



Fact Sheet: Governor Glenn Youngkin Calls for Sanctuary Cities Ban

Overview: Governor Glenn Youngkin is introducing a budget proposal to ban “sanctuary cities” and ensure Virginia taxpayers are not funding localities who are refusing to comply with federal law to deport illegal immigrants who have committed a crime.

This proposal requires local law enforcement and jail officials to fully comply with US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detainers and provide notification to ICE 48 hours prior to the release of an illegal immigrant who has committed a crime.

If localities adopt a “sanctuary city” practice – that is policy or practice that impedes communication or cooperation with ICE – **they will now lose state funding.**

The DCJS Director will be required to withhold 599 funding to those localities and the Compensation Board will be required to withhold state per diem payments to local and regional jails.

Why It Matters:

- We must prioritize the safety of the citizens of the Commonwealth and stop localities from returning criminals, who entered the country illegally, back out into our communities to potentially commit more crimes.
- This November, an illegal immigrant from Honduras attacked and raped a woman on a hiking trail in Herndon. This individual has a criminal history in the region dating back to 2022 including weapons, auto theft, indecent exposure, and sexual assaults, yet he was repeatedly let back out into the community due to Fairfax County’s sanctuary policies.¹
- In July 2023, a Honduran national who entered the U.S. illegally was arrested in Fairfax County on charges related to child sex crimes. ICE issued an immigration detainer; however, the Fairfax County Sheriff’s Office did not honor it, resulting in the individual’s release on bond. He was later re-arrested in February 2024 on additional child sex crime charges. This case intensified debates over the county’s policies regarding cooperation with federal immigration authorities.²
- Crimes like these are completely preventable if localities cooperate with ICE, including giving them proper notice prior to release.

¹ [Man who is in the US illegally and allegedly raped a woman has long criminal history](#), November 2024

² [Fairfax has not honored detainers on undocumented immigrants who commit sex crimes: ICE](#), July 2024

- These reckless and irresponsible local sanctuary policies permit criminals to re-enter our communities and intentionally impede the duties of federal law enforcement.

Local Sanctuary Policies:

- Several localities and local jails in Virginia have implemented sanctuary policies in recent years including not recording immigration status, ignoring immigration detainers issued by ICE, not notifying ICE prior to inmate release, or not holding inmates for adequate time after notification of release to ICE.
 - In 2021 Fairfax County’s Board of Supervisors passed the Trust Policy which “contains standards to ensure that employees do not voluntarily cooperate with enforcement of federal civil immigration laws.”
 - In December 2022, the Arlington County Sheriff informed advocacy groups that her department will no longer voluntarily cooperate with ICE. This followed Arlington County Board’s July 2022 adoption of their Trust Policy which states they “will comply with all applicable federal or state regulations mandating cooperation with ICE and other federal immigration officials...but will otherwise restrict sharing of personally identifiable information that could be used to further immigration enforcement efforts.”
 - Richmond’s 2017 mayoral directive states that the “Richmond Police Department will not consent to participate with the Immigration Customs Enforcement 287(g) agreements, and in the interest of public safety and protecting communities, will maintain its policy of not inquiring as to the place of birth or immigration status of individuals with whom it comes into contact.”
 - In 2007, Alexandria passed Resolution 2246 which states that “beyond what is required by State and Federal law, the City and its various agencies will neither make inquiries about nor report on the citizenship of those who seek the protection of its laws or the use of its services.”
- These sanctuary policies allow violent criminals to be released back into our communities. As of November 27, 2024, 945 inmates incarcerated in Virginia Department of Corrections facilities had an open immigration detainer.³
 - 91% of those had a violent most serious offense
 - 21% had murder as their most serious offense
 - 41% had rape/sexual assault as their most serious offense
- **Please note: The Virginia Department of Corrections *fully* complies with ICE detainers and proactively works with ICE to help them remove illegal immigrants who have committed crimes through deportation.**

³ Virginia Department of Corrections Research Unit

Banning Sanctuary Cities:

- This proposal mandates cooperation with ICE, mandates pre-release notice, and requires the Commonwealth to withhold 599 funding and jail per diem
- This change will ensure local facilities fully comply with ICE detainers and provide sufficient notice to ICE prior to releasing an illegal immigrant who has committed a crime, allowing ICE adequate time to take custody of them prior to release.

Cracking Down on Gang Violence in the Commonwealth:

- Prior to today's announcement, the Governor has taken several other actions also aimed at reducing crime in the Commonwealth and keeping our communities safe.
- Operation Bold Blue Line (OBBL) has formed innovative law enforcement partnerships and taken targeted actions to dismantle networks of violent crime.
- A key component of OBBL is the Operation Ceasefire Virginia effort, led by Attorney General Jason Miyares. The Commonwealth has invested \$66 million in Ceasefire and other gang violence intervention programs, a completely new effort that began in 2022.
- These efforts have delivered results. Comparing YTD 2023 to 2024, there has been a 34% decrease in murders and a 12% decrease in violent crimes in OBBL cities. Violent crime across Virginia is also down 11%.
- Governor Youngkin also issued Executive Order 41 earlier this year, launching the Next Level Partnership to Combat Gangs and Gang Violence, which establishes a centralized repository for gang-related data, creates a gang intelligence task force, bolsters anti-gang awareness and youth prevention strategies, and deters criminal gang activity through criminal justice personnel training, enhanced prosecution and investigations.