

Data Shows Sanctuary Policies Make Communities Safer, Healthier and More Prosperous

Isobel Mohyeddin

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ENFORCEMENT

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The Trump administration is threatening to revoke federal funding for cities and localities that limit local officials' role in federal immigration enforcement – a coercive tactic to get local officials to cede their power and bend to a violent nativist vision. Threats to welcoming policies aren't just coming from the White House, however. Congress is soon to consider the [“No Bailouts for Sanctuary Cities Act,”](#) a bill that would plunge cities and states into utter chaos by stripping wide swaths of federal fundings from communities, leaving individuals and families without access to school lunches, emergency Medicaid, and food assistance programs.

Despite arguments to the contrary from the Trump administration and congressional Republicans, state and local policies that welcome immigrants make our communities safer, healthier, and more prosperous. They are also legal, sound, and protected by the 10th Amendment. Any attempt to threaten or intimidate local elected officials into ceding their power to follow orders from the Oval Office is an attack on local communities.

Places with Welcoming Policies are Safer for All

Again and again, studies show that there is no correlation between sanctuary policies and increased crime. [A 2017 study](#) examined overall violent crime, property crime, and assault rates in 111 cities from 2000 through 2014 both before and after the implementation of sanctuary policies. The findings of this study and [others](#) show no statistical relationship between an increase

 in crime rates and implementation of sanctuary policies. There is, on the other hand, a documented decrease in crime in cities and states that prioritize welcoming instead of targeting immigrants. Data from [a 2017 study by Professor Tom Wong, NILC and CAP](#) found that sanctuary jurisdictions report higher median household income, less poverty, higher employment-to-population ratios, and lower unemployment rates.

Our communities are stronger, safer, and healthier when we can all safely access the services and care we need without fear. Those services include preventative care, medical treatment and public education – all of which are protected under policies where jurisdictions chose to not prioritize ICE's agenda over their own residents' needs.

Increased Enforcement is Harmful


Not only is increased immigration enforcement statistically ineffective in reducing crime, but collaboration between local law enforcement and federal agents actually *worsens* public safety, as it erodes trust between communities, local law enforcement, and public institutions. People are more afraid to access [health care](#), [take their kids to schools](#), or [report when they have been victims of a crime](#) when faced with the chilling effect of immigration enforcement. These consequences are exacerbated by the Trump administration's decision to [rip away](#) long-standing protections against immigration enforcement in particularly sensitive locations such as schools, religious institutions, and healthcare facilities.

Sociologists from the University of Arizona, the University of North Carolina, and the American Immigration Council published a [robust review](#) of the existing literature on the relationship between sanctuary policies and crime in 2017. They found that policies marginalizing newcomers breed mistrust of local authorities and erode the public safety policy-makers claim to want to protect.

The Economic Benefits of Immigrants and the Burden of Enforcement

While immigrants are valued beyond their financial and workforce contributions, the data is clear that protecting our immigrant neighbors is far more economically advantageous than entangling local law enforcement with federal agencies.

For many years, [cities](#) have been enriched or [revitalized](#) by the presence of immigrants and refugees. Immigrants [comprise](#) fourteen percent of the country's population but account for 17% of the gross domestic product, and [pay](#) \$524 billion in taxes, and have \$1.4 trillion in spending power. According to the American Immigration Council, immigrants account for 22.8 percent of

 New York State's population and 27.4 percent of its labor force, supporting the entire state's economy in many ways. Local communities face high costs for collaboration. One study shows that working with ICE costs local communities upwards of \$3.28 billion annually. Sanctuary policies, conversely, can lead to \$101 million in savings for local communities. Beyond the well-documented economic contributions of immigrants and their family members, our communities benefit from being culturally rich and diverse.

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Equating immigration status with criminality is wrong, both ethically and statistically. While politicians continue to lead with hateful rhetoric and equate “sanctuary” with harboring criminals, the data shows that policies that protect marginalized communities benefit all of us.

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