

NANCY MACE  
1ST DISTRICT, SOUTH CAROLINA

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES  
COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT  
AND ACCOUNTABILITY

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

WASHINGTON, DC OFFICE  
1728 LONGWORTH HOUSE  
OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-3176  
WWW.MACE.HOUSE.GOV

MOUNT PLEASANT OFFICE  
652 COLEMAN BLVD.  
SUITE 102  
MOUNT PLEASANT, SC 29464  
(843) 352-7572

BEAUFORT OFFICE  
710 BOUNDARY ST.  
BEAUFORT, SC 29902  
(843) 521-2530

September 25, 2024

Mr. Patrick J. Lechleitner  
Deputy Director and Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Director  
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement  
500 12th St. SW  
Washington, D.C. 20536

Dear Acting Director Lechleitner,

We write regarding the sanctuary policies implemented by Kristin Graziano, the Sheriff of Charleston County, which have emboldened criminal illegal aliens and endangered the residents of Charleston County and our surrounding communities.

We understand that under Sheriff Graziano's leadership, the Charleston County Sheriff's Office has refused to provide U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) with adequate hold time to assume custody of illegal aliens and refused to provide ICE with notification they have an illegal alien in custody prior to their release. In fact, Charleston County has been recognized as a non-cooperative institution by ICE's Enforcement and Removal Operations Criminal Apprehension Division.<sup>1</sup>

This is not an isolated incident. According to ICE data, since Fiscal Year 2021, the Charleston County Sheriff's Office has refused to honor at least 51 detainer requests issued by ICE – opting instead to release these criminal aliens into our communities.

On August 23<sup>rd</sup> of this year, the Charleston County Sheriff's Office refused to honor an ICE detainer request for an illegal alien who had been arrested and charged with two counts of criminal solicitation of a minor – and instead released this criminal illegal alien on bond. This criminal illegal alien attempted to have sex with a child, and instead of cooperating with ICE, Sheriff Graziano released this illegal alien, and alleged pedophile, back into our community.

This is disturbing.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://cis.org/sites/cis.org/files/KML/Sanctuary/Detainer-Acceptance-June-2024.pdf>

As you are aware, Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) authorizes ICE to enter into agreements with law enforcement agencies to delegate the authority to perform certain immigration officer duties to state and local law enforcement officers under ICE's direction and oversight and to identify and remove criminal aliens from our communities.<sup>2</sup> Prior Sheriff Graziano's tenure, Charleston County had a 287(g) agreement in place with ICE and worked hand-in-hand with ICE to enforce our nation's laws and protect our communities from criminal aliens. On Sheriff Graziano's first day in office, she terminated Charleston County's 287(g) cooperation agreement with ICE.<sup>3</sup>

We understand that since this agreement with ICE was terminated, the Charleston County Sheriff's Office:

- No longer arrests illegal aliens they encounter
- No longer detains illegal aliens prior to immigration proceedings
- No longer turns over criminal illegal aliens to ICE for removal proceedings

Given the invasion at our southern border, we are outraged by Sheriff Graziano's disregard for our nation's laws and failure to cooperate with ICE to keep our communities safe.

In light of this, we request you provide our office with the following information by October 15, 2024:

- All email communications between any employee of ICE and any employee of the Charleston County Sheriff's Office on or after January 4, 2021
- All documents relating to detainer requests issued by ICE to the Charleston County Sheriff's Office on or after January 4, 2021, including the criminal charges brought against each alien and whether the alien was released from custody by the Charleston County Sheriff's Office

To arrange for the delivery of documents or to ask any follow-up questions, please contact our office at (202) 225-3176.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this inquiry.

Sincerely,



Nancy Mace  
Member of Congress

---

<sup>2</sup> 8 U.S.C. 1357(g)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.postandcourier.com/news/charleston-county-sheriff-kristin-graziano-cancels-ices-deal-with-jail/article\\_cdf4e9ec-4f89-11eb-bbe4-33f9452ec0ee.html](https://www.postandcourier.com/news/charleston-county-sheriff-kristin-graziano-cancels-ices-deal-with-jail/article_cdf4e9ec-4f89-11eb-bbe4-33f9452ec0ee.html)