



**Response by Grace Huang to
Questions for the Record from Chairman Grassley
Senate Committee on the Judiciary Hearing:
Oversight of the Administration's Misdirected Immigration Enforcement Policies: Examining
the Impact on Public Safety and Honoring the Victims (July 21, 2015)
August 18, 2015**

Questions for Ms. Huang:

1. The day before the July 21 hearing, you and other advocates were on a call for the media to talk about the committee's hearing and why sanctuary policies are a benefit to certain people in the country illegally. One of the participants on that call said the hearing was something like a "circus." Do you think hearing from the victims of illegal immigration is a joke, and what would you say to that person who called it a circus?

Victims' experiences are not a joke, and we have much to learn from those experiences to increase safety and justice for all. The advocacy that I do on behalf of all victims of domestic violence, including immigrant victims of abuse, is rooted in the stories that victims - and advocates at victim advocacy programs - share with me and my colleagues.

I have spent over two decades working with individual victims who have experienced horrific crimes committed against them, as they work to overcome their trauma, and work with our programs and my organization to try to improve systemic responses to domestic violence. Their voices are critical in informing how systems can improve in preventing and intervening in domestic and sexual violence. In my policy work, I work to identify gaps in our current responses to domestic violence, in terms of holding abusers accountable, providing safe options for victims, and preventing future abuse.

In this role, I listen to victims' stories of their experiences, review systemic responses to their situations, listen to experts who have implemented promising practices, study policy proposals, and study research on effective domestic violence interventions as well as lessons learned relating to domestic violence fatalities. In collaboration with colleagues, I consider proposed policy improvements, *always* considering the impact it will have on victims in the future, and what the likely unintended consequences are of any proposals, including victims who have the greatest barriers to accessing safety.

2. *At the hearing, you mentioned the concern for undocumented immigrants who may hesitate to report a crime for fear of being discovered and deported due to their undocumented status.*

a. *How does a policy of honoring an ICE detainee on a criminal alien cause undocumented immigrants to be afraid of reporting crimes?*

In my personal experience, and in the experience of many of my colleagues, often immigrants, both those here with authorization and without, are unfamiliar with how law enforcement agencies interact with ICE. Community members (immigrants and U.S. Citizens alike) are unaware of the intricacies of relating to information sharing between the police and ICE, and are unlikely to distinguish between honoring ICE detainees for those with criminal legal system involvement, and other information sharing about immigrants by local law enforcement. As noted in my written testimony submitted to the committee, recent research demonstrates that victims are less likely to contact the police to report they have been victimized if they fear it will lead to inquiries about immigration status.

b. *Is there ever an appropriate situation for detainees to be honored?*

Yes. When they are comply with the 4th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, i.e., when they are supported by a probable cause finding by a judicial officer, giving local jurisdictions the authority to hold someone in custody.

I believe that our Constitution is there to protect all of us. As a victim advocate, there have been times when I wish it were easier, for example, for law enforcement to remove firearms from domestic abusers, or better prevent them from being able to harass a victim on the stand on cross examination. But if we surrender those constitutional protections, when a victim has been arrested because her abuser has made up false allegations, she also loses her ability to respond to the charges against her. At this time, none of the legislative proposals I have reviewed resolve these constitutional problems.

In conclusion, the proposals that have been brought forward to mandate that localities hold individuals at ICE's request would sow fear in the community and undermine public safety. That is not good public policy and Congress should decline adopting those proposals.