



Legislation Summary:

An Act Relative to Protect the Civil Rights and Safety of all MA Residents; Safe Communities Act (SCA)

Initial bill number(s): H.2288/S.1510

Sponsors: Rep. Ruth Balsler, Rep. Manny Cruz, and Sen. Jamie Eldridge

What the bill does, why LWVMA supports or opposes it, and the League position relative to this bill.

The Safe Communities Act would protect the civil rights of all state residents by making sure immigrants are offered due process rights and local resources are not used towards enforcing federal immigration law. It disentangles federal immigration enforcement from state and local law enforcement.

- a) **No questions about immigration status:** Bars law enforcement and court personnel from asking people about their status unless required by law.
- b) **Protects due process:** Before Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) questions someone in local custody, requires police to obtain their consent using a form that explains their right to decline an interview or have their own attorney present.
- c) **Limits notifications to ICE:** Bars police, court officers and jail officials from *initiating* the notification to ICE that someone is about to be released. The bill would still allow notifications to ICE if a person is being released after serving a *criminal* sentence.
- d) **No more 287(g) agreements:** Ends contracts with ICE that allow state and county personnel to act as federal immigration agents, at state taxpayers' expense.
- e) **Provides crucial training and accountability:** Requires law enforcement agencies to train their personnel about this law, and if there is an alleged violation, people can file a complaint with the relevant agency or the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, EOPSS.

The League of Women Voters believes that all persons should receive fair treatment under the law. The League supports federal immigration law that provides an efficient, expeditious

system for legal entry of immigrants into the United States. In transition to a reformed system, the League supports provisions for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status. **The League supports due process for all persons, including the right to a fair hearing, right to counsel, right of appeal, and right to humane treatment.** While policy reforms, including a path to legal status, remain unachieved, the **League does not support deporting unauthorized immigrants who have no history of criminal activity.**

[*Impact on Issues*](#) pp.143-144