

The Menace of Criminal Alien Gangs

BY CHARLES JENKINS

Sheriff Charles Jenkins of Frederick County, Maryland, testified before the House Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security, April 19, 2016.

Good morning, Chairman Gowdy, and distinguished committee members. My name is Charles Jenkins, sheriff of Frederick County, Maryland. Thank you for allowing me to be here today to talk about alien crime and criminal alien gangs in America, including my county.

We all know that open border policies and failure to enforce the laws have impacted public safety in every community in America and cities are becoming war zones. Every single day, more and more Americans are becoming victims of avoidable crimes.

The Frederick County Sheriff's Office has partnered in the ICE 287(g) program since 2008 to ensure public safety. This program has been very effective in the identification, detention, and removal of criminal aliens. Through our partnership with ICE, we've effectively built an enforcement wall around Frederick County.

The criminal alien gang members are growing across the nation and the serious crimes are increasing. There is also a direct nexus between the action on unaccompanied minors of two years ago and the increases we are seeing now in gang crimes. Local stats offer what will definitely show the impact on public safety.

There are now over 75 active, validated, transnational gang members in Frederick County, many more suspected. We also know that MS-13 and 18th Street alien gangs are recruiting.

Of the 52 validated gang members identified since inception of the program, 48 percent have been identified since 2014. Seventy-two percent of the gang mem-

bers encountered since 2014 have been charged with felonies.

Sixty-four percent of the gang members encountered in 2015 were unaccompanied juveniles when they entered the U.S. They are now adults committing more serious crimes. Those crimes include attempted murder, armed robbery, aggravated assault, home invasion, armed carjacking, kidnapping, and use of firearms in felonies.

In 2014, eight criminal aliens were charged with rape and sexual assault of children between the ages of 5 and 14. One of my deputies was a victim of an unprovoked attack by an MS-13 member while simply doing a report in his car.

Recently, a known alien gang member was indicted in a 2013 MS-13 murder for hire. The victim fled El Salvador to Frederick. The hit carried over to a local set in Frederick. The victim was lured to a wooded area where he was shot in the head and stabbed to death.

The growing alien gang problem has spread into our area high schools, where fights in one particular school have become almost a daily occurrence between rival gangs. Since 2008, this administration has weakened immigration enforcement by dismissing deportation cases, rescinding 287(g) agreements, encouraging sanctuary policies, and weakening detainer policies.

ICE directives have limited enforcement priorities, suspended many thousands of removals, granted deferred actions, and suspended removals for aliens who falsely claim to be victims.

A 2014 DHS/OIG report actually points out the problems and failures within ICE. The enforcement and removal operations (ERO) have to be allowed to do their jobs to keep the criminals off the streets.

ICE executive leadership does not communicate effectively with the ERO, creating systemic breakdowns. ERO in the field offices and on the street want to do their jobs, but simply aren't allowed to do their jobs.

ICE is broken, but it's not on the street. It's a couple blocks down here in Washington, D.C. It's actually — at its highest levels, I think it's almost incapable of doing the job and carrying out the mission.

Case-by-case amnesty, back door amnesty, DACA

Charles Jenkins has served as sheriff of Frederick County, Maryland, since December 2006. His previous work in law enforcement includes the patrol division (1990-93) and criminal investigations unit (1993-2006).

programs, and the DREAM Act by executive order were pushed through. Policy shifts by this president have weakened and ended secure communities and it did not allow action to be taken with police departments and sheriffs who did not honor detainers. This allowed criminals to be released back on the streets.

In effect, criminal aliens that should have been deported have been allowed to remain and commit more heinous crimes to our citizens.

The effectiveness and value of local enforcement by simply cooperating with ICE is invaluable. Failure to cooperate and detain known criminal aliens for ICE has led American citizens, such as are sitting here today, to be victimized in every conceivable way.

It is my belief that this Congress — if this Congress and the next president do not take an action to secure this border with Mexico and enforce the immigration laws, every county in America will become a border county.

In Frederick, Maryland, our partnership of ICE is effective, having placed 1,400 criminal aliens into

removal proceedings since 2008. We honor ICE detainers so that criminals — criminals are not released back on the streets, assuring the safety of my citizens in Frederick County. Criminal aliens are deported.

It's imperative that local law enforcement cooperate and honor ICE detainers and is allowed, if not mandated, to work with ICE as an enforcement tool. As stated, this committee passed the Michael Davis, Jr. and Danny Oliver in Honor of State and Local Law Enforcement Act.

I certainly hope Congress passes that bill. That act — that act is going to strengthen local and state law enforcement. Every sheriff and police chief in this country ought to embrace that law, ought to embrace that mission and help with ICE as a — as a force multiplier.

In 2009, I testified before Congress, the cost of doing nothing is enormous. Now in 2016, I'm back here to say, we've seen doing nothing has jeopardized every American in this country. The Americans that you and I represent deserve our best. And you're absolutely right. This is all avoidable. Thank you. ■



SHERIFF JENKINS: "I truly believe, and I know for a fact, again, I have regular conversations with the ICE field offices and ICE agents who oversee our program, and by the very virtue I know that the counties that surround us, and I won't name the counties, but that — that alien criminal presence is increasing.... The gang presence is increasing. And the word — listen, the word is out. They're neighboring counties, but they will not come to Frederick County for the fact that they know if they commit a crime there's a very good chance that if they're caught they're going to be removed. So in effect it's — it's built — built a virtual wall. So but the gang problem is growing in surrounding counties."