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# El Cajon Sues California Attorney General Over Illegal Immigration Law

*Mike Garcia, Richard Lawson - April 29, 2026*

**EL CAJON, CA**—The America First Policy Institute (AFPI) filed suit against California Attorney General Rob Bonta on behalf of the City of El Cajon, challenging California’s Sanctuary State Policy in federal court. The charge: Sacramento has turned a blind eye to criminal illegal aliens, handcuffed local law enforcement, and put the safety of California’s families at risk—all in defiance of federal law.

California created this problem and has refused to resolve it. The conflict this case addresses is that if El Cajon police follow state sanctuary law, they risk federal prosecution. If they follow federal law, they risk state sanctions. That is not a legal gray area—it is a trap Sacramento built on purpose, and El Cajon’s police officers have been left to navigate it alone.

Federal law makes it a federal felony to encourage or induce someone to reside in the United States unlawfully and California designed their law to do exactly that. The Supremacy Clause is clear: when state and federal law conflict, federal law wins.

The cost of that trap became undeniable when an El Cajon city councilmember asked the Attorney General’s office a simple question: could city officers conduct a wellness check on a child who may have been a victim of human trafficking, using location information from federal authorities? The answer from Sacramento: probably not. Not a deportation. Not an arrest. **A wellness check on a child**—and California said police would likely be in violation of state law.

**AFPI vice chair of litigation Richard Lawson** highlighted California's hypocrisy:

"California wrote these laws to defeat federal enforcement, and their own legislators admitted it. When that strategy ends with a police officer being told he can't check on a potentially trafficked child, it's a legal and moral emergency, and it's time for a court to settle it."

**Chairman of AFPI's America First California chapter Mike Garcia** stated:

"This lawsuit represents AFPI's commitment to supporting law enforcement who should not have to choose between abiding by federal law or state laws when they are just trying to do what is right for their citizens. Extreme policies from Sacramento put police officers' careers in jeopardy and compromise the safety of all our communities."

California's legislature didn't hide what it was doing. The author of SB 54 stated that the bill was needed because federal deportation enforcement "will have a significant effect on California's economy." Sacramento built a business model on illegal immigration, and it is our desire that the courts restore the rule of law.