

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MAY 23, 2014

CONTACT:

Charisse Domingo, Charisse@siliconvalleydebug.org ,

Dean Kevin Santos, ksantos650@gmail.com,

Helen Beasley, helen@clsepa.org



San Mateo County Coalition for Immigrant Rights welcomes SMC Sheriff Greg Munks' decision to end compliance with most ICE immigration hold requests

Redwood City, CA- The Sheriff's Office of San Mateo County has communicated its intention to cease responding to hold requests from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) when inmates are otherwise eligible for release, except in rare occasions.

This policy change comes after years of community advocacy and in response to a recent federal court ruling that detentions pursuant to ICE requests violate the Fourth Amendment when an inmate is held solely for this reason (*Maria Miranda-Olivares v. Clackamas County*). Alameda, Contra Costa, Monterey, San Bernardino, Santa Cruz, Sonoma, and Riverside counties have all ended responses to the unconstitutional requests, most in recent weeks. Santa Clara County was one of the first in the nation to stop honoring ICE holds back in 2011.

The Sheriff has decided to stop responding to the holds except in "extremely unlikely" circumstances. The San Mateo County Coalition for Immigrant Rights is working with the Sheriff's Office on their proposed policy to further decrease County liability and increase protection for the community.

Although community members remain concerned about possible exceptions to the ICE hold compliance policy, we consider this week's news a key victory in the struggle to ensure safety and trust with all immigrant community members by separating County public safety operations from federal immigration enforcement.

As we have seen in San Mateo County, even the threat of deportation has a devastating effect on families.

"More than three years ago, I was turned over to ICE by San Mateo County Sheriff's Department for a misdemeanor offense because I was undocumented. I was brought to a detention facility in Florence, AZ and was put into deportation proceedings. Without the support of my neighbors, friends, classmates, and professors, I would have been deported. Many others were not as fortunate as I was, and if I had been deported I wouldn't be here as a college graduate today. I welcome the new policy changes implemented by the Sheriff's Department. Now that local law enforcement will not respond to ICE holds, immigrant communities throughout San Mateo County can now live without the fear of being separated from their families and communities." Dean Santos from San Bruno.

We applaud the intention the Sheriff's Office has signaled and encourage them to continue in this direction. The SMCCIR hopes that Sheriff Munks' office will end all collaboration in immigrant detention and deportation mechanisms to ensure equality for everyone.

The San Mateo County Coalition for Immigrant Rights is a diverse coalition of faith, youth, legal, civil rights, criminal justice, and immigrant rights organizations that work with communities across San Mateo County. Member organizations include ACLU – North Peninsula Chapter, ASPIRE, California Immigrant Policy Center, Comite de Padres Unidos, Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto, El Buen Pastor, Iglesia Episcopal, Fools Mission, International Institute of the Bay Area, Immigrant Legal Resource Center, Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights, Peninsula Interfaith Action/ San Francisco Organizing Project, Silicon Valley De-Bug, Stanford Immigrants Rights Clinic, Youth United for Community Action
