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Rights Groups Condemn Arizona Bill as Racist, Warn of Dangers of ICE-Police Collaboration in Lawsuit Challenging Government Secrecy in ICE Program

FOIA Lawsuit Filed, National Campaign Launched to Expose ICE Enforcement Program Advocates Say Has Devastating Effects on Community Safety

April 27, 2010, New York, NY and Washington, DC — Today, the **National Day Laborer Organizing Network (NDLON)**, the **Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR)** and the **Immigration Justice Clinic of the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law** filed a lawsuit demanding records related to the little-known United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) “Secure Communities” program that further involves local and state police in federal immigration enforcement. The filing also marks the launch of “Uncovering the Truth,” a weeklong national campaign of coordinated actions and advocacy in more than ten cities to end ICE-police collaboration.

“The passage of S.B. 1070 in Arizona should be proof enough of the dangerous and disastrous nature of ICE-police collaboration programs like the so-called Secure Communities program,” said **Pablo Alvarado, NDLON Executive Director**. “The President should heed his own advice and act responsibly by reclaiming the federal government’s exclusive authority over the nation’s immigration laws. By terminating all police and ICE partnerships, the President can help restore community safety and protect civil rights and due process for all.”

“At a time when police and ICE partnerships have clearly failed, ICE is moving swiftly to implement the Secure Communities program in every U.S. jail by 2013,” said **CCR attorney Sunita Patel**. “Contrary to its name, this latest ICE program makes the public less safe. There is no doubt that the program has and will continue to deepen fear and mistrust of the police in our communities.”

Advocates say that last week’s passage of S.B. 1070 in Arizona and the rapid expansion of Secure Communities, which is already operating in 168 jurisdictions in 20 states with

more agreements anticipated in the next few days, is cause for alarm, particularly without publicly available information on error rates, costs, oversight, accountability, racial profiling and other civil rights complaints.

“This is a massive, invasive and untested federal immigration enforcement program that ICE has been deceptive and secretive about from the start,” said **Bridget Kessler, Clinical Teaching Fellow at the Immigration Justice Clinic of the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law**. “Without more information, we cannot allow for the spread of this dangerous ICE program.”

Of the little that is known about the program, the groups say Secure Communities requires local and state police to run individuals’ fingerprints through multiple databases upon arrest, even if no charges are brought and regardless of how minor the charges are. Advocates and attorneys say that, in addition to concerns presented by relying on potentially inaccurate and erroneous information in those databases, the program functions as little more than a racial profiling dragnet to funnel even more people into the overburdened and mismanaged ICE detention and removal system.

The plaintiffs seek the materials necessary to provide the public with comprehensive information on the Secure Communities program, including policies, procedures and objectives; fiscal impact; data and statistical information; individual records; communications; and assessment records. Plaintiffs filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request in February 2010 seeking these materials. Despite ICE’s rapid expansion of the program, government agencies have not yet released the requested records.

The filing of the litigation marks the launch of “Uncovering the Truth,” a weeklong national campaign of coordinated actions and advocacy, including the release of preliminary findings based on a survey done in Morristown, New Jersey and the release of a comprehensive report from Miami, Florida on the effects of local law enforcement and ICE collaboration on community safety. Local press contacts, press conferences and events are listed below and can be found at www.UncovertheTruth.org.

To read the complaint or for more information on the Secure Communities program, visit www.UncovertheTruth.org.

The Center for Constitutional Rights is dedicated to advancing and protecting the rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Founded in 1966 by attorneys who represented civil rights movements in the South, CCR is a non-profit legal and educational organization committed to the creative use of law as a positive force for social change. Visit www.ccrjustice.org.

The mission of the National Day Laborer Organizing Network is to improve the lives of day laborers in the U.S. by unifying and strengthening its member organizations to be more strategic and effective in their efforts to develop leadership, mobilize day laborers in order to protect and expand their civil, labor and human rights. Visit www.ndlon.org.

The Immigration Justice Clinic of the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law was founded in 2008 to provide quality pro bono legal representation to indigent immigrants facing deportation. Under the supervision of experienced practitioners, law students in the Clinic represent individuals facing deportation and community-based organizations in public advocacy, media and litigation projects. Visit www.cardozo.yu.edu.

Uncovering the Truth:

A Week of Coordinated Events and Advocacy on Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Police Collaboration

Visit www.UncovertheTruth.org for updates on local events and actions and multimedia.

NATIONAL MEDIA CONTACTS

- NATIONAL/GENERAL: Alison Roh Park (917) 805-8899, apark@ccrjustice.org
- ARIZONA: Carlos Garcia (520) 248-1697, karlox_00@hotmail.com
- ATLANTA, GA: Azadeh Shahshahani (770) 303-8111, ashahshahani@acluga.org
- GRATON, CA: Davin Cardenas (707) 318-2818, davin_cardenas@yahoo.com
- HOUSTON, TX: Cesar Espinosa (713) 271-9703, americaptodos88@yahoo.com
- LOS ANGELES, CA: Carl Berquist (213) 353-1334, cbergquist@chirla.org
- MIAMI, FL: Jonathan Fried, (305) 281-9377, jonathan@we-count.org
- MORRISTOWN, NJ: Diana Mejia (201) 563-1062, WindoftheSpirit1@aol.com
- NEW YORK, NY: Ravi Ragbir (917) 566-4816, rrchanges@gmail.com
- NORTH CAROLINA: Dani Martinez (919) 856-2178, dani@ncjustice.org
- OREGON: Shizuko Hashimoto (503) 236 7916, info@pcasc.net
- PHILADELPHIA, PA: Jen Rock, (267) 275-7810, nsmphiladelphia@gmail.com
- RALEIGH, NC: Dani Martinez-Moore (919) 856-2178, dani@ncjustice.org
- SAN BERNADINO, CA: Suzanne Foster (310) 486-8499, sfoster.peoc@verizon.net
- UPPER MARLBORO, MD: Tania Del Angel (240) 353-2288, tdelangel@casamd.org
- WASHINGTON, DC: Mackenzie Baris (202) 974-8224, mbaris@dclabor.org

Monday April 26, 2010

UPPER MARLBORO, MD

Contact: Tania Del Angel (240) 353-2288, tdelangel@casamd.org

6:30 p.m. – Prince George County Correctional Center
13400 Dille Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Press Conference and Protest: Recently Prince George County decided to participate in the failed "Secure Communities" program. The protest was sparked by the case of 26 year-old Florinda Fabiola Lorenzo- Desimilian of Gables Residence, who was arrested last Tuesday for selling \$2 telephone cards without a license in her home, taken into custody leaving her 13 month old baby, 5 year-old and 10 year old in the custody of her parents, and subsequently transferred to ICE custody by the County.

HOUSTON, TX

Contact: Cesar Espinosa (713) 459-8923, americaptodos88@yahoo.com

11:00a.m. – Mickey Leeland Federal Building
1919 Smith Street, Houston, TX

Press Conference: Houston will join in a national effort to put an end to ICE and police collaborations. Community leaders, leaders of faith and community members will ask the Obama Administration to put an end to programs like the so-called “Secure Communities” program and stop separating families.

Tuesday April 27, 2010

WASHINGTON, DC

Contact: Mackenzie Baris (202) 974-8224, mbaris@dclabor.org

10:00 a.m. – The Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington DC

Press Conference: Rights groups will be joined by national and local speakers to announce FOIA litigation against various federal agencies for information pertaining to ICE’s so-called “Secure Communities” program and asking for the termination of the program in Washington D.C. The press conference will also launch the national “Uncovering the Truth” campaign.

NEW YORK, NY

Contact: Ravi Ragbir (917) 566-4816 rrchanges@gmail.com

12:00 p.m. – Jacob K. Javits Federal Building
26 Federal Plaza, New York, NY

Press Conference and Rally: Rights groups launch the national “Uncovering the Truth” campaign.

MIAMI, FL

Contact: Jonathan Fried (305) 281-9377, jonathan@we-count.org

11:00 a.m. – Government Center, South Side
111 NW 1st Street, Miami, FL 33128

Press Conference: Florida Immigrant Coalition and WeCount! release a report titled “Immigrants, Police and Community Safety: A Community Study about Why Immigrants Do Not Trust Local Law Enforcement in Miami-Dade County” and announce a second public information request to Miami-Dade County Corrections and Rehabilitation Department concerning the county's participation in ICE's so-called “Secure

Communities” program.

MORRISTOWN, NJ

Contact: Diana Mejia (201) 563-1062 WindoftheSpirit1@aol.com

7:00 p.m. – Town of Morristown
200 South Street, Morristown NJ

Morristown Town Meeting: Local residents will testify at the Morristown Town Meeting before city council members about the negative impact of programs like 287(g) and the so-called “Secure Communities” program on community policing. They may also present preliminary findings from surveys with Morristown residents.

ATLANTA, GA

Contact: Azadeh Shahshahani (770) 303-8111 ashahshahani@acluga.org

9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. – Catholic Charities of Atlanta
680 West Peachtree Street NW, Atlanta, GA

Training: “Responding to ICE Enforcement in 2010” is an intensive one-day training on current ICE enforcement mechanisms and providing assistance following an ICE action. The training will highlight enforcement issues in Georgia. Sponsored by Catholic Charities of Atlanta and Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc (CLINIC).

Wednesday, April 28, 2010

SAN BERNADINO, CA

Contact: Suzanne Foster (310) 486-8499, sfoster.peoc@verizon.net

10:00 a.m. – San Bernardino City Hall
300 North "D" Street, San Bernardino, CA 92418

Press conference: Immigrant rights advocates will announce a FOIA request of the San Bernadino Sheriff's Department on recent implementation of Secure Communities as well as its ongoing participation in the controversial 287(g) program, along with the announcement of a May 1st Immigrant Workers' Rights March in San Bernardino, and a call to end racial profiling in Arizona.

Thursday, April 29, 2010

GRATON, CA

Contact: Davin Cardenas (707) 318-2818, davin_cardenas@yahoo.com

6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
551 Summerfield Road, Santa Rosa, CA

Film Screening: Join community members and advocates for a screening of “800 Mile Wall,” followed by panel discussion regarding the imminent passage of S.B. 1070 in Arizona and the recent participation of Sonoma County in the so-called “Secure Communities” program, which occurred without public consultation or discourse.

Friday, April 30, 2010

RALEIGH, NC

Contact: Dani Martinez-Moore (919) 856-2178, dani@ncjustice.org

12:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. – NC Justice Center
224 S. Dawson St, Raleigh, NC 27601

Brown Bag Lunch & Workshop: “Uncovering the Truth: Institutionalized Racism in Public Policy” is an opportunity for participants to learn more about two key policies making national news—the racial profiling inherent in ICE collaboration with local police, a dangerous and disastrous practice that is at the heart of the new Arizona anti-immigrant law currently receiving wide national media attention. An action will be taken at immediately following the event. Visit <http://tinyurl.com/apr302010> for more information.

Sunday, May 2, 2010

PHILADELPHIA, PA

Contact: Jen Rock, (267) 275-7810, nsmphiladelphia@gmail.com

1:00 p.m. to 6 p.m. – Mifflin Park
6th Street and Ritner Street, Philadelphia, PA

Community Barbecue: Join the Cambodian Association of Greater Philadelphia, New Sanctuary Movement of Philadelphia and JUNTOS/Casa de los Soles for the Family Unity Barbecue celebrating the strength and diversity of the immigrant community of Philadelphia, which is being threatened by Philadelphia Police Department collaboration with ICE. The event calls for an end to this collaboration and for the creation of local policies that support and protect all families.

Visit www.UncovertheTruth.org for more information.