

Ben J. Benoit, Mayor, District 1
Marsha Swanson, Mayor Pro Tem, District 5
Bridgette Moore, Council Member, District 4
Dustin Nigg, Council Member, District 2
Timothy Walker, Council Member, District 3

Gary Nordquist, City Manager



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Date April 11, 2018

Dear Wildomar Residents and Businesses,

The elected leadership of the City of Wildomar does not support Senate Bill 54 which was approved by the governor on October 5, 2017.

Like many cities across California, the City of Wildomar has received emails and inquiries from residents and businesses asking about the City's position on Senate Bill (SB) 54, the "Sanctuary State Bill." Let me assure you that our Councilmembers and staff are carefully reading and considering every piece of correspondence and updates received on this important and sensitive topic.

SB 54 went into effect on January 1, 2018 after passage by the State Legislature and Governor. In summary, the bill limits the ability of local law enforcement agencies to participate in federal immigration enforcement. As a result, the federal government's Department of Justice has filed litigation on the matter and several California cities have also joined in this litigation effort.

Although subtle, it is worth noting that SB 54 does not affect Wildomar in the same way as it does others because we contract with the Riverside County Sheriff's Department for our police services. The County Sheriff, an independently elected official, develops and implements the law enforcement procedures that are followed by the City's contracted police force as well as the Sheriff's personnel that staff and operate the local jails.

The City Council's focus, consistent with the recently released community survey results, is that public safety is the highest priority for our community. I am proud to say that my fellow council members and I approved a February 2018 budget increase in police service levels and we should be seeing more officers on the streets within the next few months. This increase was funded by the 2018 resumption of funding that the State took from us in 2011. While this will be an improvement, additional service levels are needed to react to the constant modifications in our laws (including AB 109, Prop 47, and Prop 57) that have undeniably hindered our ability to protect Wildomar. These misguided attempts to improve and streamline law enforcement have come at a significant cost and burden; we cannot allow them to erode public confidence in law enforcement or diminish our resolve to protect our community.

The City's expectation is that we continue to work together with the Riverside County Sheriff's Department to keep Wildomar residents safe by reducing and/or eliminating all elements of criminal activity, and that this remains their top priority in fulfilling their obligation to our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben J. Benoit', is written over a white background.

Ben J. Benoit, Mayor

cc: City Councilmembers
City Manager