

Key, Lori

From: Rafael Torres, III, Esq. <rafael@torres-firm.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 17, 2020 5:22 PM
To: ClerkoftheBoard
Subject: Full Statement

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Good afternoon,

I did not realize that our time for public comment was cut short. I'd like to respectfully request that my full statement be included in the record:

My name is Rafael Torres, III. I am an attorney licensed to practice law in our State, and my work is almost exclusively immigration based. I live and work in District 4 of Ventura County.

I have many concerns related to the presentation today. First, as the sheriff mentioned, the statistics presented today are for the calendar year 2019. As such, it would be helpful to have this information well before the forum so that we, the public can meaningfully review it.

Second, I'm concerned about the increase in misdemeanor booking related to detainers. This is a large liability issue because that is an immense pool of cases that may relate to potential violations of the California Values Act SB54. It is clear that no conviction classified under prop 47 can be the basis for cooperation with ICE, but as you know, some offenses have mixed status grounds, which means that they can either be charged as misdemeanors or felonies. If this sounds confusing, it's because it is! The more you cooperate with ICE and skirt the safeguards of SB54, the more opportunities you have to get it wrong. No one is perfect, but several hundred cases give a huge margin for mistakes and there are liability issues for failing to comply with SB54.

Third, we should consider the additional work and costs of analyzing every possible case for SB54 safeguards and the work of communicating that information to ICE. All this extra work and money spent are unnecessary burdens on the budget of our county. You do not have to do this.

Fourth, sanctuary policies result in safer communities and lower crime rates. I'd respectfully direct you to review a study published just last month in the Journal of Crime and Justice confirming that increased immigrant populations in communities reduce the overall crime rate.

If the sheriff takes an official position to not cooperate with ice, this will help ease confusion and fear among our community, it will provide cost savings to the County, it will reduce the county's potential liability, and, most importantly, it will help keep families united. There is no good reason to continue cooperating with ICE. Other counties in California have done so and we should do the same.

You are not responsible for the reprehensible conditions maintained in ICE detention facilities. I can personally attest based on my own experience that these detention centers are deplorable places and they are not capable of safeguarding detainees against the spread of COVID-19, which in turn hurts our collective health. Neither are you responsible for the injustices of the immigration system, but you are responsible for your contribution to this system. For the good of our county, I ask you to stop all cooperation with ICE.

Sincerely,

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