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MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**STEPHANIE CHANG**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

September 29, 2015

To: Senate Judiciary Committee

Re: SB 445

Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the committee, for the opportunity to testify about Senate Bill 445.

I was disappointed when I learned this summer that anti-sanctuary city legislation might be introduced in the State Senate and I remain disappointed.

There are more than 200 cities, counties, and states in the country that have community trust or sanctuary city policies in place. Law enforcement experts across the country have pointed out that community trust or sanctuary cities policies actually can deter crime. Sanctuary city policies, like those in Detroit and Ann Arbor, help build community and police relations. Under sanctuary city policies, undocumented immigrants are less likely to be fearful of contacting the police due to their immigration status. Instead, they are more likely to report crime to law enforcement agencies and cooperate with law enforcement officers.

Lastly, I want to point out that immigrants are less likely to commit serious crimes than those who are born here, and census data shows that immigrants are less likely to be incarcerated for crimes.<sup>1</sup> For example, according data from the 2010 American Community Survey (ACS), about 1.6 percent of immigrant males age 18-39 are incarcerated, compared to 3.3 percent of the native-born. Going back decades, decennial census data showed that incarceration rates of the native-born were anywhere from two to five times higher than that of immigrants.

I believe that our local jurisdictions should have the ability to do more to be welcoming and safe communities for all. This proposal is a step backward. Police should be able to focus on stopping and solving crimes in our local communities, not checking immigration papers. In Michigan in recent years, we have been making strides forward with welcoming cities initiatives, Welcoming Michigan, creating the Office of New Americans. We need legislation that supports our growing diverse population in Michigan, and this legislation goes in the exact opposite direction.

I urge you to oppose SB 445. Thank you again for your time.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://immigrationpolicy.org/special-reports/criminalization-immigration-united-states>