



287(g) and Its Impact on Wisconsin Farmers and Rural Communities

1. What is 287(g)?

Origin: Section 287(g) was added to the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) in 1996.
Purpose (according to ICE):

- Allows U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to delegate immigration enforcement powers to state and local law enforcement officers.
- Local and State officers can perform certain immigration functions under ICE supervision.
- Intended to identify and remove “criminal aliens” and enhance community safety.

2. How 287(g) Works:

- A state or local agency can sign an MOA (memorandum of agreement) with ICE. Wisconsin’s current Governor publicly stated he will not enter into a 287(g) agreement at the state level. Wisconsin is seeing these agreements being signed at the county sheriff level, most often by the county sheriff running a local jail.
- Agreements can be terminated at any time by either party.
- Upon a local sheriff or police department signing an agreement, Local officers receive training to act as immigration agents.
- They can investigate immigration status, detain individuals, and begin deportation processes.

3. Concerns with 287(g):

- Discrimination & Racial Profiling
 - Officers may target individuals based on appearance, language, or perceived immigration status.
- Family Separation
 - Local traffic stops or minor infractions can lead to deportation proceedings.
- Undermines Public Safety

- Immigrant families, and those who employ immigrants, may fear reporting crimes or cooperating with law enforcement.

4. Status of 287(g) in Wisconsin:

- First implemented in 2017 under the first Trump administration.
- **16 counties currently have 287(g) agreements:**
 - **Brown, Calumet, Fond du Lac, Kenosha, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marathon, Marquette, Outagamie, Sheboygan, Sauk, Sheboygan, Washington, Waukesha, Waushara, Winnebago, and Wood.**
- Local sheriffs' offices in these counties are empowered to act as ICE agents.

5. Why Farmers Care:

- Wisconsin agriculture depends heavily on immigrant labor (dairy, produce, processing).
- Fear of deportation harms farmworkers, their families, and rural economies.
- Communities rely on immigrant families as neighbors, church members, and local business supporters.
- 287(g) increases stress and instability for mixed-status families working in agriculture.
- Local law enforcement perform vital services for rural communities, redirecting officers leaves gaps to the resources previously provided.
- 287(g) erodes trust between local officers and the communities they operate in.

6. What Farmers and Community Members Can Do:

- Contact Local Leaders
 - Call your county supervisor and local sheriff to oppose 287(g).
 - These agreements are reversible and because Sheriffs are elected positions, public pressure could push them to reverse an active agreement at the county level.
- Connect with immigrant advocacy groups for local events
 - Groups like Voces de la Frontera call 287(g) a discriminatory and harmful program.
 - They demand abolition of 287(g) at the local, state, and federal levels and are hosting a Statewide Tour to Stop 287(g) by partnering with groups and hosting local events.
 - Reach out to Roselyn Pacheco at Voces to get more information about the Statewide Tour and to learn how to get involved:
roselyn@vdlf.org.
- Support Immigrant Neighbors

- Speak out against racial profiling and family separation through op-eds and social media.
- Connect with the WFU Communications department for support on writing or placement of op-eds and other original writing.
 - Contact information: Communications Director, Tommy Enright (tenright@wisconsinfarmersunion.com or (715)-563-2169)
- Know Your Rights
 - Encourage all community members, especially mixed-status families, to learn about their legal rights by hosting a workshop through the county WFU chapter.
 - There are Know Your Rights workshops for immigrant employees and community members available through Worker Justice of WI for free.
 - Reach out to Allison Crook at acrook@wisconsinfarmersunion.com for more information on these training sessions.

In addition to 287(g), there are various other incentives, agreements, and changes that local governments can pass that threaten immigrant families. Learn more from these resources:

- [Jail2deportation_report_2025.pdf](#)
- [Disappeared In America Presentation - Google Slides](#)

Advocacy is needed to protect immigrant families and ensure strong, stable rural economies. Connect with WFU Government Relations Director, Michelle Ramirez-White if you would like to discuss 287(g) further or have questions: email mramirezwhite@wisconsinfarmersunion.com or call (715) 450-9507.

Wisconsin Farmers Union, a member-driven organization, is committed to enhancing the quality of life for family farmers, rural communities, and all people through educational opportunities, cooperative endeavors, and civic engagement. For more information visit www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com.