ICE: Sheriff's offices hesitant to detain people based on immigration status

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Cutrell, who also said the Clatsop County Sheriff's Office did not alert the agency of his most recent arrest.

"Hours after his release, ICE deportation officers received information from federal databases about his prior immigration history and his most recent arrest. From there, they conducted an online review of jail and court records and determined that Lopez-Fabian did not have lawful status in the country, and subsequently, targeted him for immigration enforcement." Cutrell said in an email. "ICE focuses its enforcement

'ICE puts out a blanket statement every time they do these things because they want to cover their butts. Believe me, we want to hold these guys.'

Sheriff Tom Bergin

resources on individuals who pose a threat to national security, public safety and border security."

Sheriff Tom Bergin said the timing and coordination of Fabian's initial arrest and release did not allow for his office to notify the agency.

"He posted bail, so there's not much we can do unless ICE

notifies us, which it didn't," Bergin said. "ICE puts out a blanket statement every time they do these things because they want to cover their butts. Believe me, we want to hold these guys."

The federal agency criticized the county last year for not adhering to its requests to detain undocumented immi-

grants. Bergin pointed to a U.S. District Court case in Portland in which a judge ruled in favor of a woman detained by ICE at a Clackamas County jail, claiming the Fourth Amendment protected her against unreasonable search and seizure.

The federal court ruling made sheriff's offices hesi-

tant to detain people based on immigration status.

The federal agency often does not seek a warrant for an immigration violator signed by a judge, relying instead on a warrant signed by one of its own agents. Bergin suggested that his office would be on steadier constitutional grounds to detain people like Fabian if the agency obtained judicial warrants.

"All the federal government has to do is change one tiny little thing," Bergin said. "I think the current administration is looking at doing that."

In the meantime, lawmakers — including U.S. Rep.

Suzanne Bonamici, D-Oregon
— have proposed legislation
that would deter immigration
arrests at courthouses, schools
and health clinics.

Some criminal justice officials have suggested the practice discourages immigrants from appearing in court either as witnesses or defendants.

Bergin disagrees.

"I don't have a problem with it. We're worried about the actual criminals that are causing problems and doing harm to our citizens," Bergin said. "If they're a wanted criminal, they're not going to show up anyway. I don't think it affects it one way or another."

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WHEN: 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 3 WHERE:

Astoria High School auditorium, 1001 W. Marine Drive

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Questions? Bartell.Liz@gmail.com or 503-200-8605