

## ICE Releases List of Illegal Aliens Currently In Custody In Mecklenburg County Charged With Violent Crimes

By Administrator

Friday, 25 October 2019 10:35 - Last Updated Friday, 25 October 2019 10:37

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State lawmakers demanded Friday that the Mecklenburg County Sheriff honor detainer requests from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) following information released by the agency detailing violent criminal charges against illegal immigrants currently in custody who could be released into North Carolina communities. Murder, assault, robbery, and sex offenses committed against minors are among the serious charges against foreign nationals currently in custody at the Mecklenburg County Detention Center with outstanding detainer requests from DHS's U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency.

The outstanding detainers were only issued for illegal immigrants "handcuffed and arrested for a crime committed in the local community" according to information released by ICE on Friday.

Sanctuary policies implemented by the Mecklenburg County Sheriff this year protect those individuals from federal law enforcement's detainer requests despite the being charged crimes in North Carolina.

"These are just the latest examples of unlawfully present aliens charged with serious public safety offenses in Mecklenburg County – yet these latest examples are still currently in local custody," the agency said Friday. "These cases have all been identified by ICE to be illegal aliens subject to an Ice detainer and yet, per current local policy, they would be released back into the local community without notice to ICE."

Lawmakers in North Carolina approved legislation supported as a "high priority" by the state Sheriffs' Association compelling the Mecklenburg County Sheriff to comply with ICE detainers for individuals currently in custody and charged with crimes, but the bill was vetoed by Gov. Roy Cooper and opposed by legislative Democrats.

H.B. 370 Require Cooperation with ICE Detainers provides "an appropriate and careful balance under the Constitution for the rights of the accused and for the public safety of our communities," according to the North Carolina Sheriffs' Association.

The measure was nonetheless vetoed by the Governor, allowing the Mecklenburg County Sheriff to refuse detainer requests and release suspected illegal immigrants with significant criminal histories – who are currently in custody charged with criminal offenses and wanted by federal officials – back into North Carolina communities.

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State House sponsors of H.B. 370 and Speaker Tim Moore (R-Cleveland) released a joint statement Friday demanding the Mecklenburg County Sheriff honor detainer requests for individuals identified by ICE as currently in custody and charged with crimes.

“The sanctuary law enforcement policies of the Mecklenburg County Sheriff and Governor Cooper put North Carolinians’ safety at risk every single day,” said state Reps. Carson Smith (R-Pender), Destin Hall (R-Caldwell), Brenden Jones (R-Columbus), Jason Saine (R-Lincoln), and Speaker Moore.

“The Governor’s support for an open-borders policy of non-cooperation with immigration officials presents an unconscionable and unnecessary threat to the people of this state every day. To protect illegal aliens charged with crimes over the safety of North Carolina communities is not only a dereliction of duty, it is a deliberate decision to put the people of North Carolina in harm’s way.”

“We demand the Mecklenburg County Sheriff comply with immigration detainers for illegal aliens charged with murder, assault, robbery, sex offenses against minors, and other violent offenses. The Governor must also release legislative Democrats to override his veto of H.B. 370 and put an immediate stop to this imminent threat to public safety in North Carolina.”

Rep. Smith was the sheriff of Pender County for 16 years. Rep. Hall is an attorney and chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Criminal Matters. Rep. Saine is a senior co-chair of the House Appropriations Committee and Rep. Jones is the Deputy House Majority Leader.

According to ICE, in 2018 more than 470 criminal aliens were transferred into ICE custody pursuant to an immigration detainer from Charlotte, N.C.

Since the enactment of Mecklenburg’s non-cooperation policy, those individuals are instead released into North Carolina communities where they are free to reoffend until ICE is able to locate and arrest them, or until they commit additional preventable crimes resulting in their

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arrest again by law enforcement.

“As these persons remain in local custody, should Mecklenburg County reconsider its non-cooperation policy, there is still time to prevent the release of these individuals and instead work cooperatively to protect public safety,” ICE said in its release Friday.