

Key Issue(s):

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- Sanctuary Policies Prohibited



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF VIRGINIA

Action Alert!

Alert No: 17-09

January 17, 2017

This "Action Alert!" is a call to action for League members and friends throughout the state to communicate with their local legislators and various committee members. We ask the legislators to take actions on proposed legislation as described in the alert below. Members may discuss the pros or cons as an individual but not as a League member. Our requests to legislators are based on our positions or those of LWVUS. It is most effective to contact your own legislator. While the legislature is in session is the best opportunity to educate legislators and to allow them to make informed decisions.

Always keep our League policy in mind:

*"Only the President or her designee is authorized to speak for the League. However, we encourage all members to contact their public officials as **individuals**, whether or not they agree with a League position."*

Prohibition of Sanctuary Policies Vote NO on HB 2000

HB2000 would add a section regarding immigration to the Virginia Code titled, "Establishment of sanctuary policies prohibited." It states, "No locality shall adopt any ordinance, procedure, or policy that restricts the enforcement of federal immigration laws to less than the full extent permitted by federal law."

There has been no finding that any jurisdiction in Virginia is a “sanctuary” city. The bill does not even define what a “sanctuary city” is.

Proponents

1. Cite incidents of problems with the release of incarcerated illegal immigrants in other states saying that this bill’s prohibition will prevent problems in Virginia.

Opponents say that such a law will create fear:

1. Fear in the immigrant community, especially for children, including for legal immigrants. Fear that will harm the current successful relationship of immigrants with law enforcement, Fear among immigrants who are victims of domestic violence who will not go to the police because their abuser threatens to report their illegal status.
2. Advocates who work in the immigrant community are extremely concerned that their work will be hampered because of the immigrants’ fear of being visible.
3. Legislators in opposition say that Federal authorities should implement Federal law, not Virginia’s local law enforcement.
4. Local jurisdictions have reported that they do not want to be required to enforce federal law.

For example, the town of Boones Mill states that,

“We strongly oppose this bill. It would have a highly uncertain, but definitely negative impact on small towns like Boones Mill. The police implication is... uncertain and alarming. We object to being deputized to enforce federal laws of any kind. At present, our local officers do not enforce federal tax law, drug law, nor immigration law. Local ordinances and state code are our tools, and local safety is our goal. It is hard to imagine a federal enforcement regime with required technology purchases and changed police procedure involving more time at traffic stops, upon arrest, or involving prisoner transport. Our small police force could not easily absorb such changes. Our staff would likely resent and resist a requirement to comply with federal law in this policy area, instead

of focusing on local safety. As low as our wages are, we rely on public service motivation among officers. A crisis of mission and morale could destroy a small-town police force – which would defeat the purpose of deputizing it for federal service.”

Tell your Senator that we should not be creating fear; rather, we should be responding with measures to assist those who have faced intolerable political persecution or humanitarian crises.

Ask your Senator to VOTE NO on [HB 2000](#).

[http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?
ses=171&typ=bil&val=hb2000&submit=GO](http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?ses=171&typ=bil&val=hb2000&submit=GO)



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