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Opinion: How does board's posturing on immigration policy help county?



San Diego County Sheriff Kelly Martinez is shown at a February press conference. (Hayne Palmour IV / For The San Diego Union-Tribune)



By **REBECCA JONES**

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When you live in California, there's a double-edged sword. We're blessed with world-renowned beach weather, nature's beauty and abundant natural resources, but we're also burdened by excessive regulations, costly state mandates and federal policies that leave us paying exorbitant prices for everyday essentials — from housing and utilities to basic groceries and gas.

These rising costs aren't just numbers on a receipt; they're daily stressors for hardworking families. As an elected leader, I know and understand my role: to represent your money wisely and advocate relentlessly for quality-of-life essentials at reasonable prices so that you and our communities thrive and prosper.

In today's politically charged environment, it's key to our lives that local elected officials are accountable to the fundamental intention of the service they were hired to do. Are they earnestly serving you or simply posturing for political optics?

A recent decision by the Board of Supervisors to seek to limit cooperation between the Sheriff's Office and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is just one such localized example. While the move may have been well intentioned, it appears to be more about headlines than helping. Sheriff Kelly Martinez took a principled stand, emphasizing that she must follow the law, not engage in political grandstanding and headline clickbait. She believes current state law already offers a reasonable balance that maintains public safety. When politicians start "virtue signaling" with policies they cannot enforce, they create confusion, erode trust and ultimately fail the people they are meant to serve.

Elected officials should focus on what truly matters: managing essential infrastructure, keeping us safe by respecting the law, advocating for quality of life programs and providing excellent customer service. That's how you maintain public confidence — not by overstepping legal boundaries or engaging in political theater, but by staying grounded in your role as a public servant.

In San Marcos, for over 18 years, I've focused on the efforts that matter to our residents. We keep our government efficient, responsive and service-minded. Working with my City Council, we consistently reject polarizing protestors who seek attention on our agenda with issues outside our governing, avoid unnecessary dramatics, and work collaboratively to create an environment where residents and businesses succeed, despite government. We do our jobs so they can do theirs.

This approach has made San Marcos a place where community trust and personal prosperity go hand in hand. It's a model of leadership that prioritizes people over politics, results over rhetoric. If more elected leaders committed to transparency, restraint, and servant leadership — especially here in California — we could begin to chip away at the cost burdens and policy confusion that too often get in the way of your prosperity.

Hey, all you elected officials, keep your eyes on the road! Serve as a fiduciary. Hey, all you elected officials, keep your eyes on the road! Serve as a fiduciary. We can build a California where success isn't stifled by regulation, but We can build a California where success isn't stifled by regulation, but supported by sensible, grounded governance.

Jones is mayor of San Marcos, where she previously was deputy mayor and a council member. She is as a member of the San Diego Association of council member. She is as a member of the San Diego Association of Governments' Board of Directors.