



ACLU: New immigration order could have chilling effect in Indiana

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Details of a new immigration order mandating the quick deportation of undocumented immigrants could have a sweeping impact here in Indiana, experts say.

The orders, reported Tuesday by USA Today and other media outlets, are outlined in new memos supporting President Trump's immigration policy that instruct federal agents, including Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to identify, capture and quickly deport all undocumented immigrants they encounter.

While many details remain unclear, Ken Falk, legal director for the American Civil Liberties Union of Indiana, said the orders will have a chilling effect that could make it more difficult for local police to solve crime.

"One of the reasons local law enforcement is not eager to get involved in immigration enforcement is it discourages and prevents people here without status from reporting crimes," Falk said.

Undocumented immigrants, Falk said, will become easy targets for criminals because they are less likely to report a crime for fear of getting deported.

The memos, according to the reports, call for the hiring of 10,000 more immigration agents and give local police more ability to help with immigration enforcement. They also allow planning to begin on an expansion of the border wall between the United States and Mexico.

Undocumented immigrants convicted of a crime are the highest priority, but reports say the memos make clear that ICE agents should also arrest and initiate deportation proceedings against any other undocumented immigrant regardless of whether they are accused of a crime.

Falk said the new order may infringe on the rights of immigrants.

"When you are in this country, even without status, there are certain rights you have including due process," Falk said.

Undocumented immigrants are far more likely to be victims of crime than perpetrators, experts say.

The Migration Policy Institute has estimated that about 820,000 of the 11 million illegal immigrants living in the country have criminal convictions. Research cited by the Cato Institute and the American Immigration Council indicates that immigrants are less likely to commit crimes than people born in the United States.

Last week, Marion County Prosecutor Terry Curry announced theft charges against a woman who swindled \$67,856 from 31 immigrants who she promised to help gain residency documents.

Judith Palma met her victims at Indianapolis churches and is accused of taking payments from dozens of people seeking immigration services that she never provided.

Last week, Mayor Joe Hogsett told a rally of about 1,500 people that Indianapolis would not spend money to enforce Trump's immigration policies.

"As a city, we are committed with all stakeholders to ensure that not one dime of city resources funds anything that a court has determined to be discriminatory or unconstitutional," Hogsett said during a rally on the east side organized by the Indianapolis Congregation Action Network (IndyCAN).

In a statement issued on Jan. 30, Gov. Eric Holcomb expressed support and urged caution when he weighed in on Trump's suspension of immigration from seven majority-Muslim countries.

"There is no larger duty in America than to protect our citizens and its borders," Holcomb said in the statement. "We will monitor the future implementation of this executive order and its potential impact on Hoosiers. We can all agree there should be no adverse effects on the welcoming environment for the law-abiding international community that is such an important part of our great state."