

# Letter: Trump administration has sought to penalize sanctuary states

Continued from Page 1A

The other sheriffs who signed the letter mostly hail from other rural counties: Gilliam, Harney, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Malheur, Douglas, Curry, Coos, Klamath, Union, Grant, Wheeler, Lake and Deschutes.

Bergin's letter includes a reference to Mollie Tibbetts, a 20-year-old woman whose body was discovered in an Iowa cornfield earlier this month after a week-long search. Cristhian Bahena Rivera, 24, an undocumented immigrant from Mexico, has been charged with first-degree murder in connection with her death.

The case "has refocused attention on the violence and heartbreak illegal immigrant criminals can visit on Americans and their families," Bergin wrote.

Several of Tibbetts' relatives and friends have pushed back against politicians who have used her death in arguments for tougher immigration laws. Her father, Rob Tibbetts, in his eulogy at her funeral, specifically criticized the vitriol against the Hispanic community.

"We are deeply troubled that elected officials continue to perpetuate the myth of the criminal immigrant," said Erin McKee, co-director of the Immigrants Rights Project at the Oregon Justice Resource Center, in a statement. "Studies have shown, repeatedly, that immigrants commit crimes at lower rates than native-born citizens."

Sheriff Bergin's statement not only ignores facts and statistics, but it also relies on tired, fear-mongering rhetoric that misleads the public on how the law works."

The measure in Oregon comes at a time when President Donald Trump is pressing immigration reform as a national priority. The Trump administration has sought to penalize sanctuary states and cities, condemning the lack of cooperation on immigration enforcement as a threat to public safety. Supporters point to the focus on immigration as a sign that the measure has legs.

The sheriffs who signed the letter in favor of repealing the sanctuary law represent counties that backed Trump in the 2016 presidential election, except for Bergin. Clatsop County favored former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who won in Oregon based on her strength in Portland and other large metropolitan regions.

"Certainly, immigration law violations are federal offenses. But they are precursors to other crimes illegal immigrants routinely commit in their efforts to conceal their illegal presence — crimes like identity theft — that harm everyday Oregonians at the local level. Such crimes are well within local police and sheriffs' purview," Bergin wrote.

One outcome of a repeal for sheriffs would be its potential to repair relationships with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The federal agency has repeatedly criticized counties in the state — including Clatsop — for releasing undocumented immigrants from jail after they are arrested for crimes unrelated to their immigration status.

In response, Bergin has said that while he would like to detain inmates on ICE holds, he is concerned about potential civil rights lawsuits. He hopes a sanctuary law repeal would create a more fluid relationship between his office and ICE.

"This is an additional strain on the system which should not be happening in the first place," Bergin wrote. "To have the ability to work with our federal partners would alleviate the inconsistency and stop the erosion and ineffectiveness of these sanctuary laws."

While not expressing support or opposition to the measure, a number of law enforcement officials in the county have wondered if witnesses or victims would be less willing to report crimes without the sanctuary law.

Bergin called arguments about victim or witness cooperation "nonsense," since officers would not risk jeopardizing criminal cases.

"When people step forward to volunteer information about criminal activity, law enforcement officers are not going to 'look a gift horse in the mouth' by inquiring into their immigration status," Bergin wrote.

The Clatsop County District Attorney's Office used to allow undocumented immigrants to sign forms — called "U visas" — that temporarily set aside their immigration status during an ongoing case. Since Trump took office, prosecutors have not been issuing the forms out of concern that the federal government won't honor the agreements, District Attorney Josh Marquis said.

"Some who are victims may be worried to come forward," Marquis said. "We

want victims to come forward and feel like they're reasonably protected."

People who oppose the measure, including a host of business, religious, labor, law enforcement and Hispanic groups, have said a repeal of the state sanctuary law could lead to racial profiling. Bergin called the assertions "insulting."

"I can honestly say that I have never witnessed an instance of racial profiling from any of my deputies," Bergin wrote. "They serve and protect all who need assistance regardless of race, origin or creed."

McKee said Bergin's comments dismiss experiences described by people of color.

"It only takes a quick internet search to find cases of ICE deporting noncitizens who called the police for help. If Measure 105 passes, people of color will, once again, bear the brunt of the fallout," McKee said. "This letter signed by the 16 sheriffs is nothing short of open hostility towards communities of color, immigrants and noncitizens."

Astoria Police Chief Geoff Spalding said a repeal likely would not have much of an impact on the police department's daily operations.

"We will continue to be not proactive in seeking immigration violators," Spalding said. "That would be a fairly substantial policy shift, and I don't see that happening."



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian  
Clatsop County Sheriff Tom Bergin, shown here in front of the old Clatsop County Jail, has taken a leading role in a measure that would repeal Oregon's sanctuary law.

**BUY ANY 5** participating items and receive a code to enter for a **CHANCE TO WIN!**

\*NO PURCHASE NECESSARY to enter or win. Open to legal U.S. residents, residing in Oregon or SW Washington, 18 years and older (must be 21+ to purchase alcohol). Promotion ends and Entry Codes must be entered by 11:59 PM PT on 11/22/18. 5 participating items must be purchased in a single transaction. For complete details, see Official Rules at [www.cwseries.com](http://www.cwseries.com).

WIN A 2018 Toyota RAV4 Adventure Series

TOYOTA  
PROTOTYPE SHOWN WITH OPTIONS.

GRAND PRIZE

Pair of 2019 Ducks or Beavers Football Season Tickets

WEEKLY PRIZES

- Air Travel for 4 to the Alaska Airlines destination of your choice Some blackout dates apply
- Trip for 2 to an Away Game
- Groceries for a Year
- 2 Night Coastal Getaway and More!

THANK YOU SPONSORS:

clip or CLICK! just for U
Valid 8/28/18 thru 9/4/18

\$10 OFF \$50 or more\*

Save on your next grocery purchase of \$50 or more\* with your Club Card & this Savings Award.

\*Use this Savings Award on any shopping trip you choose at any Oregon Safeway or Albertsons store and S.W. Washington stores serving Clark, Wahiakum, Cowlitz, Skamania, Walla Walla and Klickitat counties by 9/4/18. This \$10.00 Savings Award excludes purchases of Alcoholic Beverages, Fluid Dairy Products, Tobacco, US Postage Stamps, Trimet Bus/Commuter Passes, Money Orders, Container Deposits, Lottery, Gift Cards, Gift Certificates Sales, All Pharmacy Prescription Purchases, Safeway Club Savings, Safeway or Albertsons Store Coupons and Sales Tax. One Savings Award redeemable per household. COUPON CANNOT BE DOUBLED. Online and in-store prices, discounts, and offers may differ.

0 00000 77006 4

clip or CLICK! just for U
Valid 8/28/18 thru 9/4/18

Check out our BBQ Grilling Events this weekend! \*See Store for details

AVAILABLE IN THE Service Deli

\$10<sup>ea</sup>

Club Price

0 00000 77412 3

\*This coupon must be presented at time of purchase at Safeway / Albertsons. Offer valid with Card and Coupon. COUPON CANNOT BE DOUBLED or combined with digital coupon. Coupon valid 8/28/18 - 9/4/18.

Prices in this ad are effective 6 AM Wednesday, August 28, 2018 thru Tuesday, September 4, 2018 (unless otherwise noted) in all Safeway or Albertsons stores in Oregon and S.W. Washington stores serving Wahiakum, Cowlitz, Clark, Skamania, Walla Walla and Klickitat Counties. Items offered for sale are not available to other dealers or wholesalers. Sales of products containing ephedrine, pseudoephedrine or phenylpropranolamine limited by law. Quantity rights reserved. SOME ADVERTISING ITEMS MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE IN ALL STORES. Some advertised prices may be even lower in some stores. On Buy One, Get One Free ("BOGO") offers, customer must purchase the first item to receive the second item free. BOGO offers are not 1/2 price sales. If only a single item purchased, the regular price applies. Manufacturers' coupons may be used on purchased items only — not on free items. Limit one coupon per purchased item. Customer will be responsible for tax and deposits as required by law on the purchased and free items. No liquor sales in excess of 52 gallons. No liquor sales for resale. Liquor sales at licensed Safeway or Albertsons stores only. © 2018 Safeway Inc. Availability of items may vary by store. Online and in-store prices, discounts and offers may differ.