

Texas Passes Anti-Sanctuary Bill, Criminalizes Behavior of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs Who Do Not Comply

written by GEG | May 11, 2017



Texas Governor Greg Abbott signed a law that forbids agencies of the state or its political subdivisions from acting as illegal-alien sanctuaries. The statute criminalizes behavior by officials such as police chiefs and sheriffs who refuse to fully cooperate with federal immigration enforcement. It also establishes civil fines of up to \$25,000 daily for towns, cities, and counties that violate the anti-sanctuary law. This will be hotly contested by those who advocate open borders. —GEG

Texas's New Anti-Sanctuary Law Draws Predictable Reactions from Open-Borders Advocates

On May 7, Texas Governor Greg Abbott signed into law **SB (Senate Bill) 4**, a statute forbidding agencies of the state or its political subdivisions from acting as illegal alien sanctuaries. The statute, which comes into effect on September 1, goes so far as to criminalize behavior by officials such as police chiefs and sheriffs who refuse to fully cooperate with federal immigration enforcement efforts by providing information and honoring detainers filed against aliens arrested for criminal offenses. It also establishes civil fines of up to \$25,000 daily for towns, cities, and counties that violate the anti-sanctuary law.

Reaction from open-borders advocates such as MALDEF (the Mexican American Legal Defense

and Education Fund) and other similar groups was swift and predictable, condemning the statute as “racist” or “xenophobic” even though it applies equally to all aliens, and singles out none on the basis of nationality or ethnicity.

The *Washington Times* reports that the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) went so far as to issue a travel alert to warn Americans traveling to Texas after September 1 that they could be entering a “low-rights zone”. This is absurdist hysteria, of course, since the basis of the legislation is to curb efforts to harbor and shield *aliens*, not American citizens, from the reach of federal immigration officers. In fact, the law’s primary focus is on alien criminals, and thus seems to me a vehicle for restoring common sense, preserving public safety, acknowledging the importance of the rule of law, and precious little else. But that isn’t the preferred narrative of open-borders advocates, who like to downplay the adverse impact on public safety – including in immigrant communities – when local police release criminal aliens back into the community rather than turn them over to federal agents for deportation proceedings.

Also reacting to the statute, Honduras’s deputy foreign minister *predicted an exodus* from the state of the approximately 120,000 Honduran nationals living there. This would seem to be a curious over-reaction on the part of the foreign ministry, since there is no reason for Hondurans lawfully in the United States (or even, frankly, illegal Hondurans who don’t commit crimes) to worry about the effects of a law primarily geared toward prohibiting state and local officials from shielding aliens who have been charged with criminal offenses. Only time will tell whether this dire prediction comes to pass, but I’m taking it with the proverbial grain of salt.

Another interesting reaction to the new law comes from LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens), Maverick County, and the town of El Cenizo (which is in Webb County), all of which have *teamed up to sue the state*, claiming that the bill violates the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution. This seems, at least to me, odd in the extreme.

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