



To: House Federal & State Affairs Committee
From: Erica Andrade, President & CEO, El Centro
Date: 2/23/2026

Re: HB 2771 – Written Oral Opponent Testimony

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in strong opposition to HB 2771.

El Centro has served Latino and immigrant communities in Wyandotte and Johnson Counties for nearly 50 years. Our mission is to strengthen communities and improve lives through educational, social, and economic opportunities. Central to this mission is fostering trust between families and the institutions that serve them, including local law enforcement, schools, and public systems that keep communities safe and thriving.

HB 2771 would undermine that trust and harm public safety across Kansas. By expanding local law enforcement's role in federal immigration enforcement, this bill would create a chilling effect that discourages immigrants—regardless of immigration status—from reporting crimes, cooperating with police, or seeking help from courts and public institutions. When community members fear that contact with local law enforcement could lead to immigration detention or deportation, crimes such as domestic violence, wage theft, and exploitation go unreported. Public safety suffers for everyone, not just immigrant families.

The bill authorizes county sheriffs to hold individuals for up to 48 hours based solely on administrative immigration warrants or detainers issued by federal immigration authorities. These documents are not judicial warrants and do not require a judge's signature. Allowing extended detention without judicial oversight raises serious due process concerns and exposes counties—and Kansas taxpayers—to significant legal risk.

HB 2771 also creates new financial liabilities for the State of Kansas and local governments. The bill requires municipal insurance pools to cover immigration enforcement activities and mandates that the State pay judgments in certain federal lawsuits involving officers operating under 287(g) agreements. At a time when law enforcement agencies are already stretched thin responding to mental health crises, gun violence, and substance abuse, this bill diverts resources away from core public safety responsibilities and toward costly federal enforcement activities.

Perhaps the most significant change in HB 2771 is that it allows county sheriffs to enter into 287(g) agreements directly with federal immigration authorities without approval from county commissioners



or following established interlocal cooperation procedures. This represents a major shift in local governance and accountability. Decisions with far-reaching fiscal, legal, and community impacts would be made without oversight from locally elected governing bodies responsible for budgets and community priorities. Removing this layer of accountability weakens democratic processes and limits community input on policies that directly affect residents.

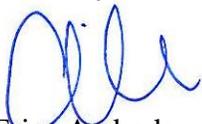
Immigration enforcement is a federal responsibility. Requiring or incentivizing local law enforcement to take on federal duties creates an unfunded mandate and places Kansas communities in the position of bearing the financial and social costs of federal policy decisions. Kansans should not be forced to pay for expanded federal enforcement or for legal settlements arising from actions taken under these agreements.

El Centro stands firmly against policies that erode trust, expand government overreach, and place unnecessary financial burdens on local communities while making Kansas less safe. Strong communities depend on cooperation between residents and law enforcement, not fear and separation.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the committee to oppose HB 2771.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Erica Andrade
President & CEO
El Centro, Inc.