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Title

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Californians say cities should not be sanctuaries, IGS poll finds

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Berkeley — Californians strongly oppose “Sanctuary City” policies under which local authorities ignore federal requests to detain undocumented immigrants who have been arrested but are about to be released, according to a new poll released today by the Institute of Governmental Studies (IGS) at the University of California, Berkeley.

That opposition includes strong majorities in both major political parties and among independent voters, and crosses other demographic categories. Almost two out of three Latinos said they oppose such policies.

The online survey, which polled 1,098 California residents from Aug. 11-26, found that 74 percent of respondents said local authorities should not be able to ignore a federal request to hold a detained person who is in the country illegally. Only 26 percent of respondents said local authorities should have that right.

Opposition to the Sanctuary City policies crossed the political spectrum, and included 73 percent of Democrats, 82 percent of Republicans, and 71 percent of independents.

“We found very broad-based opposition to the idea of ‘Sanctuary Cities,’” said IGS Director Jack Citrin, a professor of political science at UC-Berkeley who has studied immigration for years. “Californians want their local officials to abide by the requests of federal authorities.”

Within every ethnic group, majorities said local officials should defer to the federal requests, including 65 percent of Latino respondents. Similar views were expressed by 75 percent of Asian Americans and African Americans, and 80 percent of whites.

“The differences among ethnic groups in our survey were not extreme, an interesting finding given that Latinos are more likely to know someone personally affected by these issues,” Citrin said. “While these results for Latino residents are interesting, people

should bear in mind some limitations on our data, including the fact that our survey was conducted only in English, and that our sample consisted almost entirely of citizens.”

Of the overall sample, 99.5 percent of respondents identified themselves as citizens.

In an additional indicator of the broad agreement on the issue, a majority of all age and income groups said local officials should abide by the federal requests, although the largest margins came from older and wealthier respondents.

To gauge the impact of a recent high-profile incident, half the respondents were simply asked about the basic policy, while the other half were also told about that an undocumented immigrant who had been deported several times was recently released from jail and soon after shot and killed a woman in San Francisco.

The additional information about the shooting had relatively little impact on the responses. When they were simply asked about the basic policy, 71 percent of respondents said cities should not be able to ignore a federal hold request. Among those who were told about the shooting, opposition to the Sanctuary City policy rose to 76 percent.

“Whether they were told about the recent San Francisco shooting or not,” Citrin said, “a strong majority of respondents made it clear that local authorities should not be able to ignore a federal request to hold an undocumented immigrant.”

Background

The poll was conducted for IGS by Survey Sampling International, using online questionnaires. There were 1,098 respondents sampled between Aug. 11 and Aug. 26. The margin of error is 2.5%. Responses for the entire sample were weighted to reflect the statewide distribution of the California population by gender, race/ethnicity, education and age.

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Appendix

The material in parentheses was given to only half the respondents.

(An illegal immigrant who had been deported several times was recently released from jail in San Francisco and soon after shot and killed a woman walking with her parents near the Bay.)

Under California law, local jurisdictions like cities and counties can ignore requests from federal authorities to detain illegal immigrants who have been arrested and are about to be released.

Do you believe that local authorities should be able to ignore a federal request to hold an illegal immigrant who has been detained?

1. Yes, local authorities should be able to ignore these federal requests.
2. No, local authorities should not be able to ignore these federal requests.

	Told About Shooting	Not Told About Shooting	Total
Yes	24.3%	28.8%	26.5%
No	75.7%	71.2%	73.5%

By Partisanship – All Respondents

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
Yes	27.1%	29.1%	18.0%
No	72.9%	70.9%	82.0%

By Income – All Respondents

	Less than \$25,000	\$25,000-\$49,999	\$50,000-\$74,999	\$75,000-\$99,999	\$100,000-\$149,999	\$150,000+
Yes	29.2%	27.2%	28.1%	21.1%	17.8%	19.5%
No	70.8%	72.8%	71.9%	78.9%	82.2%	80.5%

By Age – All Respondents

	Age 18-29	Age 30-39	Age 40-49	Age 50-65	Age 65+
Yes	33.8%	32.1%	28.0%	16.3%	11.7%
No	66.2%	67.9%	72.0%	83.7%	88.3%

By Race/Ethnicity – All Respondents

	Asian	Black	Latino	White
Yes	25.2%	25.0%	35.3%	20.5%
No	74.8%	75.0%	64.7%	79.5%

By Education – All Respondents

	Less than high school	High school degree or equivalent	Some college	Bachelor's degree	Advanced degree
Yes	12.5%	32.4%	26.4%	22.0%	20.4%
No	87.5%	67.6%	73.6%	78.0%	79.6%

By Gender – All Respondents

	Female	Male
Yes	22.9%	26.9%
No	77.1%	73.1%