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'SANCTUARY CITY' CHICAGO TO FILE SUIT AGAINST TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Lawsuit relates to requirements for federal grant program, immigration enforcement

By Valerie Bauerlein
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Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel said Sunday the city will file a federal lawsuit challenging the Trump administration's use of federal grant money as a way to force local authorities to cooperate with a crackdown on illegal immigration.

The showdown over so-called sanctuary cities has been months in the making, as some local governments resist federal calls to hold people in jail when asked to do so by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency.

The lawsuit, to be filed Monday, is coming now, Mr. Emanuel said, because the Justice Department recently [required such cooperation for cities](#) to be considered for a long-running federal crime prevention grant, the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant. Mr. Emanuel said the new rules would require cities to allow the Department of Homeland Security to have unlimited access to local police stations and law-enforcement facilities.

"Chicago will not be blackmailed into changing our values, and we are and will remain a welcoming City," Mr. Emanuel said in a press release Sunday.

The Justice Department criticized Mr. Emanuel's stance.

"In 2016, more Chicagoans were murdered than in New York City and Los Angeles combined," said Devin O'Malley, a spokesman for the department. "So it's especially tragic that the mayor is less concerned with that staggering figure than he is spending time and taxpayer money protecting criminal aliens and putting Chicago's law enforcement at greater risk."

Attorney General Jeff Sessions [last month said](#) it is appropriate and long overdue for the department to make grants to local governments that allow federal immigration access to detention facilities and provide 48 hours' notice before the release of an illegal immigrant wanted by federal authorities.

"This is what the American people should be able to expect from their cities and states," Mr. Sessions said.

The Byrne JAG funds provided \$347 million to state and local governments last year. The city of Chicago said it routinely uses the grant money to buy vehicles and SWAT equipment. Last year, Chicago received \$2.3 million in Byrne JAG funds.