



In California... We Trust?

Gov. Brown Vetoes Trust Act

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Some were calling it the anti-Arizona bill, but to the California Capitol, it was AB 1081, the Trust Act. 0

Nearing the Sept. 30 deadline for bills passed through the California Legislature, Gov. Brown decided to veto the bill that would force local police agencies to cease orders from the Federal Immigration agency: Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Pres. Obama authored what local police agencies were following the Secure Communities Act, which requires police to send information and continue to detain undocumented immigrants upon arrest.

However, in the bill's text, Assemblymember Tom Ammiano, (D-San Francisco) claimed this was not just an economic issue since the Federal Government does not reimburse the cost of Secure Communities, but the Trust Act would reinstate the trust that has been compromised through this pursuit.

In addition, in a statement, Ammiano said the Trust Act would have allowed California's local law enforcement to return its focus to dangerous people rather than on the "unjust treatment of productive Californians."

Brown, in his attached letter, stated the bill was "fatally flawed" as it leaves out crimes for referring to ICE – such as child abuse, drug trafficking, selling weapons, and gangs. Gov. Brown did, however, state his position in the need for comprehensive immigration reform.

Oday Guerrero, an undocumented immigrant and founder of the Dream Team, an organization that is based and operated in the Central Valley, believes the Trust Act would have been the first step toward immigration reform, not the "final solution," she said.

"I feel disappointed that he vetoed the bill despite a lot of organizations pushing for the bill's signature," Guerrero said. "I would feel more comfortable if there was more reassurance that police would not arrest [undocumented immigrants] without reason of a serious crime."

Sheriff Robert Doyle of Marin County disagrees, though.

"It's a Federal violation, and would make California a 'sanction state,'" Sheriff Doyle said.

Doyle added that even before the bill was voted upon in California's Legislature, the California Sheriffs Association pressed Gov. Brown to veto the bill.

"California shouldn't be in the immigration business," Sheriff Doyle said. "No state should respond to immigration. It should have a federal response. If illegal immigrant advocates want to change the law, they should go to Washington."

However, Guerrero is not worried as much about herself or others like her who are DREAMers (a law that was introduced in 2001 but has not been approved in Washington). Instead, she is worried about the "real targets."

"Parents, aunts, and uncles are more targeted. That's most concerning," she said. It is concerning to her because they are not covered under some of the protections that the DREAM Act provides.

One move she thinks that could help out those who are undocumented is to come out to the public as an undocumented immigrant because the community would allow protection if there were ever to be an arrest and possible referral to ICE for deportation.

"It's a defensive against deportation. The more the public supports you, the less likely there will be a deportation."

The Salinas Police Department, however, told the *Otter Realm* its officers do not participate in the Secure Communities Act as they fear that it would jeopardize the cooperation in crime reporting from undocumented immigrants.

Guerrero agrees on the distrust that arises from the use of the Secure Communities Act.

“At any moment I could be targeted because of my skin,” she said. “It’s scary to think that something might happen to you. That the police might not assist you.”

Guerrero told the story of a Los Angeles woman who had been a victim in a domestic abuse incident to the police. But instead of the police arresting the aggressor, she was arrested because of her immigration status.

California law officials have deported more than 80,000 undocumented immigrants through the Secure Communities program.

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Henry loves scouting out the scoop in the world, nation, state and local news realm. But, other than that, he spends much of his time thinking of how *Star Trek* and *Star Wars* are great allegories for an international political world, and just how ingenious *Doctor Who* is.

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