

First up were directives for jails and state prisons to not honor holds by federal immigration authorities, seeking to take into federal custody inmates being release who had pending immigration cases. A new bill, SB 54, seeks to go further and bar law enforcement from virtually all cooperation with federal immigration authorities. According to Senator Kevin De Leon, SB 54 would "prevent federal agents from rounding up undocumented prisoners in jails and deporting them, ~~where they can return and commit more crime.~~" [Of course, there are multiple citizens in California victimized by those released from custody after immigration holds were ignored. The most infamous case is the murder of Kate Steinle, killed by a man released to the streets by the City of San Francisco after it refused to honor the immigration hold that was placed when the man was transferred to San Francisco from federal custody.]

Other pending political efforts include a bill barring law enforcement from assisting in the enforcement of federal marijuana laws. This bill is unanimously opposed by law enforcement as the bill shields those who will use a California state license for marijuana to violate federal law. ~~Up north,~~ The City of San Francisco withdrew from the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force, a move which followed the Trump Administration's first travel ban.

None of these moves advance public safety, and ultimately, are only symbolic since they cannot stop federal authorities from enforcing federal law in California. However, non-cooperation has real consequences when federal authorities do enforce federal law. For example, ~~ICE Director Thomas Homan explained that~~ not allowing ICE to arrest people in jails and courthouses has resulted in ICE going out into local communities to make arrests, resulting in immigration arrests of those not initially targeted. In response to legislation such as SB 54, a bill named after two Northern California law enforcement officers murdered by an illegal immigrant ~~called the~~ "Michael Davis, Jr. and Danny Oliver in Honor of State and Local Law Enforcement Act" provides federal money to municipalities and states that aid in immigration law enforcement. At the same time, the House of Representatives passed a bill penalizing municipalities and states that refuse to cooperate with immigration authorities.

A more immediate consequence of refusing to cooperate with federal law enforcement may be a decrease in funding, personnel, and equipment provided by federal authorities to local task forces which enforce California state laws. These task forces, ~~including those led by the Sheriff's Department in Los Angeles and others across the state,~~ combat a myriad of state crimes that include human trafficking, gangs, drugs, auto/cargo theft, hate crimes, and environmental crimes. Political decisions to end cooperation with federal authorities on their law enforcement priorities may result in the federal Department of Justice deciding to remove these resources and direct them to states not antagonistic to federal law enforcement. Such a move would diminish public safety ~~in Los Angeles and~~ across California, where local law enforcement is already understaffed and underfunded.

At the end of the day, refusing to cooperate with federal law enforcement may be a winning political strategy; it is not a winning public safety strategy.

*The Association for Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs (ALADS) is ~~the collective bargaining~~*