



LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTION PARTNERSHIP

ADVANCING JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY SOLUTIONS

121 Mystic Avenue, Suite 9
Medford, Massachusetts 02155
(781) 393.6985

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Lieutenant Diane Goldstein, Ret.
Nevada, USA

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Deputy Chief Wayne Harris, Ret.
Chair, New York, USA

Major Neill Franklin, Ret.
Treasurer, Florida, USA

Professor Jody Armour
Secretary, California, USA

Sergeant Terry Blevins, Fmr.
California, USA

Chief Mike Butler, Ret.
Colorado, USA

Ms. Nadine Jones
New Jersey, USA

Captain Leigh Maddox, Ret.
Maryland, USA

Captain Sonia Y.W. Pruitt, Ret.
Maryland, USA

Superintendent Richard N. Van Wickler, Ret.
New Hampshire, USA

Detective Sergeant Neil Woods, Ret.
Derbyshire, England, LEAP UK

Date: February 3, 2022

Re: HB 1355 - Immigration Enforcement

Position: OPPOSE

To: The Florida House Criminal Justice & Public Safety Committee

Distinguished Members of the Committee,

We are writing to you as police, sheriffs, prosecutors, and other criminal justice professionals. In the interest of public safety, law enforcement needs the trust of the communities we took an oath to protect and serve. In order to protect this trust, we believe that Florida should not use local and state police officers and sheriffs' deputies to conduct federal immigration law enforcement.

As police, prosecutors, judges, and other criminal justice professionals, we know from firsthand experience that protecting public safety means rebuilding police-community trust. The police are only as strong as our relationships with the public, because we prevent and solve crime based on information from witnesses and victims. With community trust in police at a [historic low](#) nationwide, this is one of the most urgent and important barriers to public safety today.

One major factor destroying community trust is the fact that many local police officers and sheriffs' deputies are asked to enforce federal immigration law. [A report on Latino perceptions of police](#) found that 44% of Latinos hesitate to report crime to police for fear that police would investigate the immigration status of their family or community members.

Local police need to prioritize local safety, rather than sacrificing community safety by becoming agents of federal immigration policy. We urge Florida Senators to oppose HB 1355 in order to rebuild trust in immigrant communities.

HB 1355 would require all agencies that operate a county detention facility to enter a contract with ICE known as the 287(g) program by 2023. Under the 287(g) program, ICE would sign agreements with local law enforcement agencies requiring local officers to interview individuals about their immigration status and search them in DHS databases.

This collaboration encourages crime in immigrant communities because victims and witnesses will often avoid reporting crimes to the police for fear of being asked about their immigration status. This makes immigrants easy targets of crime and criminals know it.

We believe that local law enforcement agencies should focus critical resources on strengthening community safety rather than sacrificing safety to become involved in federal immigration law.

To protect constitutional rights and community trust, we urge you to oppose HB 1355.

Respectfully,

Sheriff Jim Manfre (Ret.)
Flagler County, FL
Speaker, Law Enforcement Action Partnership

Lt. Diane Goldstein (Ret.)
Redondo Beach Police Department, CA
Executive Director, Law Enforcement Action Partnership