

Voces de la Frontera: Responds to Sheriff Clarke

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In response to Milwaukee County Sheriff David Clarke's [remarks](#) concerning the 287g program and his desire to aid Donald Trump's efforts to separate millions of immigrant families, Voces de la Frontera issued the following statement from Executive Director Christine Neumann-Ortiz:

"287G is a discredited program that converts local law enforcement into Immigration agents, and it is highly controversial. The program has been found by federal courts to systematically violate people's civil rights by promoting racial profiling. The courts have found the program violates people's constitutional right to due process, freedom from unlawful detention, and equal protection under the law.

"287g is the program that Sheriff Arpaio used in Maricopa County to wage a campaign of state-sponsored terror against immigrants, Latinos, and people of color. If Clarke has 287g authority, he will be able to do as Arpaio did, barricade Latino and immigrant neighborhoods, picking up Latinos solely based on their appearance and interrogating them about their immigration status.

"287g is an unfunded mandate. The federal government will not reimburse Clarke or Milwaukee County for the civil rights lawsuits sure to follow, as has happened in other counties.

"Contrary to promoting public safety, this program will make us all less safe. People will be afraid to work with local law enforcement out of fear that they, their families or friends will end up deported. Families will be afraid to go to the parks with their children. Milwaukee will be a place to avoid, undermining the local economy and

depriving our community of the important contributions immigrants make as taxpayers, consumers and workers.

“Being undocumented is a civil infraction, it is not a crime. Yet Clarke has always characterized undocumented immigrants as hardened criminals, instead of mothers, fathers, working people, and grandparents who are trapped in a failed immigration system and are making important contributions to our community.

“In his latest comment he is cynically trying to pit African-Americans against immigrants. He has shown the same level of disrespect for the rights of African-Americans as for the rights of immigrants. He has called supporters of the Black Lives Matter movement “subhuman,” and compared them to ISIS. He has used racial slurs to attack African-American public figures who disagree with him.

“Sheriff Clarke thinks he is above the law. Clarke has not been held accountable for deaths in his jail. In fact he has abused his power to try to intimidate officials from mounting a meaningful investigation. He has used his power to bully people for even looking at him the wrong way in an airport. He has wasted taxpayer money building his personal brand as a spokesperson for the most vile, racist voices in our politics. He must resign.

“Monday showed the deep opposition to Clarke’s plan to bring 287g to Milwaukee County. Tens of thousands of people participated in a community-wide general strike by withholding their labor, shutting down their businesses, and supporting a one-day consumer boycott. We are prepared to sustain similar action to keep Clarke from bringing 287g to Milwaukee, and to join with nationwide mass resistance against Trump’s unconstitutional executive orders that aim to force local government to be an arm of Immigration, legalize discrimination, and carry out mass deportations.”