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FAU Poll Shows Floridians Favor Sanctuary Cities, Don't Support Government Cutting Off Funding

BOCA RATON, Fla. (February 6, 2017) – A majority of Floridians favor sanctuary city policies that offer safe harbor for undocumented immigrants, according to a statewide survey by the Florida Atlantic University Business and Economics Polling Initiative ([FAU BEPI](#)).

A majority of respondents (52 percent to 36 percent) do not want the federal government to cut off funding to sanctuary cities and a plurality of respondents (46 percent to 38 percent) do not want the U.S. Justice Department to take legal action against sanctuary cities. All regions of Florida with exception of the Southwest are in favor of sanctuary cities.

“This means that Floridians support sanctuary policies that commit a city to serving all individuals without regard to immigration status,” said Monica Escaleras, Ph.D., director of the BEPI.

While Democratic mayors across the country have banded together to fight Trump’s executive order that White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer said “will strip federal grant money from the sanctuary states and cities that harbor illegal immigrants,” the Republican mayor of Miami-Dade County, Carlos Gimenez, announced January 26 that it will abandon the practice of a sanctuary city.

This decision will affect many since Miami-Dade County has the second highest number of immigrants in the country, with more than 1,330,000, according to the Migration Policy Institute. The majority of respondents wanted Miami-Dade County to keep the sanctuary status (62 to 39 percent). Similarly, Floridians would like to see Tampa become a sanctuary city (61 to 39 percent).

Republicans were the only group who supported cutting federal funds with 70 percent in support and 24 percent opposed. When asked about the proposed border wall, 44 percent support and 56 percent oppose. However, when respondents were told constructing the wall would cost \$15 billion dollars support dropped to 34 percent.

Republicans favor extending the wall at 70 percent, with their support dropping only to 65 percent when told it would cost \$15 billion.

The online survey, which polled 600 Florida residents from February 1-4, 2017, with a margin of error of +/- 3.9 percent, found that nearly two-thirds of respondents currently disapprove of President Trump's job performance (66 to 34 percent). However, among Republicans, Trump's approval is at 73 percent, while only 8 percent of Democrats approve of the job he's doing so far.

Democratic Senator Bill Nelson appears vulnerable in his 2018 re-election attempt with 28 percent saying he deserves re-election while 72 percent said it was time to give someone else a chance. No political group supported Nelson including Democrats.

It appears having previous knowledge of sanctuary cities influences a person's attitude toward the practice. Of the 55 percent of respondents who were familiar with sanctuary cities, 51 percent wanted the Justice Department to take legal action against these cities.

For more information, contact Monica Escaleras, Ph.D., director of the BEPI, at 561-297-1312 or mescaler@fau.edu, or visit www.business.fau.edu/bepi.

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About FAU BEPI:

The Florida Atlantic University Business and Economic Polling Initiative conducts surveys on business, economic, political and social issues with a focus on Hispanic attitudes and opinions at regional, state and national levels via planned monthly national surveys. The initiative subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research and is a resource for public and private organizations, academic research and media outlets. In addition, the initiative is designed to contribute to the educational mission of the University by providing students with valuable opportunities to enhance their educational experience by designing and carrying out public opinion research.

About Florida Atlantic University

Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. Today, the University, with an annual economic impact of \$6.3 billion, serves more than 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students at sites throughout its six-county service region in southeast Florida. FAU's world-class teaching and research faculty serves students through 10 colleges: the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, the College of Business, the College for Design and Social Inquiry, the College of Education, the College of Engineering and Computer Science, the Graduate College, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. FAU is ranked as a High Research Activity institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The University is placing special focus on the rapid development of critical areas that form the basis of its strategic plan: Healthy aging, biotech, coastal and marine issues, neuroscience, regenerative medicine, informatics,

lifespan and the environment. These areas provide opportunities for faculty and students to build upon FAU's existing strengths in research and scholarship. For more information, visit www.fau.edu.