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## House Appropriations Hurts Immigration Enforcement

By James R. Edwards Jr., *Human Events*

New congressional restrictions on immigration enforcement should worry Americans about the direction of immigration policy after this year's election.

The Democratic majority on the House Appropriations Committee, led by North Carolina liberal David Price, put handcuffs on the popular 287(g) program. The FY 2009 Homeland Security Appropriations bill shuts off nearly all enrollment of state and local police departments in this program.

The bill, as passed by the House Appropriations Committee, prohibits Homeland Security from "enter[ing] into any agreement delegating law enforcement to any state or political subdivision of a state as authorized under such section 287(g), other than at a jail, prison, or correctional institution . . . ."

The committee report explains, "[B]ill language is included requiring ICE to prioritize the delegation of federal immigration enforcement authorities to state and local correctional agencies, and to preclude the use of any funds for the delegation of federal authorities to organizations that fail to comply with the terms of their agreements."

In other words, the bill curtails new 287(g) enrollment for police departments of states and localities. A fig leaf implies police have abused their 287(g) delegated authority (which isn't at all the case).

The bill leaves open the remote possibility of new 287(g) participation by law enforcement agencies. But the vast majority will be "agreements that will maximize the identification of aliens who are unlawfully present in the United States and have been convicted of dangerous crimes."

Identifying criminal aliens quickly and putting them through deportation proceedings while they serve their prison sentences is important. But a program for that already exists: the Institutional Removal Program (renamed the Criminal Alien Program)...

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