



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Crandell Informs Citizens on 287g Program Facts

Towson, MD - Monday, June 5, 2017

Monday June 5, 2017, Dundalk, MD – Baltimore County Councilman Todd Crandell released the following fact sheet surrounding the 287g Program, the federal program created by the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1996. The program uses federal funds to train local law enforcement to assist federal authorities in their Homeland Security mission. Current legislation proposed by Crandell would require Baltimore County Detention Officers be trained to assess the immigration status of a prisoner and work in partnership with Immigration and Customs Enforcement Officers.

“Getting the facts out there in the face of misinformation and political rhetoric is important because public safety and upholding the law should never be partisan. Our own County Executive has sunk into partisan politics by calling the legislation “Trumpism”, even though the federal statute creating the program was signed into law by Democratic President Bill Clinton,” Crandell said.

“A lot was said in the public Work Session that shows a clear misunderstanding of what the program is, even among my colleagues,” he added, “so let’s set the record straight in the face of the misinformation and fear mongering being done by the bill’s opposition. This is about removing criminals from our communities under existing law, nothing more.”

1. 287g is NOT racial profiling. In fact, because under the program every prisoner is screened upon intake into the county jail, any semblance of racial profiling is avoided. Further, the legislation does not pertain to the Baltimore County Police Department; traffic stops by police to assess an individual’s immigration status is NOT part of the program.
2. Implementation of 287g does NOT affect the immigrant community’s relationship with local law enforcement. Various studies and surveys show that there is no decline in crime reporting by immigrant communities once programs like 287g are implemented.
3. Harford and Frederick Counties report NO significant costs in implementing the program, because ICE pays for the travel, meals, and training of the local officers, as well as for the computer equipment and set up necessary for the program. Studies that show costs in the millions of dollars to conduct the program are outdated and irrelevant, because they address a completely different model of the 287g program, which is no longer in existence.

Nothing is for free, however. Under 287g, Baltimore County Detention Officers would have to attend a four-week training course in South Carolina. They would earn their county salary during training, and their position at the jail would have to be covered during that period. While this may cause concern regarding overtime costs because the jail is currently understaffed, most jurisdictions taking part in the program send only one to five officers to be trained at a time, limiting the overtime exposure. Even so, the Council should be asking why do we have a hiring problem at the Detention Center and what can be done about it?

Costs are minimized; public safety is increased. What cost do we put on criminal recidivism by illegal immigrants who commit multiple crimes in our communities? The United States General Accounting Office reports that the average criminal illegal alien, in 2009, had 7 arrests and an average of 12 offenses. At what cost are we going to allow people here illegally to harm our neighbors repeatedly when we can do something about it?

4. If implemented, Baltimore County would NOT be required to detain individuals beyond their release date from the jail. In fact, Orange County, California's 287g agreement is structured in such a way. As such, there is no Constitutional liability or additional costs for detention incurred. Furthermore, when 287g participants work with ICE in partnership, the safe transfer of prisoners between the agencies occurs in a secure area. Currently, given County policies, ICE is often forced to make an arrest in a public setting, creating dangerous safety situations.
5. The Administration claims that the Detention Center already assesses the immigration status and reports to ICE. This is a bit of smoke and mirrors. Untrained officers are doing the assessments, and sending fingerprints to the FBI's Integrated Automated Fingerprint System (IAFS), not to ICE. Additionally, if an illegal was never encountered by immigration or law enforcement, meaning they crossed the border illegally, their fingerprints would not be flagged by IAFS, which is why ICE believes, and their internal data suggests, that Baltimore County is missing over 80% of illegal alien criminals coming through the detention center – and therefore missing out on the amount of compensation the County already receives from the Fed for imprisoning criminal illegals.

I strongly urge my colleagues to consider, or in some cases, reconsider, their positions on this bill. One more victim is one victim too many. What if we miss the opportunity to prevent a murder because we are tied up in political correctness? What if we miss a chance to prevent a terrorist attack because local authorities are not working in partnership with federal authorities? Let's stick with the facts, and do the right thing by the law-abiding citizens of Baltimore County.

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Contact: Doug Anderson
410-887-3383
wdanderson@baltimorecountymd.gov