

ICE Agents Union President Defends Lawmakers from AFL-CIO Threats, Encourages Rubio to Leave Gang of 8

Washington, DC - *The following statement was issued today by Chris Crane, National ICE Council President:*

“I was deeply alarmed to read the statement from Ana Avendano, the Director of Immigration for the AFL-CIO, threatening to “steamroller” lawmakers who oppose a plan to provide amnesty and citizenship to millions of illegal immigrants. She added that these attacks were a “fun evolution.” As an American, an AFL-CIO member, a law officer, and a veteran, I think it’s a dark day for our country when unions openly threaten the representatives of the people in order to stop free and open discussion and stifle our representative form of government through coercion. I certainly hope that the AFL-CIO reconsiders its position, and allows elected officials to represent the opinions of Americans within their districts without fear of union retribution.

Ms. Avendano’s remarks are even more disturbing given that, according to news reports, the AFL-CIO has been closely involved in the crafting of the Gang of 8’s comprehensive immigration bill. In effect, AFL-CIO leadership is threatening to target lawmakers who oppose the very bill the AFL-CIO helped secretly write behind closed doors. While the AFL-CIO obviously had its chance to provide input on the proposed legislation, it seems clear that the AFL-CIO plans to deprive other Americans from having the same opportunity through their elected representatives.

ICE officers have requested meetings with the Gang of 8, but those requests have been denied. A spokesman for Gang of 8 member Senator Robert Menendez told the media that “Since the Gang of 8 has not met with anybody else, they did not agree to meet with the ICE union president.” Contrary to these statements from the Gang of 8, however, news reporters have repeatedly indicated that the Gang has consulted with the powerful Chamber of Commerce, the AFL-CIO and many others. Someone clearly isn’t telling the American people the truth regarding the Gang’s activities or their alliances.

Attempts to obtain a White House meeting have also failed—even though the White House has met repeatedly with powerful business executives and pro-amnesty special interest groups. Meanwhile, immigration officers who work within our nation’s broken immigration system every day, and know its failings arguably better than anyone, are not welcome and have been barred from providing any input.

To me, this demonstrates that the members of the Gang of 8 and the White House have no intention of seriously addressing enforcement issues within their proposed legislation. If the President and the Gang of 8 had opened up discussions with law enforcement officers from ICE and other federal agencies charged with enforcing U.S. immigration law, as a country we could have worked together in crafting real legislation aimed at fixing our nation’s broken immigration system once and for all. Instead, the President and the Gang of 8 shunned America’s immigration

officers in favor of Big Unions, Big Business and attorneys and special interest groups—all of which stand to make billions from illegal aliens under the new legislation. Judging from information leaked this week regarding the legislation, it appears that the Gang of 8 and its big money associates have simply created amnesty for 11 million illegal aliens in the U.S. with no guaranteed commitment of ever providing for strengthened enforcement to prevent the problems of our current immigration situation from recurring.

Senator Rubio was asked during a recent interview that “if you don’t get enforcement first, or securing the borders first, is that a deal killer for you?” And he replied, “Absolutely... Because we will be right back here again.” But the outline from the Gang of 8 offers legalization, or amnesty, before enforcement is accomplished. Senator Schumer admitted as much: “we’ve come to a basic agreement, which is that first, people will be legalized... Then, we will make sure the border is secure.” I would then respectfully call on Senator Rubio to follow through on his commitment to the American people—and his pledge to accomplish enforcement before legalization—and to leave the Gang of 8.

There is nothing in the proposed plan that I have seen to suggest that there will be any effort to accomplish enforcement before legalization occurs. Moreover, a lack of strong and immediate interior enforcement means the U.S. will again become a sanctuary for the millions of illegal aliens who undoubtedly will flood across our nation’s borders in the future. Once across the border, guidance from the Obama administration will continue to prohibit ICE officers from enforcing immigration laws on the interior of the United States providing illegal aliens with safe haven and residence.

The only precondition to amnesty in the Gang of 8’s outline is for Secretary Napolitano—who is being sued by ICE officers for undermining the law—to submit a “plan” about how she’ll secure the border years after millions of illegal aliens have already been granted amnesty. Based on her anti-enforcement record, no American should have any faith that Secretary Napolitano will provide a well intended or effective law enforcement plan. The fact that the Gang of 8 left this enforcement plan up to any person instead of detailing it out themselves through legislation, shows just how little the Gang of 8 understands of what actually must be done in terms of immigration enforcement, public safety and national security.

Every American should brace themselves for a piece of legislation from the Gang of 8 that, despite a lot of window dressing, will fail to do anything other than provide for amnesty and doom the US to a constant flow of illegal immigration. My promise to America is if we don’t have enforcement first—including both a secure border and robust interior enforcement—enforcement will never happen at all. We will be back here in ten years discussing the next amnesty.”