

March 14, 2022

Testimony Opposing HB 2717

Hello, I am Dory Sabata, I live and work in Kansas City, KS. I am an educator and health professional. I am married and have a 10 year-old daughter. I am the primary caregiver to an aging parent who relocated to Johnson County, KS to be near us. I worship in a bilingual church. I live in a multicultural community, and I value the investments immigrants have made in my community and the state of Kansas. Thank you for your openness to this testimony.

I am strongly against proposed HB 2717 "Prohibiting any municipality from preventing the enforcement of federal immigration laws, requiring municipal law enforcement agencies to provide written notice to each law enforcement officer of the officer's duty to cooperate with state and federal agencies in the enforcement of immigration laws and requiring any municipal identification card to state on its face that it is not valid for state identification." I recognize this legislation is an effort to undo Wyandotte County's recent passage of *Safe and Welcoming*. HB 2717 will create fear to limit safety of Kansans and stifle those who have been contributors to our economic growth.

According to the Migration Policy Institute*, an estimated 69,000 unauthorized immigrants reside in Kansas. Half of unauthorized immigrants in KS reside with children and 39% reside with a child who is a US citizen. Also, 20% are married to a US citizen or legal permanent resident. Four thousand (or nearly 60%) have resided in the US for 10 or more years. The majority are ages 25-54 (70%), married (51%), and speak English well (55%). Immigrants significantly contribute to our local and state economy, and we all deserve to be safe in the community.

One of the risks to families like mine and others in my community is the fear that our families will be torn apart. Even one unnecessary report to immigration enforcement could result in a dissolved small business, loss of employees, coping as a single parent and parentless children, or being an older adult struggling without a needed caregiver. Is that what you want for citizens of KS from such a bill?

Our local police department does not need to make reports to immigration enforcement following a routine traffic stop. There is no requirement that local police or sheriffs enforce or cooperate in the enforcement of immigration law. They are not adequately trained to take these actions, nor is there additional funding of the police departments for this. To have a safe community for us all, people, regardless of immigration status, need to be able to work with police and report crimes to the police without fear of being deported themselves.

This bill has detrimental implications across the state including southwest Kansas to Johnson County. Do you want to see setbacks in economic growth and unreported crime in exchange for police being mandated to report to immigration enforcement? I certainly don't. Therefore, I strongly oppose HB 2717.

Thank you for the opportunity to share.

Sincerely,

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*<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/unauthorized-immigrant-population/state/KS>