March 17, 2021

Dear Governor Gianforte,


Montana needs leadership that tones down unfounded fears and promotes policy that helps all Montanans prosper. House Bill 200 does just the opposite. Instead, this bill traffics in fear, fanning the flames of harmful rhetoric and undermining local control. All this to solve a problem that does not exist in our state, where not a single ‘sanctuary city’ has been declared.

While this bill wouldn’t solve any problems, it would create plenty. This legislation would criminalize immigrant communities, jeopardize public safety, and undermine the ability of local police to combat crime and safeguard against racial profiling. That’s not the Montana we know and love, and this isn’t how we get Montana back to work.

Immigrants in Montana take part in a long tradition of coming to the United States in search of a better life, freedom and opportunity. These immigrants are our neighbors, our co-workers, our friends and family, and they deserve to be treated with the same decency and respect as any other Montanan. Legislation like this falls far short of that mark, using these members of our community as pawns for scoring political points and ignoring the vital role that they play in our economy and our communities.

I hope you’ll see fit to stand up for the strangers and sojourners in our midst and reject House Bill 200.

Sincerely,

Sam Forstag, Legislative Program Manager
ACLU of Montana
Cosigned:

Diane Magone, Co-Chair  
*Treasure State Values*

Kelsen Young, Executive Director  
*Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence*

Travis McAdam, Program Director  
*Montana Human Rights Network*

SJ Howell, State Policy Director  
*Montana Women Vote*

Randall Caudle, Attorney  
*River Mountain Immigration*

Mary Poole, Executive Director  
*Soft Landing Missoula*

Gloria Soja, MAC Assistant  
*Montana Association of Christians (MAC)*