



# Sanctuary Policy is Bad Public Policy

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## What Are Sanctuary Policies?

Sanctuary policies are laws, ordinances, resolutions, executive actions, or any initiatives that prohibit local officials from inquiring, acting on, or reporting an individual's immigration status—even when there is reasonable suspicion that an individual is in the country illegally. Many sanctuary policies restrict law enforcement agencies from cooperating with federal immigration officials, including prohibiting their compliance with immigration detainers. The U.S. is currently home to more than **300 sanctuary jurisdictions**.

## Why Should State and Local Leaders Oppose Them?

**SANCTUARY POLICIES THREATEN PUBLIC SAFETY.** According to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement estimates, roughly **2.1 million criminal aliens are living in the U.S.**, over 1.9 million of which are removable. These criminal aliens continue to live in communities and engage in further criminal activity when state and local law enforcement are prohibited from cooperating with federal immigration officials.

**SANCTUARY POLICIES ARE EXPENSIVE.** Illegal immigration is a huge burden to state and local governments, costing taxpayers an estimated **\$113 billion** in 2013. A majority of this expense – \$84 billion – is borne by state and local taxpayers. These costs come in the form of educational, healthcare, welfare, and law enforcement expenditures to illegal aliens and their families. By giving them a place to live and work where they can go undetected, sanctuary policies encourage further illegal immigration that only serves to increase these costs.

**SANCTUARY POLICIES CONFLICT WITH FEDERAL LAW.** In 1996, Congress adopted the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act to prohibit state and local governments from restricting their employees from sharing and receiving information regarding illegal aliens with the federal government. Sanctuary policies that shield criminal aliens from the administration of federal law conflict with the execution of immigration law as Congress intended.

**SANCTUARY POLICIES THREATEN NATIONAL SECURITY.** It is no secret that Americans face serious threats from terrorist organizations. With the **FBI pursuing hundreds of active extremist investigations**, federal agents are stretched thin and depend heavily on intelligence provided by state and local law enforcement. By impeding cooperation with federal immigration officials, sanctuary policies create an environment where terrorists and other criminal aliens can go undetected and uninterrupted.

**SANCTUARY POLICIES ARE UNFAIR TO LEGAL IMMIGRANTS.** Tolerating illegal immigration and providing a “safe haven” for illegal aliens is unfair to immigrants who respect our nation’s laws. In addition to waiting months or years to come here, legal immigrants abide by the entry, employment, health, and processing laws and regulations set by our government. Besides giving future prospective immigrants little incentive to follow the law, sanctuary policies are an affront to those who do it the right way.

### **What Can State and Local Lawmakers Do To Address Sanctuary Policies in Their Communities?**

- ✓ Enact legislation to prohibit sanctuary policies.
- ✓ Restrict funding to jurisdictions that ignore the law.
- ✓ Require state and local cooperation with federal authorities.
- ✓ Grant victims of sanctuary policies a voice by allowing them to sue the responsible entity.

For more information on Sanctuary Policies, visit [FAIRus.org](https://fairus.org).