American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations



815 Sixteenth Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20006 (202) 637-5000 www.aflcio.org

RICHARD L. TRUMKA PRESIDENT

Gerald W. McEntee Michael Goodwin Michael J. Sullivan Clyde Rivers Ron Gettelfinger Ron Gettellinger John Gage Laura Rico Capt. John Prater Richard P. Hughes Jr. Rogelio "Roy" A. Flores Malcolm B. Futhey Jr. Roberta Reardon Ken Howard

ELIZABETH H. SHULER SECRETARY-TREASURER

Cecil Roberts James Williams Larry Cohen Robbie Sparks Rose Ann DeMoro Fred Redmond Fred redinional Fredric V. Rolando Newton B. Jones DeMaurice F. Smith James Boland

ARLENE HOLT BAKER EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT Frank Hurt William Lucy Harold Schaitberger

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Robert A. Scardelletti Edwin D. Hill William Burrus Vincent Giblin Warren George Nancy Wohlforth Mark H. Ayers Matthew Loeb Diann Woodard D. Michael Langford Baldemar Velasquez Bruce R. Smith

Patricia Friend R. Thomas Buffenbarger Joseph J. Hunt Leo W. Gerard William Hite Gregory J. Junemann James C. Little Ann Converso, R.N. Randi Weingarten Patrick D. Finley Robert McEllrath

John W. Wilhelm

For Immediate Release

Contact: Amaya Tune: 202-637-5018

Statement by AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka On Arizona Anti-immigrant Law

April 27, 2010

Arizona's new anti-immigrant law (SB 1070) is an affront to American values of fairness and respect for our constitution. The AFL-CIO joins people of conscience around the country in condemning the law, which will make racial profiling the norm—if not a requirement—in Arizona and will be impractical, unenforceable and a waste of scarce public resources.

The law requires a police officer to stop a person and demand proof of immigration status when the officer has "reasonable suspicion" to believe the person is not authorized to be in the United States, regardless of whether he or she is suspected of a crime. The law puts Arizona's entire Latino population—the great majority of whom are U.S. citizens or legal residents—at risk of arrest.

It is also severely undermines workers' rights: Any employer faced with Latino workers' complaints—in the form of a picket or a lawsuit—can simply call the police and have workers arrested under the guise of "reasonable suspicion." The law's chilling effect is all too clear.

The law turns public employees into federal immigration officials, requiring them to verify immigration status upon "reasonable suspicion"—a complex task that they are not trained, or paid, to do. To make matters worse, public employees must now perform that task under an ever-present threat of being sued because the law subjects local governments and their employees to potential lawsuits by any citizen who believes it is not being enforced strongly enough.

We need urgent action. The Arizona law should not be allowed to become a model; it is bad public policy and it should be put to rest. We call on the Department of Justice to step up to its fundamental mission of protecting and defending our civil rights and immediately bring legal action to stop Arizona from implementing its ill-guided and unconstitutional law. We also call on President Obama to publicly oppose and terminate all programs --- including collaborations between state and local law enforcement and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) --- that result in racial profiling. Our focus should instead be on a comprehensive solution to the broken immigration system.

###

For daily news, information and facts on this and other workers' issues, go to www.aflcio.org