higher Education-Chair  
Health  
Armed Services & Veteran’s Affairs  
Federalism

**Contact Information**

Office: 614-644-5094  
Email: Rep53@ohiohouse.gov



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**REPRESENTATIVE CANDICE KELLER**  
**HOUSE DISTRICT 53**

talking about race, we're not talking about immigrants who live peaceably among others in their communities. We are talking about those who: 1) have committed one crime by illegally entering the U.S., and 2) have committed a second crime that warranted an arrest by local law enforcement. Before the elements of this law would be triggered, there would have to be a crime committed first.

The second reason I am glad that I am here before this committee today is because the discussion needs to be had how these policies are *tying* the hands of local law enforcement behind their backs. In these sanctuary city areas, there have been sheriffs who have backed off holding criminal aliens for fear of lawsuits. Law enforcement should never fear to do the job they were hired for—enforcing the law.

For those who may not understand, the definition of a “sanctuary city” is a political subdivision that refuses to cooperate or participate in federal programs aimed at immigration enforcement, mostly the Secure Communities Program. This is where an officer who may have reasonable cause to believe that a criminal is here illegally can run his information through a database and establish immigration status. Then, an ICE detainer of 48 hours can be established to allow for ICE to travel to the facility and begin removal proceedings. These political subdivisions are not allowing for this type of information sharing in order to keep our communities safe.

And where have these policies gotten us? In 2015 there is the case of Juan Francisco Lopez-Sanchez, an illegal alien who had seven felony convictions in the United States and had been deported five times. Yet, the city of San Francisco, a sanctuary city, released him in to the community. Eleven weeks after Lopez-Sanchez was released, he shot Kathryn Steinle in the back as she strolled with her

**Committees:**

Higher Education-Chair  
Health  
Armed Services & Veteran's Affairs  
Federalism

**Contact Information**

Office: 614-644-5094  
Email: Rep53@ohiohouse.gov



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**REPRESENTATIVE CANDICE KELLER**  
**HOUSE DISTRICT 53**

father along San Francisco's Embarcadero. Her last words were, "Help me, dad!" as she collapsed in her father's arms. She died two hours later in a hospital.

In 2016, the San Francisco PD arrested a criminal illegal alien for cocaine possession with intent to sell, among other charges. This man had already been deported three times previously and had prior convictions for similar offenses, yet was still released. Then, in 2017, SFPD arrested this individual again on the charge of selling narcotics. And yet again, he was released back into the community.

Another case out of SFPD included a man who was a criminal illegal alien and alleged gang member who was arrested more than ten times in four years. His charges included: rape, assault, domestic battery, robbery, and vehicle theft. On each occasion, ICE's request to have this man transferred to their custody or receive notice before his release was denied.

I do not believe this is the type of communities we want as Representatives of this great state. The current underground world of illegal immigration allows for severe abuse, human trafficking, and drug trafficking. Women and children can be most at risk of said abuse as they don't want to report abusive spouses due to their own illegal status. Our state has been hit extremely hard in recent years due to drug trafficking.

No matter your political affiliation, I believe you want Ohio communities to be safe for its citizens. Thus, HB 169 must be a priority for this committee and this General Assembly.

To give a brief summary, HB 169 effects the law enforcement community by requiring: 1) state and local officials to participate in any available federal program that allows the agency to submit to federal authorities information about an

**Committees:**

Higher Education-Chair  
Health  
Armed Services & Veteran's Affairs  
Federalism

**Contact Information**

Office: 614-644-5094  
Email: Rep53@ohiohouse.gov



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**REPRESENTATIVE CANDICE KELLER**  
**HOUSE DISTRICT 53**

arrestee to enable those authorities to determine whether the arrestee is unlawfully present in the U.S., 2) law enforcement agencies to immediately report the identity of an arrestee where the officer has reasonable cause to believe is here unlawfully, 3) law enforcement agencies to cooperate with ICE detainers, and 4) law enforcement agencies must notify its officers and employees of these new requirements.

Secondly, it holds local officials accountable for their sanctuary city policies. Immigration policy and enforcement has always been vested in the Executive branch of government, and these officials are usurping their authority with these policies. First, the bill outright tells political subdivisions they cannot continue to adopt these policies. They cannot forbid law enforcement or other officials from: complying with the requirements concerning law enforcement and/or public benefits, inquiring about a person's name, birthdate, place of birth, or citizenship or immigration status in the course of investigating or prosecuting a crime, maintaining said information, or sending that information to or requesting that information from a federal, state, or local government agency for the purpose of determining citizenship or immigration status.

Also, the bill provides the conditioning of funds to local governments if they adopt such policies. An Ohio resident may file a complaint with the Department of Public Safety that their local subdivision is in non-compliance. Then, that subdivision needs to prove that they are indeed in compliance and following the law. If not, there are procedures in the bill where funding can be withheld and officials may be held liable if someone has a personal injury, death, or property loss where sanctuary city policies were a proximate cause of the crime.

**Committees:**

Higher Education-Chair  
Health  
Armed Services & Veteran's Affairs  
Federalism

**Contact Information**

Office: 614-644-5094  
Email: Rep53@ohiohouse.gov



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**REPRESENTATIVE CANDICE KELLER**  
**HOUSE DISTRICT 53**

There are numerous organizations in support of this type of legislation, including: ACT for America, the Federation for American Immigration Reform, the Ohio Jobs & Justice PAC, the National Sheriff's Association, the National Police Association, and Advocates for Victims of Illegal Alien Crime.

Colleagues, I could stand before you all day and name crime after crime that has been committed at the hand of criminal illegal aliens. These are not people who are just living peaceably in their communities. These aren't even those who entered illegally but are just working hard to feed a family and escape extreme circumstances. These are people who come to our country illegally and then have no regard for the rule of law. This cannot be accepted in any peaceable society. I urge you to consider your own communities when considering this bill. I would hope that you would see that now is the time to stop tying the hands of law enforcement, stop allowing criminal aliens back onto our streets, and to start standing up for peaceable citizens and the rule of law.

I now yield to my joint sponsor, Representative Niraj Antani.

**Committees:**

Higher Education-Chair  
Health  
Armed Services & Veteran's Affairs  
Federalism

**Contact Information**

Office: 614-644-5094  
Email: Rep53@ohiohouse.gov