



Ned Lamont
GOVERNOR
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

August 19, 2025

By Overnight Delivery

with copy via email to paul.junge@usdoj.gov

Attorney General Pamela Bondi
Office of the Attorney General
c/o Paul Junge, Intergovernmental Liaison
United States Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Bondi:

I write to acknowledge your letter dated August 13, 2025, regarding immigration enforcement efforts in Connecticut. In it you request that I confirm my “commitment to complying with federal law.” I confirm that the State of Connecticut is at all times committed to protecting Connecticut residents and maintaining public safety in a manner that is in full compliance with state and federal law.

While the term “sanctuary jurisdiction” has no legal meaning, nothing in Connecticut laws or policies violates federal immigration law or impedes federal officials from carrying out their immigration enforcement duties. During President Trump’s first term, the Department of Justice examined Connecticut’s laws and practices, and, in the attached [letter](#)¹, the Office of Justice Programs expressly certified our compliance with 8 U.S.C. § 1373. That certification was correct when the DOJ issued it, and Connecticut laws and practices remain in compliance.

Contrary to the assertions in your letter, Congress has not “codified the duty of states and local governments to cooperate in immigration enforcement efforts.” That would be unconstitutional. *See New York v. United States*, 505 U.S. 144 (1992); *Printz v. United States*, 521 U.S. 898 (1997); *Murphy v. National Collegiate Athletic Association*, 138 S.Ct. 1461 (2018). Section 1373 is instead far more limited.

Connecticut law does not limit or restrict law enforcement’s ability to collect and maintain information about a person’s citizenship or immigration status, or even to share that information with federal immigration officials upon request. The state’s policy is that state and local law enforcement resources should be primarily used to carry out state and local public safety responsibilities, rather than being diverted to immigration enforcement, a responsibility of the federal government. In addition to safeguarding our public funds, such policy is intended to instill trust in our residents that they can and should engage fully with our state and local law enforcement and with our court system. Your claim that Connecticut law conflicts with U.S.C. § 1373 or any other federal statute is unfounded.

¹ <https://www.justice.gov/archives/opa/press-release/file/1003021/dl>

While nothing in Connecticut's laws or statutes interferes with the Department of Homeland Security carrying out its immigration enforcement responsibilities, in some instances, the opposite is true. DHS's recent approach can interfere with the ability of state and local authorities to carry out their business in an orderly and safe manner. When the federal government detains people at state courthouses, it is harder for prosecutors, public defenders, police, and judges to do their jobs. These measures create fear among Connecticut residents, including witnesses, victims and families, about going to court or contacting the police to report criminal activity. Our justice system cannot operate effectively when people do not feel safe coming forward. As a result, the safety of Connecticut communities is compromised.

As a Governor, my focus is on making sure our kids show up at school, our residents participate fully in their democracy, and that all individuals are treated with respect. We all agree that violent criminals should be arrested, prosecuted, and, when appropriate, deported, which is why Connecticut law facilitates law enforcement working with federal officials in those instances. Unfortunately, DHS's current deportation tactics undermine legitimate law enforcement by instilling fear among residents and interfering in the orderly functioning of our state courts. These practices are not required to secure our borders, promote public safety, or effectively enforce our immigration laws. They instead undermine public safety by impeding Connecticut's ability to enforce its own laws and protect its residents.

Moving forward, intergovernmental cooperation cannot be treated as a one-way command from Washington. Federalism requires partnership. The Department of Justice should treat states as sovereign partners—respecting state law, maintaining honest communication, and working collaboratively. Only through such cooperation can both levels of government truly serve the public.

Sincerely,



Ned Lamont
Governor

cc: William Tong
Connecticut Attorney General
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs

Washington, D.C. 20531

October 11, 2017

Ben Barnes
Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division
Office of Policy and Management
450 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106-1308

Dear Mr. Barnes,

Thank you for your recent submission regarding your compliance with 8 U.S.C. § 1373, further to the terms of your FY 2016 Byrne JAG grant award from the Department of Justice. Your submission was very helpful and informative.

Based on the materials you have provided, the Department has found no evidence that the State of Connecticut is currently out of compliance with section 1373. As a reminder, complying with section 1373 is an ongoing requirement that the Department of Justice will continue to monitor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Alan R. Hanson".

Alan Hanson
Acting Assistant Attorney General