

# American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin: Issues Texas travel advisory

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## *Traveling to Texas May Result in Violation of Constitutional Rights*

The American Civil Liberties Union and ACLU of Wisconsin issued a nationwide travel alert today informing anyone planning to travel to Texas in the near future to anticipate the possible violation of their constitutional rights when stopped by law enforcement.

The alert comes amid the passing of a Texas law, known as SB4. SB4 gives a green light to police officers in the state to investigate a person's immigration status during a routine stop, leading to widespread racial profiling, baseless scrutiny, and illegal arrests of citizens and non-citizens alike presumed to be "foreign" based on how they look or sound.

"In a free country, you shouldn't have to worry about losing your rights when crossing from one state to another, and residents shouldn't have to put up with the way this law encourages racial profiling," said ACLU of Wisconsin executive director Chris Ott. "In recent months, clumsy and heavy-handed anti-immigrant measures have sparked outrage, and we hope Wisconsin lawmakers will avoid making the same mistakes. The ACLU fought President Trump's unpopular and unconstitutional Muslim travel ban, and we will fight unjust laws like this."

"We plan to fight this racist and wrongheaded law in the courts and in the streets.

Until we defeat it, everyone traveling in or to Texas needs to be aware of what's in store for them," said Terri Burke, executive director of the ACLU of Texas. "The Lone Star State will become a 'show me your papers' state, where every interaction with law enforcement can become a citizenship interrogation and potentially an illegal arrest."

SB4 requires Texas law enforcement to comply with the federal government's constitutionally flawed use of detainer requests, which ask local law enforcement to hold people for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), even when they lack the legal authority to do so. Additionally, between 2008 and 2012, ICE requested local law enforcement to hold 834 **U.S. citizens**, some of whom subsequently spent days in jail as a result. Under SB4, the state of Texas is placing the rights of its residents, including U.S. citizens, in extreme jeopardy.

"It is simply a matter of time before illegal arrests occur. Local law enforcement will have to decide between violating a person's rights and being severely fined, thrown in jail, or even being removed from office for choosing not to do so," said Burke.

SB4 will go into effect on September 1, 2017. However, the ACLU is concerned that some law enforcement officers may begin to treat residents and travelers unfairly now. If you believe your rights have been violated because of SB4, please contact the ACLU of Texas at [1-888-507-2970](tel:1-888-507-2970).

ACLU "Know Your Rights" materials are available in a variety of languages at: [aclu.org/know-your-rights](http://aclu.org/know-your-rights)

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