

Republican Perspective
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WESTERN SANCUTARY

“I will not support a federal budget that cuts funds for sanctuary cities, states, or universities.” Jimmy Gomez, California Congressman (D)

Try to imagine — it's early morning Monday, December 17th and you are on your way to work on CA Hwy 65. The route you take daily from Porterville to Visalia. You are thinking about finishing your Christmas shopping while the radio plays country in the background. Suddenly, headlights from what seems to be a pickup truck is heading directly towards you at a high rate of speed. You swerve but the truck clips your vehicle and you careen off the highway. The impact causes you to blackout.

You awake to paramedics checking your vitals as the ambulance speeds to the hospital. They tell you that you are lucky to be alive. At the hospital emergency center, a team of nurses and doctors strip your clothing as you head to surgery.

Surrounded by family, you ask what happened. They tell you not to worry but just rest as you are in critical condition. You ask if you'll be home for Christmas and notice a tear in your wife's eye. You fall asleep.

The attending nurse causes you to stir. You notice that someone has left the Fresno Bee next to your bed. You read the grim details about what happened.

Gustavo Garcia drove a stolen pickup truck into oncoming traffic on CA Hwy 65. Four people were injured and you critically. Garcia was pronounced dead after being thrown from the truck and engaging in a gun battle with police.

You learn that Garcia had a long criminal history —arrests for drugs, assault with a deadly weapon, vandalism and contributing to the delinquency of a minor. He was deported twice only to return via the southern border.

Garcia went on a 24 hour rampage that started Sunday at Walmart. He pleaded to customers to buy him bullets but when they refused he stole 300 9MM bullets. He shot his first victim, a farm worker unpacking fruit. Around 7:30 pm, he shoots a woman at Motel 6 in the arm and chest. The apparent reason was that she had made eye contact with him. Both the farm worker and the woman will recover. Around 1:30 AM Monday, Garcia shoots up a Shell gas station. An hour later he shoots and kills a 51 year old man at an Arco AMPM in Visalia. He visits his ex-girlfriends house and fires shots from the backyard. He leaves and fires shots at another home. Police are called and Garcia flees. He shoots and hits police vehicles but crashes his car after a chase.

Garcia eludes police and then holds-up three farm workers at gunpoint and steals their pickup truck. This leads to a high-speed 100 mph chase on CA Hwy 65. Garcia purposely drives on the wrong side of the road that results in the injury accidents.

The Tulare County Sheriff's department had arrested Garcia on Friday for a substance abuse misdemeanor. The federal Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency issued a "hold" against Garcia. The hold was not honored by the Sheriff's department and Garcia was released unbeknownst to ICE.

Sheriff Mike Boudreaux expressed his dismay. "Before SB 54, Gustavo Garcia would have been turned over to ICE officials. That's how we've always done it, day in and day out," Boudreaux said. "After SB 54, we no longer have the power to do that. Under the new state law, we must have a 'federally signed warrant' in order to do that. We didn't honor the detainer because state law doesn't allow us to." "That tool has been removed from our hands and because of that our county was shot up by a violent criminal that could have easily been prevented had we had the opportunity to reach out to our fellow counterparts," he added. SB 54 is California's Sanctuary State law.

The nurse arrives again and takes the newspaper. You think about life going forward. Christmas is likely to be in the hospital. Your totaled vehicle was paid off. Now, even with insurance settlement, car payments are around the corner. Your income will be impacted as you face disability. Physical therapy will be arduous. But you break a wry smile — two shot, one shot dead, four injured, lives dramatically impacted — just collateral damage for living in a sanctuary. You are grateful for a Democrat Legislature and Governor that passed and signed into law SB 54.