

For Immediate Release // Excuse Cross Postings

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Statement of Pablo Alvarado in reaction to Governor Brewer's signature on SB 1070:

Although we kept our hopes up for a miracle, Governor Jan Brewer signed SB1070 into law. But in the midst of much consternation, miracles do happen. In order to lighten the pain, humble people have often prepared for the worst.

Immigrant communities in Arizona are caught between feelings of fear and anger about SB1070. But between the fear and the imprudence they find courage. The courage not to allow oneself to be provoked. The courage not to resort to violence. The courage to resist peacefully and the courage to love even our adversaries. If these feelings and values are not in our hearts when we go out to protest in order to repudiate SB1070 and repudiate what it represents, we would easily fall into hurtful demonstrations.

We must go out to the streets to protest, and bring our signs along with our neighbors and family members. Let's have our drums be heard, let's sing, let's dance and use art to raise our voices, But let's do so peacefully.

Let's go out to the streets holding our heads up high for we are not a danger to this country. Some of our allies might tell us not to hold our signs up and chant in Spanish because it will upset the general public; in other words, those who have yet to decide whether or not they recognize the contributions of immigrants and are grateful for their nanny, their gardener, or the waiter who serves them at restaurants. Let's not pay

attention to this. Let's chant even louder. Let us be who we are: humans with dignity, with pride and a strong identity. Let us not allow them to portray us as "the poor ones" that have to be protected because they are afraid. No, we are people in resistance, noble, peaceful and brave.

The civil rights crisis in Arizona goes beyond the issues of immigration. Neither should our fight be reduced to a legislative strategy in Washington, DC. This is about the future of our country. We are either a country of exclusion or inclusion. We are either a country where we all have the right to life, liberty, and the search for happiness, or a country where people are judged and their opportunities limited based on the color of their skin.

It is time for us to study and honor the legacy of those who fought for the civil rights we are defending today, and which should form the basis of our fight. All oppressed communities throughout the world have had to fight, generation after generation, so that their dignity and their rights are recognized. Today it is our turn.

This is the same legacy that allowed Barack Obama become the first African-American President. This legacy should be expanded so that immigrants may have the same opportunities, and their children will be able to become presidents one day, too.

Now that the Governor has signed this nefarious law, the following step of our fight will be to address this civil rights crisis at the federal level. We hope that Barak Obama will do the right thing in the coming days.

Si se puede!

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