

Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors: Supervisor West opposes efforts to criminalize immigrants

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MILWAUKEE – Supervisor Peggy A. West expressed her opposition today to an effort by conservative legislators to deny local governments the ability to set their own policies related to federal immigration laws and regarding the treatment of individuals detained in local jails.

“The kind of legislation that conservatives in Madison are pushing today is not at all about public safety, as they claim, and has everything to do with portraying immigrants as criminals.

“Senate Bill 275 will only encourage more racial profiling and stereotyping of immigrants, and it will embolden certain legislators to continue pushing their anti-immigrant agenda.

“This bill seeks to hold local governments hostage to the anti-immigrant agendas of these legislators, by threatening to withhold state funding if we don’t comply with their demands.”

“I thought conservatives believed in smaller government and local control, but this kind of legislation feels like Big Brother telling our local government that we have to be a part of their immigrant-hating agenda – or else,” said West.

Senate Bill 275 would require local law enforcement to hold people charged with a crime in jail for up to 48 hours if they federal immigrations officials suspect they might be undocumented.

The bill would also prohibit municipal governments from enacting policies that block the enforcement of any state and federal laws related to undocumented immigrants or that block state and federal laws meant to determine if someone is properly documented.

If adopted, municipalities found to be in violation of the law could be fined up to \$5,000 per day.

“We already have federal laws on the books that require local governments to comply with immigration enforcement laws, and to share information with federal authorities regarding individuals detained in our jails who may be undocumented,” said West.