



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER
BRAD LANDER

April 29, 2025

The Honorable Eric Adams
Mayor
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

RE: President Trump Executive Orders Targeting Sanctuary Cities

Dear Mayor Adams,

I am writing to call on you to recuse yourself from all matters related to the City's sanctuary laws that have been targeted by the Trump Administration's latest Executive Order. I urge you to immediately designate a trustworthy public servant to protect the best interests of the City in your stead, such as the Corporation Counsel who was appointed with the advice and consent of the New York City Council. You have previously recognized a conflict of interest and the need to recuse yourself from the decision to issue Executive Order 50 in order to maintain the trust of the New Yorkers we serve. The same principle should apply in defense of our sanctuary laws more broadly.

Yesterday, April 28, President Trump signed Executive Order "[Protecting American Communities Against Criminal Aliens](#)," instructing the U.S. Department of Justice ("DOJ") and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security ("DHS") to compile a list of "sanctuary jurisdictions." While the City of New York is not a jurisdiction that "obstructs federal immigration law enforcement," we can assume New York City will appear on the published list. This latest Executive Order appears to be designed to cure some of the [legal deficiencies](#) in the Trump Administration's [original Executive Order](#) targeting sanctuary jurisdictions.

Now, City Hall's failure to take action leaves our City in fiscal jeopardy. Throughout these first 100 days of Trump's Presidency, your Administration has been muted, if not [muzzled](#), in its response to the very clear and explicit threats to our City's federal funding and New Yorkers' civil liberties. This cannot stand. Since November, my Office has been raising [alarms](#) about the threats to our federal funds posed by the Trump Administration. Billions of dollars of federal funding as well as the lives and freedom of millions of New Yorkers are at stake. New York City must defend itself more robustly from these attacks.

Last Friday, a state court judge extended a Temporary Restraining Order against your Administration from implementing [Executive Order 50](#), which would allow Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE") to establish an office on Rikers Island. The [lawsuit](#), filed by City Council against your Administration, alleges that your Executive Order 50 is the "poisonous fruit" of a corrupt deal between you and the Trump Administration. In that case, you recognized the conflict of interest and delegated your authority to issue Executive Order 50 to First Deputy Mayor Randy Mastro, [stating](#) it was necessary to "maintain trust among the nearly 8.5 million New Yorkers who our administration serves every day."

In addition to offering space on Rikers Island to ICE, your personal defense attorney explicitly **told** federal prosecutors that you could prevent “Corporation Counsel from litigating challenges to immigration enforcement.” The conflicts of interest, or at least the appearance thereof, now extends to this latest action by the Trump Administration. Given the conflicts of interest, it is imperative that you recuse yourself from all matters related to sanctuary laws or immigration enforcement, and designate a public servant who was appointed with advice and consent from the City Council to address the issues and make decisions on behalf of the City. To restore trust to New Yorkers, you should not be involved in decision-making related to when or how the City defends its sanctuary laws.

I urge you to recuse yourself and let dedicated public servants weigh the issues and make decisions in accordance with their duties and oaths to uphold the constitution and act in the best interests of our City. With acute threats to the City’s federal funding, we’re facing a critical moment. A dedicated public servant – not an individual with a personal conflict of interest – should be making such decisions based on the facts and the law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Lander", with a stylized, flowing script.

Brad Lander
New York City Comptroller