



NATIONAL CONFERENCE *of* STATE LEGISLATURES

*The Forum for America's Ideas*

October 20, 2015

**Curtis Bramble**  
*Senate President Pro Tempore*  
*Utah*  
*President, NCSL*

**Karl Aro**  
*Director of Administration*  
*Department of Legislative Services*  
*Maryland*  
*Staff Chair, NCSL*

**William T. Pound**  
*Executive Director*

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
United States Capitol S-230  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
United States Capitol S-221  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: S. 2146, the "Stop Sanctuary Cities Act"

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Reid:

On behalf of our country's fifty state legislatures and those of the U.S. territories, we write to express our opposition to S. 2146, the "Stop Sanctuary Cities Act," scheduled to move forward in the U.S. Senate this week. NCSL has supported a partnership with the federal government in enforcing criminal immigration violations. Many states and localities over the years have voluntarily entered into flexible agreements with the federal government to conduct enforcement activities. NCSL maintains that cutting critical law enforcement and community development funding to states and localities is the wrong approach to solving our nation's immigration issues. This legislation creates additional community relations and crime-solving hurdles for those whose responsibility it is to keep our communities safe and crime-free.

If passed, S. 2146 will penalize states that do not comply with its requirements by withholding important funding in the following programs: Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS); Community Development Block Grant (CDBG); and the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP). COPS funding promotes the goal of mutual respect between police and the communities they serve. The COPS program at the state and local level is used in part toward funding crime prevention and deterrent programs like anti-gang initiatives, anti-methamphetamine programs and anti-heroin task forces. COPS is also used to hire police officers who will work to strengthen police-community relations and fight crime in our communities.

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The CDBG program provides formula grants to states and localities to help address state and local housing and community development issues. Recently, states have used this funding to help homeless veterans find homes and to fight crime and drug activities in public housing properties. SCAAP is a reimbursement program to states for a small portion of the costs states incur incarcerating criminal aliens. States only receive approximately 18 cents in reimbursement costs for every dollar they spend on incarceration costs.

All of these programs are vitally important to states and localities for both crime fighting, crime deterrence and prevention, and community relations and development purposes. The penalty provisions of S. 2146 would only serve to impede state and local law enforcements efforts to fight crime, enhance and strengthen police-community relations and provide economic assistance to some of our most vulnerable populations, like homeless veterans. NCSL stands committed to work with Congress to pass meaningful and comprehensive immigration reform that addresses all immigration issues, including respect for the proper role of state and local law enforcement personnel. If you need further assistance or have any questions, please contact NCSL staff Susan Parnas Frederick, at [susan.frederick@ncsl.org](mailto:susan.frederick@ncsl.org) or 202-624-5400.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William T. Pound". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "W".

William T. Pound  
Executive Director  
National Conference of State Legislatures