Coast Guard Commandant: Some Cases of ‘Sanctuary’ Localities Inhibiting Cooperation

WASHINGTON – The Coast Guard’s top officer told Congress that there have been some cases of “sanctuary” localities failing to cooperate on a law-enforcement case, but that such events are “anomalous.”

Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Karl L. Schultz testified April 9 before a joint hearing on Capitol Hill of the Transportation and Maritime Security subcommittee of the House Committee on Homeland Security.

“I have been told that some of the sanctuary state and city programs are actually inhibiting cooperation between local governments and the Coast Guard,” Rep. Debbie Lesko (R-Arizona), the ranking member, said, addressing Schultz. “Have you heard any of that and can you explain it?”

“The Coast Guard absolutely exists on partnerships,” Schultz replied. “We’re the lead law-enforcement agency in the maritime domain and we work with state and local folks.

“There have been some examples in Southern California,” Schulz said. “I would say they’re anomalous, not day to day. Day to day, we continue to work well, but I’ve talked to field commanders in recent visits who tell me we don’t have 100% predictability that a local sheriff or a local police marine unit is going to launch on a case to the degree that we had yesteryear. But we’re working across those things It’s not something that I think is a big inhibitor to our mission, but I have heard some of those stories.”