



INTRO TO SB 4

Elizabeth Gerberich

American Gateways – Outreach Coordinator

elizabethg@americangateways.org

AGENDA

1. Who we are & what we do
2. Overview of SB 4
3. Impact on API communities
4. Community response

AMERICAN GATEWAYS

- Free & low-cost immigration legal services for low-income individuals & families
 - Visas for survivors of abuse and violence
 - Asylum & detention work
 - Family-based immigration & citizenship
- 20 county service area in Central TX
 - Offices in Austin, San Antonio & Waco
- 314 E Highland Mall Blvd, #501, Austin TX 78752
 - Hours: Mon-Thurs, 9am – 12 pm & 1:30pm – 5pm

SB 4

- “show me your papers” law that will go into effect on September 1st, 2017
- 2 main components:
 - 1) Prohibits law enforcement from having policies that prohibit cooperation with federal immigration authorities
 - 2) Requires local law enforcement agencies to comply with ICE detainer requests

#1: COOPERATION WITH IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES

- Not *required* cooperation, but cannot prohibit cooperation
- Either written policies or policies in practice
- Cooperation =
 - Asking immigration status during “lawful detention” or arrest
 - Calling or sharing information with ICE
 - Allowing ICE or other immigration authorities into local jails

#2: ICE DETAINERS

- All local LE must comply with detainers or face criminal charges
- ICE detainer (or “immigration hold”):
 - Request from ICE to local law enforcement
 - Detain an individual for 48 hrs beyond when they would otherwise be released
 - Verification of immigration status
 - Voluntary program
- Even documented (permanent residents, visa holders, etc) individuals can be subject to ICE detainers

BEFORE & AFTER

Before SB 4	After SB 4
Law enforcement could prohibit agents/officers from asking immigration status or otherwise cooperating with ICE	Law enforcement cannot prohibit agents/officials from asking immigration status or otherwise cooperating with ICE
Law enforcement could refuse to comply with ICE detainer requests – policy left up to each county sheriff	Law enforcement agents/officers will face criminal charges if they do not comply with ICE detainers

EXCEPTIONS

- K-12 school police
 - Pre-Ks & college campuses ARE NOT exempt
- Hospitals
- Mental Health Facilities & community centers that provide mental health care
- Places of worship

EFFECTS OF SB 4

- blurred lines between local law enforcement & immigration authorities
- more opportunities for racial profiling from law enforcement



IMPACT ON IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES

- increased fear of deportation
- more barriers to reporting for immigrant survivors of violence & victims of crime
- decrease in accessing necessary social/legal services & care

IMPACT ON API COMMUNITIES

“The face of undocumented immigrants in the media is often a Latino face, but with close to 1.3 million Asian and Pacific Islanders living in Texas, both documented and undocumented, our community will be targeted by this bill...In Texas, 8 percent of undocumented immigrants are from Asian countries, so the fear of mass deportations is a reality in the Asian community. Families who have been here for a decade or more have been torn apart or are living in fear...this law will further promote racial profiling throughout Texas and the country at large. SB4 is just another example of the wrongs felt by our community at the hands of the government, reminiscent of the Chinese Exclusion Act, the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II, and the profiling of Arabs, Muslims, South Asians and Africans after 9/11.”

- John Yang, Asian Americans Advancing Justice

IMPACT ON API COMMUNITIES

- Fear of deportation & family separation
- Language access
 - Materials developed in Spanish, gap in access



COMMUNITY RESPONSES

- Various cities and counties have joined a suit against the state
 - Including: Houston, Austin, Dallas, San Antonio, Travis County, Bexar County (~27% of Texans)
 - Organizers across state urging other to join
- State Rep. Ramon Romero (D-Fort Worth) filed a bill to repeal SB 4 during the special session
- Increased Know Your Rights workshops
- Deportation Defense Hotline
 - 512-270-1515

