

HB 2466

Thank you Chairman and committee,

My name is Laurie Anderson; I am a Commissioned Disciples of Christ Minister, Director of Immigrant Justice Advocacy Movement, member of Sanctuary Movement, and on the NGO Advisory Council of DHS-ICE of Secretary Johnson.

The term “sanctuary city” is often used incorrectly to describe trust acts or community policing polities that limit entanglement between local police and federal immigration authorities. Trust act policies make communities safer and increase communication between police and neighborhood residents without imposing fear and restrictions on federal law enforcement activities. The dichotomy here is between trust or fear. We all want safer communities and we want it based on trust; not fear.

The term “sanctuary city” is a misnomer when used to describe community policing policies. The attempt to eliminate fear from those who worry that reporting a crime or simple interaction with local law enforcement is overshadowed because the fear of deportation of face to face influence could result in being thrown into the deportation process. Some have confused “sanctuary city” policies with the Sanctuary Movement where undocumented immigrants are accompanied by faith communities to give voice to their stories- to give a human face to what living with undocumented immigrant status looks like in this county. Sanctuary Movement is not blanket insulation from any immigration enforcement action. Sanctuary Movement is a network of organizations and churches fighting deportations of our community to change the broken federal immigration policy by revealing the human cost and moral crisis cause by more than 1,000 deportations a day.

Sanctuary Movement seeks legally recognized forms of relief, such as a stay of removal or deferred action for community members currently in Sanctuary. As, faith leaders, we accompany our brothers and sisters facing deportation. Our faith traditions share a moral and ethical responsibility to defend immigrants fighting their deportations- people who are risking everything to keep their families together.

HB2466 is deliberately arousing and causing fear. Sanctuary city is a term that many associate with San Francisco, and an action that would insulate folks from any immigration enforcement

action. The fact is nothing in so called existing sanctuary city policy or Sanctuary Movement prevents federal enforcement actions.

There is nothing in this bill that respects due process...Kansas needs to make smarter decisions about the safety of its residents- not the fear of its leaders. Laws should reflect the values and moral compass of the people- HB2466 denies dignity of our communities and the people living as our neighbors.

Our congregations for centuries have opened their doors to provide sanctuary. We will continue to stand in solidarity with immigrant leaders fighting to keep all families together, regardless of immigration status. And we will do what Congress has refused to do: protect immigrants from a system that is separating families and deporting people who are woven into the fabric of our communities and congregations.

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