

Tuesday, February 25th, 2025

Testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 254

Chairman Mike Thompson and members of the committee,

Thank you for allowing me to express my concerns on SB 254 today. My name is Madison Shanks and I'm an 11th grade student from Bishop Seabury Academy. I am writing because if SB 254 is to be passed it will allow the unlawful harassment of the people, perpetuates racism and makes way for extreme government overreach.

We have a constitutional duty to uphold here, and passing this bill would violate that. We, as US citizens, have certain rights that are protected under the constitution. One of those being our right to only be detained with reasonable suspicion. A right that is in danger of being overturned if this bill is passed. The founding fathers and legislators over the years have established that some fundamental rights to the people should be;

1. "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects"
2. "The right of the people to be secure...against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause."

It's unclear what would give law enforcement officers reasonable suspicion to enforce this bill if it were to be passed. According to lines 34-36 SB 254 law enforcement officers could detain someone until citizenship is confirmed at any time by claiming that they could be an illegal

immigrant. Imagine going to work in the morning and being detained because a law enforcement officer thinks you could be an illegal immigrant. Reasonable doubt becomes obsolete under this bill as anyone could be detained at any time for any reason. Violating the fourth amendment and allowing unreasonable seizure of a person without reasonable suspicion of probable cause is a spit in the face to the constitution and major government overreach.

Continuing on the murkiness of reasonable suspicion in this bill, the guidelines put in place to enact this bill will be inherently racist. The people targeted by this bill are not white. In today's society when someone mentions an immigrant photos of Mexicans, Hispanics, Asians, Latinos, Indians, and other non-Caucasian people are shown. All groups that are not white. Regardless of how reasonable suspicion guidelines for this bill are established, marginalized groups of US citizens are going to end up being the ones punished by SB 254. It will oppress these groups by giving police unjust reasons to detain based on the color of someone's skin, the way they speak, or some other stereotype chosen to be the guidelines. Allowing it to pass will only be strengthening the oppression and prejudice against marginalized groups, not getting rid of illegal aliens.

The constitution is the supreme law of our country, it should come before any bill or law. If we violate it with this bill, then what's to say that we won't continue to pass unconstitutional bills like this? I urge you to oppose this bill and to protect the people's constitutional rights.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Madison Shanks

Douglas County, Kansas