



OFFICE OF THE
SHERIFF OF ROCKINGHAM COUNTY

Sam S. Page, Sheriff

Physical Address:
Law Enforcement Center
170 NC 65 Reidsville, NC 27320

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 128 Wentworth, NC 27375

Non-Emergency	(336) 634-3232
Records	(336) 634-3235
Detectives	(336) 634-3238
Administration	(336) 634-3239
Animal Control	(336) 634-3300
Jail	(336) 634-3236
Fax	(336) 634-3064
Public Information	(336) 634-3065

rockinghamsheriff.com

Monday, July 15, 2013

Dear Fellow Sheriffs,

First of all, thank you for your tremendous assistance in opposing the Gang of Eight comprehensive immigration bill recently, and for signing on to our growing list of sheriffs, federal agents, and other law enforcement officials across the United States who expressed concern about the public safety problems raised by the Senate bill.

Since January of 2013, the Gang of Eight, led by Senators Chuck Schumer of New York and Marco Rubio of Florida, presented to the U.S. Senate S.744, a comprehensive immigration reform bill. The bill offered instant legalization for millions of illegal aliens and doubled legal immigration and guest workers, while offering non-binding plans to secure the border, implement E-Verify and an entry-exit tracking system.

In April, it was presented as a public safety bill – but observers quickly discovered that the border and enforcement provisions were optional, and that certain other measures actually would compromise public safety and result in the legalization and admission of criminals, fraudsters, and national security threats. Unfortunately, the Gang of Eight had failed to involve representatives from ICE and other relevant DHS agencies, nor state and local law enforcement representatives who could have assisted in crafting a potentially workable piece of legislation.

The bill's many flaws, particularly putting amnesty before border security and enforcement, put it in direct conflict with the consensus position crafted by the National Sheriff's Association (attached), which emphasizes enforcement and security with the support and participation of local law enforcement, and opposes immediate mass amnesty.

While the Senate was debating S.744, Rep. Trey Gowdy, Chair of the House immigration subcommittee, introduced The SAFE Act (H.R.2278). This bill truly aims to address the public safety problems caused by uncontrolled immigration. Representative Gowdy was apparently motivated to introduce this bill by his concern for people in our communities who have been harmed by the criminal acts of those here in defiance of our laws. It has been approved by the House Judiciary committee, and hopefully will be voted on by the full House this year.

Like many of my colleagues, I believe the SAFE Act will restore the rule of law in the arena of immigration, provide tools and resources to ICE for enforcement, allow and encourage local agencies to help, and hold DHS leaders accountable through Congressional legislation and oversight. Together with Chris Crane, who leads the ICE officers union, I testified in support of this bill at a hearing in Washington in June.

A one-page summary of the most important public safety provisions is attached.

The SAFE Act is already the subject of emotional attacks by advocacy groups. I was shocked by some of the statements and assumptions made by representatives of these groups at the hearing last month. These opponents have suggested that local law enforcement officers are incapable of understanding immigration law, that they are unable or unwilling to enforce such laws fairly without discriminating against minorities or legal immigrants, and that they are unable to distinguish between victims and offenders, thus sowing distrust in immigrant communities. They even questioned the motives of those victimized by criminal aliens. They claimed that law enforcement officers are adamantly opposed to any involvement in immigration matters.

Of course, they are wrong, and that is why I am asking for your help in communicating to Congress and the public that we as leaders in law enforcement do support the SAFE Act.

Please consider taking the following steps to ensure that this bill moves forward:

1. Read the attached position statement approved by the National Sheriff's Association. Note that the NSA does not support any form of amnesty. We do support enforcement of our laws, and believe that local law enforcement agencies have the ability and should be permitted to assist federal agencies in this mission, which profoundly affects our communities. We believe that our borders must be secured to guarantee the safety of our citizens within this great Nation.
2. Reply to me by e-mail or phone to add your name to the national list of law enforcement leaders and associations that support the SAFE Act.
3. Contact your U.S. Congressional Representatives and ask them to support The SAFE Act (H.R.2278) or contact U.S. Congressional Representatives and ask them to only support true public safety legislation.
4. Encourage your colleagues to join with their colleagues who believe in protecting our borders and our citizens. Contact me at the address below to assist in our efforts to encourage our U.S. Congress to support this legislation, which genuinely advances public safety.

The immigration issue is one of the most important ones facing our Nation now and for many years to come. If we fail to secure our international borders, ports of entry, and our communities, we are failing the citizens that we have sworn to protect and serve.

Please join me and other Sheriffs across the United States in this effort. You can reach me at the Rockingham County Sheriff's Office, North Carolina @ 336-634-3239 or email: sheriffpage@gmail.com

Sincerely,

Sheriff Sam S. Page
Honorable Sheriff of Rockingham County, North Carolina