



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on February 2, 2017

Texas: Gov. Abbott Bans Funds for Sanctuary Cities; Senate Bill to Demand Compliance with ICE

Texas Republicans — from the governor’s office to the state senate — are at work to eliminate sanctuary cities in the Lone Star State. During his State of the State address on January 31, Governor Greg Abbott included banning sanctuary cities among four emergency items he wants to see put into effect in his state. (Sanctuary cities are those that have adopted a policy of not cooperating with federal immigration officials by sharing information about illegal aliens whom they have detained for other offenses, or holding such aliens so federal officers can pick them up and deport them.)



Abbott tweeted on January 31: “I’m declaring banning sanctuary cities in [#Texas](#) an emergency item. [#TXSotS](#)”

While Abbott wasn’t specific about what provisions a Texas anti-sanctuary law would include, his actions indicate it would include withholding state funding from such cities. As we [noted in a recent article](#), President Donald Trump signed an executive order on January 25 stating that “jurisdictions that willfully refuse to comply with 8 U.S.C. 1373 [sanctuary jurisdictions] are not eligible to receive Federal grants.”

Abbott’s official website posted a January 23 press release that stated he sent a letter to Travis County (Austin) Sheriff Sally Hernandez strongly urging her to reverse her policy directive forbidding Travis County Sheriff’s Office employees from cooperating with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detainer requests — in effect making Travis County a sanctuary county.

In the letter, Abbott called Hernandez’ directive “dangerous” and “shortsighted.” He added that Hernandez’ decision is “not a pronouncement of sound public policy; it is a dangerous game of political Russian roulette—with the lives of Texans at stake.”

Abbott’s letter went on to explain that Hernandez’ policy, if not revoked before the February 1, 2017 effective date, would result in the forfeiture of subsequent grant money.

The Fort Worth *Star-Telegram* reported on February 1 that Texas Republican Governor Greg Abbott blocked funding for sanctuary cities for the first time after Hernandez said the Travis County’s and Austin’s jails would no longer honor most federal immigration detainers.

The *Star-Telegram* reported that Travis County leaders condemned losing \$1.5 million in grant money earmarked for crime victim services, courts, and other programs, and they voiced support for Hernandez. The report noted that Hernandez, an elected Democrat in Texas’ most liberal city, announced after Trump’s inauguration that her jails would only honor immigration holds in murder, aggravated sexual assault, and human trafficking cases.



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Travis County Judge Sarah Eckhardt wrote a letter to Abbott in which she said she was confident that Hernandez is within the law. "I am certain you have come to the same conclusion; else you would not be seeking to change current State law to put all Texas Sheriffs in the service of the United States Department of Homeland Security," Eckhardt wrote.

The day after Abbott delivered his state of the state address, in which he declared that banning sanctuary cities would be an emergency item, state Senator Charles Perry (R-Lubbock) and members of the Senate Republican Caucus announced their support for Senate Bill 4, to accomplish that objective. "The integrity of our civil and criminal justice system is built on the premise it applies to everyone equally. When you undermine that by having individuals decide which laws they will apply, when they will apply them and how they will apply them you begin to create a perception of a double standard," Perry was quoted by KVUE TV in Austin.

Among other provisions, SB4 states: "State grant funds for a local entity shall be denied for the state fiscal year following the year in which a final judicial determination in an action brought under Section 364.005 is made that the entity has intentionally prohibited or discouraged the enforcement of immigration laws."

KVUE quoted Perry's description of a "sanctuary city" as follows:

When they have policy, implied or implicit, formal or informal, or, if you will, just kind of soft throughout their system that says you cannot enforce the ICE detainers or you cannot enforce the inquiry provisions that have been held constitutional, you can't enforce these laws, then you have a sanctuary city."

The station also quoted a comment from Senator Dawn Buckingham (R-Lakeway), who lives in Travis County and backs the bill. "We have a clear message to our law enforcement officers, obey the rule of law, respect the detainers or else there are dire consequences," said Buckingham.

As Texas advances a measure to end sanctuary cities, the opposite is occurring in California. An [article posted by The New American on February 1](#) noted that Democrats in California's state Senate have advanced bills to create statewide sanctuary for illegal immigrants, provide money to pay for immigration lawyers on behalf of immigrants facing deportation, and stop efforts to create a Muslim registry. While such a registry has not been proposed, some California senators believe it will be on President Trump's itinerary.

That article stated that one of the proposed sanctuary state bills, SB 54, also known as the California Values Act, would prohibit state and local agencies from enforcing immigration laws or from working with immigration enforcement agencies. The legislation reads:

In no event shall state or local law enforcement agencies or school police or security departments transfer an individual to federal immigration authorities for purposes of immigration enforcement or detain an individual at the request of federal immigration authorities for purposes of immigration enforcement absent a judicial warrant....

The attorney general ... shall publish model policies limiting immigration enforcement to the fullest extent possible consistent with federal and state law at public schools, health facilities operated by the state or a political subdivision of the state, courthouses, and shelters, to ensure that they remain safe and accessible to all California residents, regardless of immigration status.

The bill directs the same entities not to use money or equipment to "interrogate, detain, detect, or



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arrest persons for immigration enforcement purposes.”

The article concludes by reporting that The People Rising, an advocacy group that supports strict immigration enforcement, has announced that it will actively oppose the bills. The group’s executive director Robin Hvidston notes, “It actually puts the nation at risk when our state is crafting bills that do not uphold or respect the federal law.”

Related articles:

[San Francisco Sues Trump to Stop Executive Order About Sanctuary Cities](#)

[California Advances Bills to Become Sanctuary State](#)

[Illegal Alien Sues San Francisco for Violating Sanctuary City Law](#)

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