

Supporting Undocumented Women Survivors of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

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Lourdes' Story

“You do not belong to your family anymore, you belong to me.”



Image:http://a.abcnews.go.com/images/Health/gty_domestic_violence_II_131104_16x9_992.jpg



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Statement of the Problem

Barriers present in the US legal system today prevent undocumented women from reporting and receiving care for incidents of domestic violence and sexual assault.



Statement of the Problem

- **48%** of women reported that their partner exhibited increased violence toward them since emigrating to the United States.
- **52%** were still with their abusers. (Dutton 2000)



Image:<http://johnstonhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/domestic-violence-e1412877746807.jpg>



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History of the Issue and Its Context

McCrory signs bill outlawing sanctuary cities in NC

Tags: [Immigration](#), [Public Assistance](#)

Posted October 28, 2015

North Carolina Governor Signs Bill Targeting 'Sanctuary Cities,' Undocumented Immigrants

It also targets the city he chose to sign it in.

Mayor Kleinschmidt signs letter to encourage immigration reform in the United States



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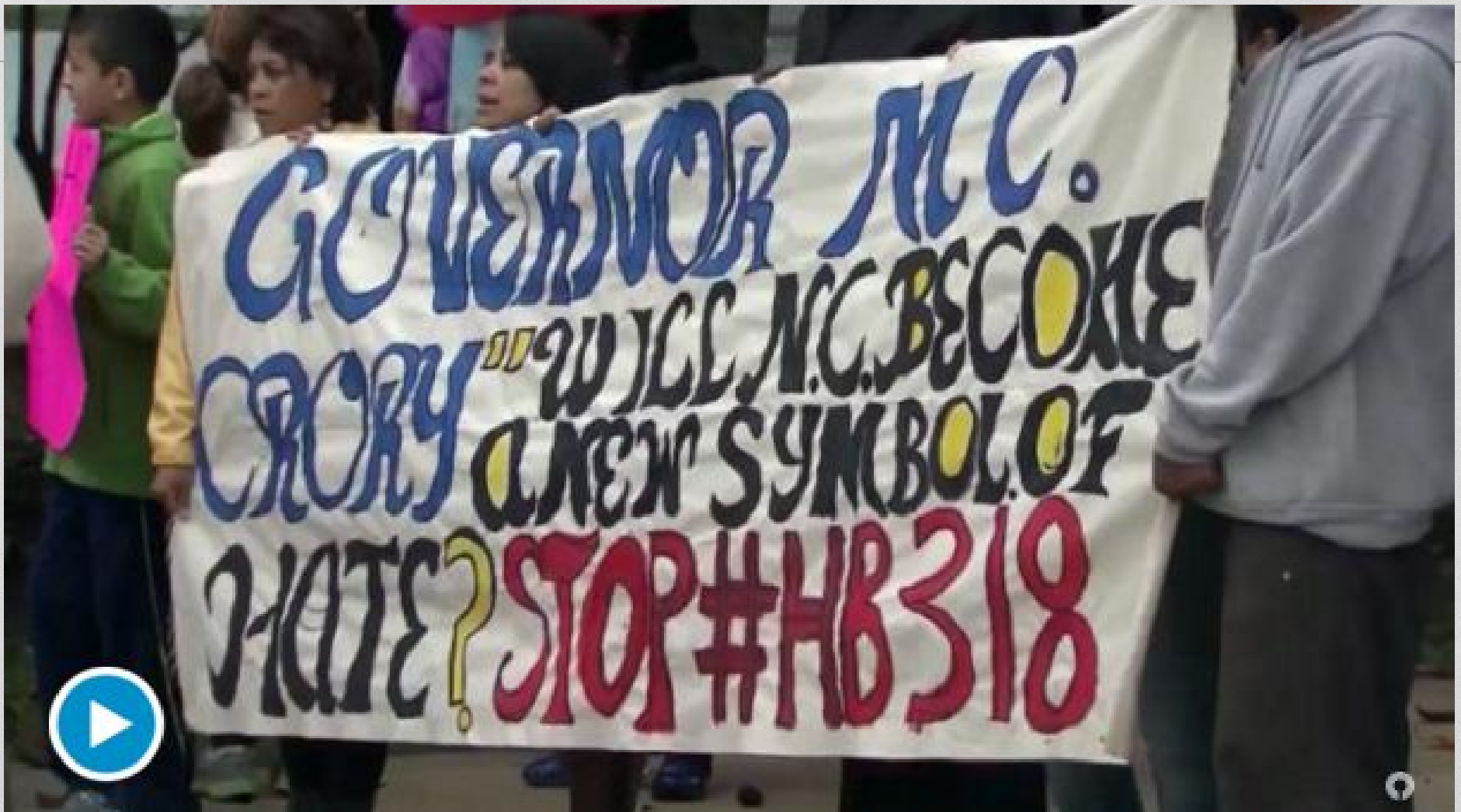


Image: <http://www.wral.com/mccrory-signs-bill-outlawing-sanctuary-cities-in-nc/15035244/>

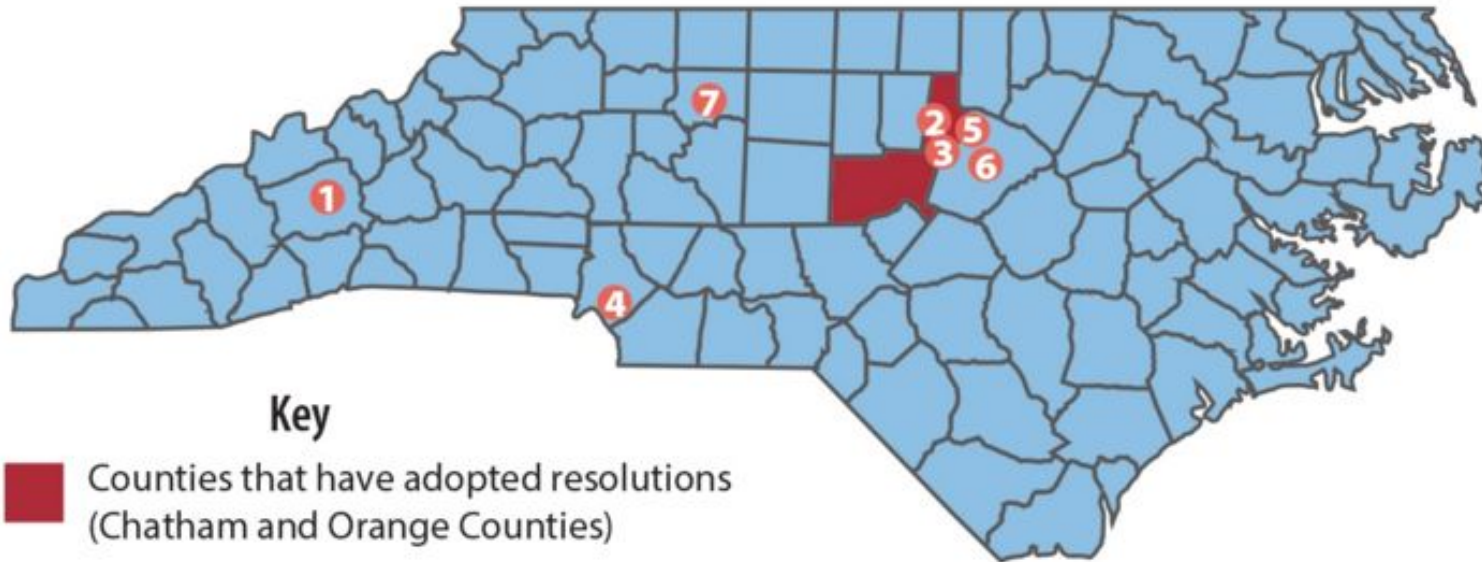


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These NC 'sanctuary cities' limit enforcement of immigration policies

There are over 200 sanctuary cities, counties and states in the country that limit enforcement immigration laws and locally issued IDs to those who are not citizens. The following shows the locations of the cities and counties in North Carolina.



1 Asheville **2 Carrboro** **3 Chapel Hill** **4 Charlotte**

Resolution adopted on
May 16, 2006

Resolution adopted on
Feb. 26, 2007

5 Durham **6 Raleigh** **7 Winston-Salem**

Resolution adopted on
Oct. 20, 2003

SOURCE: SANCTUARYCITIES.INFO

DTH/JOSÉ VALLE



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Policy Recommendation/Best Practice Model

Re-instating Sanctuary City legislation

- Law Enforcement prohibited from inquiring about citizenship status of domestic violence and sexual assault cases.
- Enforcing Secretary of Housing and Urban Development's policy guidelines for emergency short-term shelter

*“....Under the Order, for the protection of life and safety. Therefore, programs and services of this type that deliver in-kind services at the community level and do not condition the provision of assistance, the amount of assistance provided, or the cost of assistance provided on the individual recipient’s income or resources **are to make their programs available to all persons without verification of citizenship, nationality or immigration status, as set forth in the Order...**”*



Policy Recommendation/Best Practice Model

U-Visa Application Process Improvements:

- Increasing the federal cap of U-Visa's provided yearly.
- Amending the stipulation that applicants must have arrived to the US via legal means.



Image: http://www.ilgrp.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/iStock_000018164382Large.jpg

Best Practice Model: SART via NCCASA

NC SART Undocumented Citizen Programming

- Sexual Assault Response Teams
- Expanding and scaling up the SART Program to better serve undocumented citizens.



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Policy Shortcomings

- Education/Marketing need
- Xenophobia present in Law Enforcement



Image: <https://imtawanda.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/xenophobia.jpg>



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Conclusion/Call to Action

Undocumented women survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault are critically underserved. Their safety and health is a human right. Amendments to current legislation, increased and targeted programming designed to increase reporting and protection are necessary improvements to empower these women to live in peace and security.



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Citations

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