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Is Cleveland, A Sanctuary City?

Citizen asks whether Bradley County is becoming a safe haven for illegal immigrants.

by Tonya Brantley
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Illegal immigration is a problem not just in Cleveland and Bradley County, but all over the United States. However many feel that Cleveland, TN has be-

come a sanctuary city where illegal aliens can commit crimes without fear of prosecution. One concerned Bradley county citizen is DiAnna Stanich. She has come before the county commission and the city council several times to

voice her concerns. Most recently she addressed the city council on August 25th, not only to once again voice her concerns but seeking answers in regards to a letter she wrote to the Cleveland police department on July 23, 2008.

In the letter she explains that harassment charges were brought against her in early March 2008. Stanich observed an illegal alien (according to the police report) selling food to workers out of the back of her truck in the new Target shopping center parking lot. She questioned the woman about her business license, a health department permit, and other identification. When the woman couldn't provide the information, Ms. Stanich informed her she was going to call the police. The woman then sped away and Ms. Stanich followed her to an apartment building. The woman called the police and the officers asked Stanich to leave and that they would discuss her concerns with the woman. The officers took no personal information from Stanich.

The woman admitted to the two officers of being an illegal alien with no driver's license, no social security number and conducting business without a license or health permit. Plus the vehicle she was driving was registered to her even though she was an illegal alien. The officer who took the report stated that because he did not observe her driving any vehicle no charges were filed and stated she is an illegal alien but he has no authority in that area.

Stanich then went to the City of Cleveland Police Department to explain what

she had observed and asked when a police report would be filed. They informed her it would be the next day. The following day she was told that under the discretion of

At the council meeting Mayor Tom Rowland asked that council members not comment on the letter from Stanich concerning the charges against her because it would be improper to discuss those in a public forum. However, the complaints against Stanich were closed before the meeting took place. According to a statement from Steve Hatchett of the DA's office, "As of April 9, 2008, I'm clearing (the cases against DiAnna Stanich) by non prosecution administrative clearance due to the DA's office not wishing to prosecute." Also, no warrants were ever issued on DiAnna Stanich.

On the two police reports filed against her, one didn't include her personal information, but the second had full information on it including her social security and driver's license number. On the information that went to the DA her personal information was redacted. There was no consistency and she felt threatened by possible retaliation. She asked Mayor Rowland for consistency. City manager Janice Castiel said that the Cleveland Police Department is implementing a policy where they will attempt to redact personal information. Rowland said, "We'll see if it can be done."

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DiAnna Stanich

the police officers, no report would be filed. So, on March 6, 2008 she filed a dereliction of duty complaint against the officers.

Stanich said she also discovered that harassment charges were filed against her by a Hispanic male who works at Caniceria #9. According to the police report, he stated that Ms. Stanich had been harassing him and his customers by asking them for their green cards and other identification and threatening to have them deported. The officer who took the report found out it was Ms. Stanich through another officer. This harassment charge was filed the same day she filed a formal complaint against the two City of Cleveland police officers. She is still waiting the outcome of her complaint against these two officers.

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