

BILL NUMBER: AB 1081
VETOED DATE: 09/30/2012

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 1081 without my signature.

Undocumented immigrants play a major role in California's economy, with many performing low-wage jobs that others don't want. Comprehensive immigration reform including a path to citizenship would provide tremendous economic benefits and is long overdue. Until we have immigration reform, federal agents shouldn't try to coerce local law enforcement officers into detaining people who've been picked up for minor offenses and pose no reasonable threat to their community.

But I am unable to sign this bill as written. Under the bill, local officers would be prohibited from complying with an immigration detainer unless the person arrested was charged with, or has been previously convicted of, a serious or violent felony. Unfortunately, the list of offenses codified in the bill is fatally flawed because it omits many serious crimes. For example, the bill would bar local cooperation even when the person arrested has been convicted of certain crimes involving child abuse, drug trafficking, selling weapons, using children to sell drugs, or gangs. I believe it's unwise to interfere with a sheriff's discretion to comply with a detainer issued for people with these kinds of troubling criminal records.

The significant flaws in this bill can be fixed, and I will work with the Legislature to see that the bill is corrected forthwith.

Sincerely,

Edmund G. Brown Jr.