



Sanctuary City Policy Invites Trouble

In 1979, Los Angeles became the first “[sanctuary city](#),” although the term for thumbing one’s nose at federal law wasn’t in use. L.A.’s Special Order #40 stated: “Officers shall not initiate police action with the objective of discovering the alien status of a person. Officers shall not arrest nor book persons” for violating the federal law against illegally entering the United States.

Since then, more than 200 cities or counties have followed that lead and the term sanctuary city, or county, has worked its way into common use. Among other cities defiantly ignoring the federal mandate calling for detaining and deporting illegal entrants are Washington, D.C., New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Houston, Salt Lake City, Chicago, Minneapolis, Miami, Baltimore, Seattle, Portland, Detroit, Denver, San Diego, Albuquerque, and Oakland. In these locales, city employees (including police) are not permitted to ask detainees about their immigration status.

In 2009, the murder of a restaurant waitress in Albuquerque drew attention to the matter. Three illegal aliens were thought to have committed the crime. Before that murder, the three should have been detained and deported. But they weren’t because sanctuary city policy was in operation. Nothing changed. In July of this year, a gunman killed 32-year-old Kathryn Steinle as she walked with her father along a tourist-friendly pier in San Francisco. The only suspect for the killing is Juan Francisco Lopez-Sanchez, an illegal immigrant who had already been deported five times to Mexico but who was back in the sanctuary city of San Francisco.



Three months before the murder of Steinle, San Francisco authorities detained Lopez-Sanchez for peddling drugs. U.S. Customs and Immigration Authorities (ICE) sought him, but the city’s officials released him because their sanctuary city policy took precedence. County Sheriff Ross Mirkarimi’s decision to bow to this policy rather than to federal law has now cost him his job. On November 2, voters overwhelmingly cast their ballots for a new sheriff. But San Francisco’s sanctuary city policy remains. In this instance, replacing a sheriff isn’t enough.

Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton condemned the failure of San Francisco authorities to turn Lopez-



Written by [John F. McManus](#) on November 5, 2015

Sanchez over the federal authorities earlier this year after a previous arrest. But one day later when the murder of Kate Steinle was still in the news, Clinton's campaign officials declared her still in favor of the sanctuary cities policy. They issued a statement claiming, "Hillary Clinton believes that sanctuary cities can help further public safety, and she has defended those policies going back years." Like Barack Obama, she obviously intends to do little or nothing to put an end to cities defiantly ignoring federal law.

No sensible person doubts that the United States has a "border problem." More than 10 million aliens have illegally entered our nation. By doing so, they have broken U.S. laws and little has been done to stop the ongoing invasion. Meanwhile, sanctuary cities continue to receive federal aid in various forms. If shoveling money at defiant cities isn't terminated, neither will there be an end to sanctuary city defiance.

In years past, nullification of distasteful law has been employed, even by states seeking to void mandates believed to be unjust. But nullification was always employed with knowledge that there might be consequences. To date, no consequences have followed in the wake of cities and counties defying federal law. And the U.S. Congress has even entertained new laws to enforce laws that are being ignored.

The United States is unraveling before our eyes. Let's hope that there won't be any more Kathryn Steinle tragedies before we welcome the end of the sanctuary city craze.

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