



To: Wisconsin Legislators
From: Badger State Sheriffs' Association (BSSA)
Wisconsin Sheriffs and Deputy Sheriffs Association (WS&DSA)
Date: February 11, 2025
RE: Statement on LRB 0779/1 - relating to: county sheriff assistance with certain federal immigration functions

The Badger State Sheriffs' Association represents all 72 elected county sheriffs in Wisconsin, and the Wisconsin Sheriffs and Deputy Sheriffs Association is a professional organization with over 1,000 members, including sheriffs, deputies, and jail officers. Together, our organizations maintain a joint legislative committee and work collaboratively on public safety issues affecting our members and the communities we serve.

We appreciate the policy intent behind this legislation and engaged in discussions on early bill drafts to ensure it aligns with the current processes and responsibilities of Sheriffs and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials. Our organizations support the broader goal of ensuring that ICE is notified when individuals who have been charged with felonies and are in the country unlawfully are identified in our jails. Above all, we remain committed to protecting our communities and upholding public safety.

At the same time, we firmly believe that immigration enforcement is fundamentally a federal issue that should be addressed at the federal level. Additionally, while we represent all 72 Sheriffs across Wisconsin, we acknowledge that each Sheriff is an independent, duly elected constitutional officer whose authority derives from Article VI, Section 4 of the Wisconsin Constitution. It is important to clarify that supporting the intent of this policy does not diminish the Sheriff's authority in managing public safety within their respective counties.

We also recognize the challenges that certain provisions of this bill may pose, particularly the mandated reporting requirements. Many county law enforcement agencies are already operating with limited resources, and additional mandates could place further strain on their staffing and budgets.

Additionally, we are concerned about the financial implications of the shared revenue penalty provisions, which could have unintended consequences for county budgets and, ultimately, local public safety efforts.

As with any proposed public policy, our organizations carefully evaluate both the benefits and potential challenges. While we have reservations about certain provisions, we support the overarching goal of ensuring cooperation with ICE in cases involving serious criminal charges. Public safety remains our top priority, and we will continue working toward policies that enhance security while considering the practical realities faced by local law enforcement and the communities they serve.