

Graham, Cruz introduce legislation holding sanctuary cities accountable for violent crime

A handful of leading Republican senators have introduced legislation that would allow victims of violent crime in sanctuary cities to sue the municipalities for putting citizens in harm's way.

The "Justice for Victims of Sanctuary Cities Act," introduced in the U.S. Senate on Wednesday, aims to "hold sanctuary jurisdictions accountable for failing to comply with lawful detainer and release notification requests made by federal authorities and jeopardizing public safety."

The bill was introduced by Sen. Thom Tillis and co-sponsored by Sens. Lindsey Graham, Chuck Grassley, Joni Ernst, Marsha Blackburn, and Ted Cruz.

"It's disturbing to see sheriffs across North Carolina establish sanctuary jurisdictions, releasing dangerous individuals back into communities while refusing to notify federal immigration officials," Tillis said. "If politicians want to prioritize reckless sanctuary policies over public safety, they should also be willing to provide just compensation for the victims."

A sanctuary city is one that has indicated it will not cooperate with federal immigration authorities seeking to locate and detain illegal immigrants.

There are dozens of these across the country, including major U.S. cities like New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago.

The merits of this policy have been derided by Republicans as an influx of immigrants at the U.S. southern border with Mexico has overwhelmed border patrol officials and led to improper conditions at detention facilities.

Legal and safe immigration, Republicans say, is the way to deter violent criminals from attempting to enter the country, not protecting them from the law.

"We are a nation of laws," Grassley said. "Whether you are a citizen, immigrant or even a local government, disregarding those laws should carry consequences."

President Trump, who has consistently criticized sanctuary cities and says they encourage illegal immigration, earlier this year strongly considered placing illegal immigrants into those cities as punishment, but declined.

“We’ll bring them to sanctuary city areas and let that particular area take care of it, whether it’s a state or whatever it might be,” Trump said. “California certainly is always saying, ‘Oh, we want more people.’ And they want more people in their sanctuary cities. Well, we’ll give them more people. We can give them a lot. We can give them an unlimited supply, and let’s see if they’re so happy.”

Republicans like Cruz have continually advocated for more commonsense immigration law and accountability for state and local authorities that work to undermine that goal.

“Sanctuary cities and their policies are a dangerous affront to the rule of law, and only exasperate the crisis at our border,” Cruz said. “I am proud to join my colleagues in holding these jurisdictions accountable, and will continue working to enforce our federal immigration laws and ensure the safety and security of the American people.”

Source:

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