

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations



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

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

RICHARD L. TRUMKA
PRESIDENT

ELIZABETH H. SHULER
SECRETARY-TREASURER

ARLENE HOLT BAKER
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

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

Michael Sacco
William Lucy
Harold Schaltberger
Cecil Roberts
James Williams
Larry Cohen
Robbie Sparks
Rose Ann DeMoro
Fred Redmond
Fredric V. Rolando
Newton B. Jones
DeMaurice F. Smith
James Boland

Frank Hurt
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