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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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Marlin N. Gusman
Orleans Parish Sheriff
2800 Gravier Street
New Orleans, LA 70119

The Honorable Mitch Landrieu
Mayor
The City of New Orleans
1300 Perdido Street – 2nd Floor
New Orleans, Louisiana 70112

Dear Sheriff Gusman and Mayor Landrieu:

Your new regulations barring New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) officers from sharing the immigration status of individuals with federal authorities is a direct violation of existing federal immigration law and could have huge safety consequences for residents and tourists. This ridiculous policy prohibiting U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers from doing their job to stop the illegal immigration epidemic is an insult to residents of New Orleans. If you do not think creating a sanctuary city will attract more illegal immigrants – some who could be dangerous criminals – you are incredibly naive.

The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, passed by Congress in 1996, specifically states, “Notwithstanding any other provision of Federal, State, or local law, a Federal, State, or local government entity or official may not prohibit, or in any way restrict, any government entity or official from sending to, or receiving from, the Immigration and Naturalization Service information regarding the citizenship or immigration status, lawful or unlawful, of any individual.” Despite the clear expression of congressional intent and existing federal requirements, these new immigration policies adopted by the NOPD directly prohibit officers from both inquiring into an individual’s immigration status or sharing any such information obtained with federal officials. You have officially created a sanctuary city.

Sanctuary city policies lead to increased crime and violence—just look to the murder of Kate Steinle by an illegal immigrant and five-time deportee, in San Francisco last year. The illegal immigrant had a criminal past but was not detained or deported due to similar sanctuary policies in San Francisco. Unfortunately, Ms. Steinle is far from the only victim of violent illegal immigrants. There is widespread evidence that sanctuary city policies have led directly to widespread crime and violence.

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In July 2015, an 18 year-old girl and her 4 year-old son were found shot and burned in their car in Franklin County, Washington. The woman's boyfriend is being held as a suspect on \$1 million bail. They have already determined he is an illegal immigrant who was deported in 2014, and since illegally re-entered the United States.

Also in July 2015, an illegal immigrant who has been deported four times confessed to killing his wife with a hammer in Laredo, Texas. Laredo Police reported continuously encountering the man in violent episodes with his wife, yet did not notify Border Patrol.

In January 2015, an illegal immigrant was arrested on charges of shooting a convenience store clerk in Mesa, Arizona. At the time of arrest, he was awaiting a final deportation order.

In July 2014, an illegal immigrant beat and murdered his girlfriend in Metairie and was later arrested in Texas. He was originally apprehended at the southern border in Texas in June 2014, while illegally entering the U.S. He was released shortly after his original apprehension because of policies similar to what you have just implemented.

There are too many stories of undocumented violent criminals released from police custody and seeking safe harbor in sanctuary cities. I do not need to remind you that New Orleans is struggling with a devastatingly high murder and violent crime rate. Providing incentive for undocumented criminals to flock to the city is a huge mistake and I hope you will immediately reverse this policy.

Your top priority as Sheriff and Mayor should be providing a safe community for the residents of New Orleans and the scores of tourists that visit every year. Making New Orleans a sanctuary city could only make it more dangerous.

Sincerely,



David Vitter
U.S. Senate