



Philadelphia to End Contract Allowing ICE Access to City's Police Database

Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney and City Solicitor Marcel Pratt announced July 27 that their city will let expire a decade-old contract with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) that currently allows ICE access to the Philadelphia Police Department's Preliminary Arraignment Reporting System (PARS). The PARS agreement with ICE will expire August 31.



A news release posted by the city's Office of Immigrant Affairs Law Department quoted Kenny as follows:

For some time now we have been concerned that ICE uses PARS in inappropriate ways, including to conduct investigations that result in immigration enforcement against law-abiding Philadelphia residents. My Administration engaged in dialogue with ICE in recent weeks about its use of PARS data, and rather than allay these concerns, ICE officials in fact confirmed many of them. Such practices sow fear and distrust in Philadelphia's great immigrant community, and make it more difficult for our Police Department to solve crimes. I cannot in good conscience allow the agreement to continue.

Pratt, also quoted in the release, repeated Kenney's assertion that ICE was using PARS data to enforce the law against "law-abiding" residents, stating in part: "We have concluded that ICE's use of PARS can result in arrests of otherwise law-abiding residents for civil immigration violations when the agency executes an operation due to information found in PARS."

These statements by Kenney and Pratt ignore the fact that someone who is in the country illegally has broken our country's immigration laws, and therefore is not "law abiding."

An AP report quoted a statement by U.S. Homeland Security spokeswoman Katie Waldman, who called Philadelphia's decision irresponsible and said the city will end up "harboring criminal aliens."

"Sanctuary-city policies make American communities like Philadelphia less safe by putting the rights of criminal aliens over the safety and security of American citizens," Waldman said. "Despite the misguided action taken by Philadelphia today, DHS will continue to work to remove illegal aliens and uphold public safety."

As a sanctuary city, Philadelphia had already limited cooperation with immigration enforcement. It won't honor detainer requests from ICE and release inmates to the agency without a judicial warrant.

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Written by [Warren Mass](#) on July 30, 2018

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