



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on January 15, 2019

## Urban Sheriffs Quitting ICE's 287(g) Program; Rural Sheriffs Joining It

Some sheriffs who were newly elected in urban counties last November are ending participation in 287(g), an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) program that allows county sheriffs to assist federal authorities in deporting aliens living in the United States illegally. These include Mecklenburg and Wake counties in North Carolina, and Anne Arundel County in Maryland.



Under the 287(g) program, sheriff's deputies check detainees' immigration status during the booking process using computer equipment and databases provided by ICE.

A January 13 report from WSOC-TV news in Charlotte, North Carolina, stated that Gaston County Sheriff Alan Cloninger will continue to implement 287(g) even after others across the state have decided to drop it.

Stateline, a news service of the Pew Charitable Trusts, after an analysis of federal and state data, found that while urban counties across the country increasingly are withdrawing from the 287(g) program, many counties in more conservative suburban and rural areas have joined the program since the start of the Trump administration. The only urban counties to join were those encompassing Fort Worth, Texas, and Knoxville, Tennessee.

"There seems to be an increasing split, where smaller counties are on board and bigger counties are not," Stateline quoted Lena Graber, a staff attorney who follows 287(g) issues at the Immigrant Legal Resource Center, an immigration advocacy group in San Francisco.

"There are a lot of new places signing contracts [for 287(g)], but the major cities have rejected it," said Chris Rickerd, an attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union, which opposes the program. In California, two large counties — Orange County near Los Angeles and San Diego County — were forced to drop 287(g) by a state law that took effect in 2018.

Stateline used Maryland as an example to illustrate the split between urban and more suburban or rural counties when it came to their approach toward 287(g). Anne Arundel County (which includes Annapolis) dropped out of the program after Democratic County Executive Stuart Pittman was elected in November on a promise to end 287(g).

But in suburban Harford County (north of Baltimore) and in more rural Frederick County on the Pennsylvania border, sheriffs participating in 287(g) won reelection.

A Reuters report on November 27, 2017 observed that since the beginning of the Trump administration, 29 additional police departments had joined the 287(g) program, which doubled the program's size in 10 months.



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