

Thank you Chairman and Committee-

My name is Rev. Laurie Anderson- I am a congregational pastor, Director of Immigrant Justice Advocacy Movement (IJAM), an active member of the ICE-NGO Working Group in Washington D.C.; and past coordinator of the National Sanctuary Movement.

I am an opponent of SB 158.

As members of various faith communities, we are called to welcome the stranger in our midst and love our neighbor as ourselves. If we are to live up to these values, we cannot stand idly by while elected officials target those who need our help most.

Immigrants are valuable and essential members of our city, county and state. Safe and welcoming communities for all people should be our utmost concern. Communities where all people can go about their daily activities without fear, or undue risk of harm. The relationship of trust between the immigrant community and local law enforcement is central to the safety of our communities.

This trust is threatened when local law enforcement agencies are entangled with federal immigration enforcement programs; with the result that immigrant community members fear approaching police when they are victims of, and witnesses to crimes. Senate Bill no. 158 deeply embeds and instils this fear in our immigrant communities.

It is clear we need humane and compassionate immigration reform on the federal level. Efforts of enforcement only moves the responsibility from our congress to our local law enforcement agencies. SB 158 will push our immigrant brothers and sisters deeper into the shadows of our community.

There is not even one Sanctuary City in the State of Kansas. But what there is, with rapidly growing numbers are congregations engaging in the Sanctuary Movement. The Sanctuary Movement and its nation-wide network of congregations are preparing themselves to open their doors and offer sanctuary to those facing deportation and to welcome our immigrant sisters and brothers.

We all seek to ensure effective policing, protect the safety and well-being of the residents of our great state... Yet I and many others, are deeply concerned that SB158 will shut the door on the immigrant community and force them to live "outside." Congregations and faith communities will continue to respond with bold and prophetic voices. We will open sanctuary spaces for those targeted by hate and anti-immigrant rhetoric – we will work alongside our friends, families, and neighbors to ensure the dignity and human rights of all people. We will not stand idly by and have our beloved community attacked. We will open our sanctuary's; we will continue to rise up and stand with one another.

Fed and State Committee

Date 2-15-2017

Attachment # 33