

Statement of Congressman Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S (AZ-04)
Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security, and Related Agencies
Members' Day Hearing
March 1, 2017

Thank you Mr. Chairman for the opportunity to testify before the Subcommittee. I'm Congressman Paul Gosar and I represent Arizona's Fourth Congressional District. I am also Chairman of the Congressional Western Caucus, Chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, and Vice-Chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on the Interior. There are a number of critical programs and activities addressed by the Homeland Security Appropriations bill that are of great importance to Arizona. I would like to take this opportunity to discuss several of those here today.

The first important measure I would like to advocate for today is the defunding of sanctuary cities and jurisdictions. The Center for Immigration Studies has reported that there are more than 276 sanctuary jurisdictions nationwide. These cities and localities have refused to comply with federal immigration laws and have "released more than 8,000 criminal-alien offenders over eight months. In the same amount of time, nearly one-out-of-every-four released criminals had been arrested for subsequent offenses."

The shocking case of Kate Steinle in San Francisco in 2015, revealed the danger sanctuary cities pose to our Republic. Steinle was shot and killed by Juan Francisco Lopez-Sanchez, an illegal immigrant who had been deported five times. San Francisco authorities were asked to detain Sanchez until he could be turned over to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials. The city declined and held Sanchez in jail for less than a month on a 20-year-old drug charge before releasing him on April 15, 2015 – less than two months before he killed Steinle. The House has voted and passed language that prohibits federal funds from going to

sanctuary cities five different times in recent years. Last year, 42 members of the House cosigned a similar request to this Subcommittee. I respectfully request inclusion of this potentially life-saving provision in this fiscal year's bill.

The next measure I would like to advocate for deals with preventing funds for the implementation of former President Obama's executive actions on immigration. In his first six years in office, President Obama stated at least 22 times that he did not have the authority to unilaterally change immigration policy. Yet, that is exactly what he attempted to do by issuing unconstitutional executive actions in November 2014, with the intent of creating the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans (DAPA) program and expanding the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. The Obama Administration's executive actions clearly infringe on the authority of Congress to control immigration matters. In 2015, the House passed H.AMD.6 to the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act to defund DACA and DAPA. Inserting this rider in the FY18 Homeland Security Appropriations bill will provide assurances to the public that we will do all we can to put an end to this lawlessness and to defend our Constitution. Last year, 36 members of the House joined me in submitting this appropriations language request. I ask that the Subcommittee uphold the Rule of Law by including this important language in this year's fiscal bill.

The American people have made it abundantly clear that they wish to see our southern border fortified. For decades, a porous border has allowed millions of unlawful immigrants to enter our country. The Secure Fence Act of 2006 (Pub.L. 109-367), which was signed into law by President George W. Bush, required the Secretary of Homeland Security to achieve and maintain "operational control" over the entire international land and maritime borders of the United States" and called for two layers of reinforced fencing in parts of California, Arizona,

New Mexico, and Texas totaling more than 700 miles. This fencing was intended to deter crossings where illegal activity is a high risk, but DHS has yet to complete the law's fencing requirements. Security fences work, and completion of the double-layered fence on our border with Mexico should be a top priority. Last year, 21 members of the House joined me in submitting an appropriation's language request on this matter. I believe this should take priority and respectfully ask for inclusion of these resources in this fiscal year's bill.

The fiscal year 2017 Homeland Security Appropriations bill provided \$5.9 billion for ICE. Included in that legislation was \$3.2 billion for detention and removal programs which include Criminal Alien Program operations that partner with local law enforcement to process, arrest, and book illegal immigrants into state and local detention facilities. I also strongly support funding for State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP). I applaud the Subcommittee for prioritizing significant resources for this program last fiscal year and would again like to ask this body to ensure sufficient funding for SCAAP in this fiscal year's bill.. Additionally, I would like to see the amendment offered by Mr. Aderholt of Alabama – which prohibited federal funding for ICE to provide abortions – and the amendment offered by Mr. Culberson of Texas – which required ICE to detain Priority 1 and Priority 2 illegal aliens – both of which were adopted by the subcommittee, included in the base text of this fiscal year's bill.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify today. I would like to thank all members of the Subcommittee for your important work and hope this fiscal year's bill is just as good as the excellent legislation brought forth last year. Thank you Mr. Chairman and, with that, I yield back.