

## Opposition to Designating Sonoma County a Sanctuary County and Santa Rosa a Sanctuary City – or anything like Unto it – by Orlean Koehle, Santa Rosa



This is a picture of Kate Steinle, who at age 32 was killed July 1, 2015, as she and her father were innocently walking on Pier 14 in San Francisco. The man who shot her with a stolen gun was Juan Francisco Lopez-Sanchez, an illegal immigrant from Mexico who had previously been arrested and deported 5 times, but was back safely living in San Francisco. Why San Francisco? Because it was a designated safe zone, a sanctuary city, where even if you had a felon record, you would not be picked up or deported. Thus he was free to rob or kill again, which he did.

The Steinle family filed a wrongful death law suit against the city and county of San Francisco, which stated "Kate's death was both foreseeable and preventable had the law enforcement agencies, officials and/or officers involved simply followed the laws, regulations and/or procedures which they swore to uphold." The suit names the city and county of San Francisco, former county Sheriff Ross Mirkarimi and the United States "for their failures to perform mandatory duties and/or for the unconstitutional and/or negligent acts and/or omissions of their officers, officials, agents and/or employees." The suit was later dismissed by a federal judge, Joseph C. Spiro. But the family has not given up; they feel this is Kate's legacy to try to stop this from happening to any other family. They call it "Kate's Law."<sup>1</sup>

No matter what the verdict was, everyone agrees that Kate's death would not have happened if San Francisco were not a sanctuary city and Lopez-Sanchez would not have been there. Here are five reasons why I am so opposed to having Sonoma County and Santa Rosa so designated as a sanctuary city.

**1) Sanctuary Cities are not Safe:** As we see from the death of Kate Steinly, such a designation does not make a county or city safe. It attracts the worst of felons and criminals and coddles them and makes them feel safe, but not the average citizen. Where was the safety for Kate?

**2) We are a Nation Ruled By Laws** – What has made our nation a great nation, a bastion of freedom, a place where immigrants want to come to – is that we are a constitutional Republic, governed by a written Constitution, the rule of law – not just governed by political whims of what is deemed politically correct for the day that will fluctuate according to whomever is in power or how the wind is blowing. Sanctuary cities are in direct violation of that rule of law. As the Declaration of Independence states, governments are instituted among men to "secure God-given inalienable rights."

**3) You as, our elected Officials are Part of that Government and have taken an oath to Enforce and Secure those Laws to Protect Your Citizens.** You are the ones who have been entrusted with securing our rights - rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness and all the other rights listed in the Bill of Rights. You are to protect your citizens from enemies – foreign and domestic. How can you do that if you are allowing known felons and criminals to have

sanctuary within your county and city boundaries? Your county and city then becomes a magnet to attract even more felons and criminals, gangs and drug pushers.

**4) Huge Cost for Taking Care of Illegals:** One of the reasons California is billions of dollars in debt is because of the huge cost we have to spend taking care of the illegal immigration problem we have here. How much our state has suffered by violating immigration rules already - billions spent in welfare for illegals, drugs, crime, cost for their schooling, medical costs. I remember Senator Feinstein herself talking about this issue many years ago and mentioning that 18 hospitals in Southern California had to be shut down because they could no longer survive having to give constant free medical care to illegals.

**The Cost to California per Year - \$25.3 billion:** A study that was released June 19, 2014 by FAIR, the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) finds that “providing education, health care, law enforcement, social and government services to illegal aliens and their dependents costs Californians **\$25.3 billion per year**” (according to FAIR's report The Fiscal Burden of Illegal Immigration on California Taxpayers.) The state's **3 million illegal aliens** and their 1.1 million U.S.– born children cost the average California household — headed by a U.S. citizen — \$2,370 annually.<sup>2</sup>

**5) Huge Cost for our Cities and our State if we no Longer Receive Any Federal Funding?** San Francisco receives \$1 billion annually from the federal government. How will they be able to survive without that money? That money is used for repairing roads, for infrastructure, for day to day maintenance. Other cities such as LA receives \$200 million from the federal government, Seattle receives \$1.48 billion. How can they just say no to such funds? I'm sure they desperately need that money.

Other mayors like the mayor of Fresno, Lee Brand, is saying no to designating his city a sanctuary city because he needs that federal money to take care of his city's infrastructure. He says, “My philosophy is to follow the law and to avoid these national culture-war questions.”<sup>3</sup>

**Conclusion:** I urge you, our elected officials to stand by your oath of office and support and protect the Constitution, the rule of law and the lives of us, your law-abiding citizens in Sonoma County and Santa Rosa. Sanctuary cities are not safe cities; they are only safe for criminals and felons and will attract even more of them. The president and attorney general have every right to enforce federal law and punish those who defy it. As is stated:

*“The Attorney General shall take appropriate enforcement action against any entity that violates 8 U.S.C. 1373, or which has in effect a statute, policy, or practice that prevents or hinders the enforcement of Federal Law.”*

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cnn.com/2017/01/10/politics/kate-steinle-wrongful-death-suit/>.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.fairus.org/news/illegal-immigration-costs-california-taxpayers-more-than-25-billion-a-year-finds-fair>.

<sup>3</sup> <http://usinc.org/sanctuary-city-battle-begun/>.