

Media Release: **Community Concerns Regarding Immigration**

Date: March 24th, 2017

In response to a series of public inquiries and concerns related to the DeKalb Police Department regarding our approach to immigration and customs enforcement, the Department would like to reassure our community that the approaches taken by the DeKalb Police with regard to such issues are not planned to change and we will not be undertaking any form of primary immigration enforcement activity.

In January of this year a Presidential Executive Order was signed regarding immigration that has generated numerous community concerns for undocumented immigrants and how the order will affect their treatment by the police. These concerns have been raised in our community and across the nation, as such the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police and the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) have sought to clarify the role of local police agencies with regard to the Executive Order. The IACP and I, as the Chief of Police for the City of DeKalb, believe that to reduce fear and ensure that we have an open and honest relationship with our community, it is essential that we understand the role of the local police regarding the Presidential Executive Order.

Recent reports that federal authorities are considering using local law enforcement agencies in the apprehension and removal of undocumented immigrants from our communities has generated significant concerns. A statement released by the IACP indicated that, "President Trump's January 25th Executive Order (*Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States*) only directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to use his existing authority under Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act to enter into **voluntary agreements** with state and local agencies to perform immigration enforcement duties." However, the IACP has, and will continue to strongly oppose any initiative that would **mandate** that state and local law enforcement agencies play a role in the enforcement of federal immigration law. The IACP believes that the issue of state, tribal, or local law enforcement's participation in immigration enforcement is an inherently local decision that must be made by law enforcement executives, working with their elected officials, community leaders, and citizens."

Federal authorities have the primary responsibility to enforce immigration laws, in DeKalb we must seek a balance between the current national discussion about immigration and what the role of the DeKalb Police is within our community. The DeKalb Police are committed to reducing crime and enhancing our quality of life through an active partnership with our community. Regardless of anyone's immigration status, we will always help those in need, tend to our victims, and do the right thing at the right time for all people. We want our community members to voice their concerns, report crime without fear, and have a trusting relationship with their Police Department. We do not want people to fear that federal authorities will be notified after the DeKalb Police pull them over for a traffic violation or respond to their call help. We must have a "behavior driven policing philosophy", that being if you are engaged in criminal behavior you have to be held accountable, yet any attempt to target *non-criminals* would destroy the trust our residents have in the police.

The DeKalb Police will not determine what action will be taken based on anyone's immigration status, we will take the appropriate action based on the needs of our community and we will proactively seek to rid our neighborhoods of the criminals that victimize us. As the Chief of Police I support the position taken by the IACP and I look forward to building on the positive relationship we have with our community.

Respectfully,

Gene Lowery

The contents of this press release are based upon the best information available to the DeKalb Police Department. The statements regarding the conduct of any person identified above are allegations until affirmatively proven in Court. All persons are presumed innocent until proven guilty.