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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
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April 10, 2025

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor
State of New York
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul:

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is continuing to investigate sanctuary jurisdictions across the United States and their impact on public safety and the effectiveness of federal efforts to enforce the immigration laws of the United States. Sanctuary jurisdictions and their obstructionist policies hinder the ability of federal law enforcement officers to effectuate safe arrests and remove dangerous criminals from American communities. This threatens Americans' safety. The State of Minnesota is a sanctuary jurisdiction that refuses to fully cooperate with federal immigration enforcement. To provide much needed oversight of this matter, the Committee requests documents and information related to the sanctuary policies of the State of Minnesota. Additionally, we invite you to testify alongside other governors of sanctuary states at a public hearing on the matter before the Committee on May 15, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. ET in room HVC-210 of the U.S. Capitol Visitors Center.

Sanctuary jurisdictions are "states, counties or cities that put some limits on how much they are willing to cooperate with federal agencies' efforts to deport" illegal aliens.[1] These jurisdictions take it upon themselves to decide what laws they will and will not abide–all for the purpose of shielding removable aliens, especially criminals, from federal law enforcement.

The State of Illinois is a sanctuary jurisdiction under the Illinois TRUST Act of 2017.[2] The TRUST Act prohibits state law enforcement from detaining or continuing to detain individuals on the basis of immigration detainers or administrative warrants for removable aliens, restricts communication with federal immigration officials, and explicitly prohibits cooperation with a "[n]on-judicial immigration warrant", including an "administrative warrant or any other immigration warrant or request that is not approved or ordered by a judge…".[3] Governor JB Pritzker doubled down on the TRUST Act, signing several other bills into law in 2021—including the Way Forward Act—which require local jurisdictions within Illinois to end

[1] Miriam Jordan, *What Are Sanctuary Cities?*, N.Y. TIMES (Jan 25, 2025).
[2] Illinois TRUST Act, 5 Ill. Comp. Stat. 805 (2017).
[3] *Compare id*. at § 10 to Immigration and Nationality Act § 236(a) [8 U.S.C. § 1226(a)] (authorizing the issuance of administrative warrants for the arrest and detention of aliens to be removed from the United States).

partnerships with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), among other measures.[4] Touting his efforts to enhance protections for illegal aliens, Governor Pritzker recently stated that Illinois law requires state police to "stand up for… law-abiding" illegal aliens, while reiterating that the state government will not cooperate with federal immigration officials.[5]

The State of Minnesota is a sanctuary jurisdiction under an erroneous interpretation of law. Specifically, Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison recently issued a formal legal opinion stating that holding an illegal alien pursuant to an ICE detainer request would constitute an unreasonable "seizure" under both the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and Article 1, Section 10 of the Minnesota Constitution.[6] Moreover, Governor Tim Walz engaged in rhetoric and efforts to make Minnesota an attractive destination for illegal aliens. In 2023, Governor Walz signed legislation expanding eligibility to illegal aliens for state sponsored healthcare,[7] Minnesota driver's licenses,[8] and free college tuition.[9] Governor Walz also stated that local law enforcement should only be responsible for "state and local laws, not federal immigration laws."[10]

The State of New York is a sanctuary jurisdiction under Executive Order No. 170, signed by former Governor Andrew Cuomo.[11] Executive Order 170 directs that "[n]o State officers or employees, including law enforcement officers, shall disclose information to federal immigration authorities for the purpose of federal civil immigration enforcement, unless required by law."[12] Governor Kathy Hochul has endorsed her predecessor's sanctuary policies, calling New York counties cooperating with ICE "renegade counties" while insisting that state police under her control "will not cooperate" with federal officials to detain illegal aliens.[13]

On the first day of his second term, President Donald Trump took decisive actions to restore the rule of law with respect to immigration enforcement.[14] One action included a

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[4] Press Release: *Gov. Pritzker Signs Legislation Further Establishing Illinois as the Most Welcoming State in the Nation*, ILLINOIS.GOV (Aug. 2, 2021).
[5] Ryan King, *Pritzker vows to 'stand in way' of certain Trump deportation policies, protect 'law-abiding' illegal migrants*, N.Y. POST (Jan. 26, 2025).
[6] *See* "*Re: Request for Advisory Opinion Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 8.07*," THE OFF. OF MINN. ATT'Y GEN. KEITH ELLISON (Feb. 6, 2025).
[7] Tom Crann and Ngoc Bui, *MinnesotaCare expands eligibility to Minnesotans with undocumented status*, MPR NEWS (June 5, 2023).
[8] *Governor Walz Signs Bill Expanding Access to Driver's Licenses*, OFF. OF GOV. TIM WALZ & LT. GOV. PEGGY FLANAGAN (Mar. 7, 2023).
[9] Tom Kertscher, *Did Tim Walz support free college education for some undocumented immigrants?*, WISCONSIN WATCH (Aug. 7, 2024).
[10] Jennie Taer, *"Sanctuary state" Gov. Tim Walz gave illegal migrants taxpayer-funded health care, tuition, driver's licenses*, N.Y. POST (Aug. 6, 2024).
[11] Executive Chamber, Executive Order No. 170, State of New York (Sept. 15, 2017).
[12] *Id*.
[13] Chris Wade, *Hochul blasts 'renegade' New York counties for cooperating with ICE*, THE CENTER SQUARE (Mar. 25, 2025).
[14] Presidential Actions, *Declaring a National Emergency at the Southern Border of the United States*, THE WHITE HOUSE (Jan. 20, 2025); Presidential Actions, *Guaranteeing the States Protection Against Invasion*, THE WHITE HOUSE (Jan. 20, 2025); Presidential Actions, *Designating Cartels and Other Organizations as Foreign Terrorist Organizations and Specially Designated Global Terrorists*, THE WHITE HOUSE (Jan. 20, 2025); Presidential Actions,

directive to the Attorney General and the Secretary of Homeland Security "to . . . evaluate and undertake any lawful actions to ensure that so-called 'sanctuary' jurisdictions, which seek to interfere with the lawful exercise of Federal law enforcement operations, do not receive access to Federal funds."[15] In addition to the efforts of the Trump Administration to ensure federal immigration enforcement can proceed unimpeded, Congress must determine whether further legislation is necessary to enhance border security and public safety. It is imperative that federal immigration law is enforced and that criminal aliens are swiftly removed from our communities.

To assist the Committee's oversight of this matter, we request the following documents and information, covering the time period January 1, 2024, to the present, as soon as possible but no later than April 24, 2025:

1. All documents and communications among or between any official, employee, contractor, or agent of the State of New York related to the State of New York's sanctuary status;

2. All documents and communications among or between any official, employee, contractor, or agent of the State of New York and any individual or entity, including but not limited to any non-governmental organization or representative thereof, related to the State of New York's sanctuary status;

3. All documents and communications among or between any official, employee, contractor, or agent of the State of New York and any official, employee, contractor, or agent of any jurisdiction located within the State of New York related to the State of New York's sanctuary status; and

4. All documents and communications among or between any official, employee, contractor, or agent of the State of New York and any official, employee, contractor, or agent of the federal government related to the State of New York's sanctuary status.

In addition, please confirm your testimony before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform by April 17, 2025.

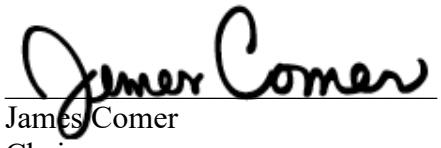
The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the principal oversight committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X. To arrange for delivery of documents, confirm your appearance at the hearing, or to ask any related follow up questions, please contact the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Majority staff at (202) 225-5074.

Protecting the American People Against Invasion, THE WHITE HOUSE (Jan. 20, 2025); Presidential Actions, *Securing Our Borders*, THE WHITE HOUSE (Jan. 20, 2025); Presidential Actions, *Realigning the United States Refugee Admissions Program*, THE WHITE HOUSE (Jan. 20, 2025); Presidential Actions, *Value of American Citizenship*, The White House (Jan. 20, 2025); Presidential Actions, *Military's Role in Protecting the Territorial Integrity of the United States*, THE WHITE HOUSE (Jan. 20, 2025); Presidential Actions, *Initial Rescissions of Harmful Executive Orders and Actions*, THE WHITE HOUSE (Jan. 20, 2025).

[15] Presidential Actions, *Protecting the American People Against Invasion*, THE WHITE HOUSE (Jan. 20, 2025).

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



James Comer
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

cc: The Honorable Gerald Connolly, Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform