

# FACT SHEET: THE MASSACHUSETTS TRUST ACT

## {HD2620 and SD1116}

### Why do we need a Massachusetts Trust Act?

**Background:** Massachusetts is not Arizona. Nonetheless, immigration enforcement at the state level causes problems here as well. In Massachusetts, the federal government interferes in local policing and seeks to use Massachusetts law enforcement resources for detaining and deporting people, regardless of the brutal effects on our families and communities. Last May, the federal government activated the so-called “Secure Communities” program, over the objections of Governor Patrick, Mayor Menino, and others. This program undermines the local work of Massachusetts police departments and drives a wedge between police officers and the constituents and communities they serve. The results of increased civil immigration enforcement in our state are:

- **Broken Families:** Detention and deportations by the federal government are tearing Massachusetts families and communities apart.
- **Misuse of Local Resources:** The federal government has coopted local and state law enforcement agencies into doing their work for them, which diverts local resources from our own public safety priorities.
- **Damaged Public Safety:** The entanglement of local police and civil immigration enforcement undermines community relations and public safety efforts, because individuals become reluctant to report crimes or serve as witnesses for fear of deportation. Collaboration between the police and the community is essential in combatting and preventing crimes.
- **Unequal Access to Justice:** In Massachusetts, local and state law enforcement officers’ assistance with federal immigration enforcement has resulted in the unlawful seizure and detention of Massachusetts residents without charges or probable cause to detain them. Submission to federal immigration detainer requests has led to many Massachusetts residents receiving unequal access to justice within the criminal justice system, unequal treatment by law enforcement officials, unfair bail forfeitures, and barriers to accessing police protection.
- **Worst of all, non-citizens who have called the police for help have instead ended up in deportation proceedings.**

### What is the Massachusetts Trust Act?

The Trust Act is proposed state legislation that will ease the unfair burden currently placed on local governments and improve public safety for everyone by establishing that Massachusetts law enforcement officials are not involved in immigration enforcement. This will promote:

- ✓ Family Unity
- ✓ Public Safety
- ✓ Fiscal Responsibility
- ✓ Equal Rights

Specifically, the bill will:

1. Provide that individuals ordered released by Massachusetts judges and magistrates will not be detained for ICE in spite of the court’s release order.
2. Clarify that it is not the responsibility of Massachusetts law enforcement agencies to enforce federal immigration law, and direct Massachusetts law enforcement officers not to arrest, detain, or transport individuals for federal immigration purposes.

**SUPPORT THE MASSACHUSETTS TRUST ACT! Contact: Linda Smith at [masstrustact@gmail.com](mailto:masstrustact@gmail.com)**