

for immigrants

coming to our country, who bring their skills, experience, intelligence and love for our land. It should not be frightened by a bully into withdrawing that welcome.

Of course, there need to be procedures in place to identify and block terrorists and violent criminals from our home. But that should not mean that we stop welcoming the thousands coming to our country in search of a better life. Thousands who ultimately enrich us.

If we are afraid to weigh in on immigration policy, to stand by the resolution we made 16 years ago, the bully has muzzled our voice. If we are cowed by the bully, we lose. We lose the potential that new people can bring. More devastatingly, we lose our human compassion if we become silent. We lose our self-respect.

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We must set an example for bullies

In a recently published editorial, "Why is Council picking a fight with Washington?" the Albuquerque Journal editorial board posed a great question while failing to propose an alternative solution for the issue at hand. ... So, what is a bully and why do we need to prevent it?

According to the American Psychological Association's definition, bullying "is a form of aggressive behavior in which someone intentionally and repeatedly causes another person injury or discomfort" and it can take the "form of physical contact, words or more subtle actions."

In this case, President Trump is the bully and, unfortunately, state and municipal governments are the victims of his

bullying. We know this because he has signed an executive order which threatens to cut federal funding for so-called "sanctuary cities," thus exercising his position as a bully trying to intimidate others into doing what he wants....

In the APA's: "How parents, teachers and kids can take action to prevent bullying" website section, they state "preventing and stopping bullying involves a commitment to creating a safe environment where children can thrive, socially and academically, without being afraid."

This last excerpt, when applied to our city government context, sounds very much like what the Albuquerque City Council is doing by reaffirming the city's 2000 resolution that granted us the status of "Immigrant-Friendly City." Councilors Isaac Benton, Klarissa Peña, Pat Davis and Diane Gibson are publicly taking a stance against an aggressive behavior that will be ongoing unless proactive measures are taken ... to stop it.

All four of them have introduced a memorial that strives to create a safe environment where all Albuquerque residents can thrive, regardless of their national origin, religion and immigration status. This measure does not, in any way, interfere with the enforcement of public safety. On the contrary, it establishes clear guidelines that our local law enforcement agency will not serve as immigration agents because that is the duty of federal immigration agencies.

...Perhaps the real question is: "Why wouldn't you stop a bully?"

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