

## CAROLINA JUST ICE POLICY CENTER

### NC IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM REVIEWED - MARCH 27, 2008

The legislature appropriated \$750,000 to the Sherriff's Association to provide technical assistance and advice to Sheriffs desiring to participate in federal immigration enforcement programs and to reimburse Sheriffs for (Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) training and personnel costs to attend training

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Four counties - Mecklenburg, Cabarrus, Alamance and Gaston are currently participating in the ICE program and three other counties (Henderson, Cumberland and Wake) are expected to join the program in the future.

Since the program began, over 4,717 people have been turned over to ICE for deportation, with 3,847 from Mecklenburg, 512 from Alamance and 358 from Gaston. When individuals are deported, they are transferred to the ICE prison in Georgia. This big boost in deportation has undoubtedly contributed to the federal government's desire to locate a new ICE detention facility in Gaston County, a move which was recently denied.

According to the Sheriff's Association, illegal aliens with criminal convictions are turned over to ICE. ICE then makes an analysis of whether or not to deport based on federal guidelines. When individuals are deported, they are transferred to the ICE prison in Georgia. The biggest cost to the Counties of the ICE program is the personnel required to review the records and contact ICE.

The Sheriff's Association also conducted a snapshot survey of the number of "foreign born" people in custody on Feb.6. Of 18,471 people in custody, 1,931 - or 11% - were "foreign born."

Sarah Preston of the Civil Liberties Union stated that:

- 1) In the absence of a sound federal policy on immigration, the state needs to move carefully.
- 2) All people are entitled to due process and a transparent policy and there is no such policy now. The CLU had to make a public records request just to get a copy of the memorandum of agreements Mecklenburg and Alamance Counties signed to participate in the program. Alamance took 5 months to respond.
- 3) There is no clear process by which a person might file a complaint.
- 4) In Prince William, VA, the cost estimate for participating in the ICE program was \$6 million. It included foster care for American children whose parents were deported; recording devices in police cars to avoid racial profiling; and the cost of businesses losing customers due to people leaving the county.

NC should carefully consider the additional problems for children, social services, detention centers and local businesses that are already being created by accelerating deportation in the counties that are actively taking on the authority to carry out immigration officer functions.