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CIVIL RIGHTS AND IMMIGRANT RIGHTS LEADERS REPUDIATE RACIAL PROFILING LAW, AZ SB1070, CALL FOR ITS VETO

MALDEF, National Day Laborer Organizing Network, Rights Working Group and CASA de Maryland convene before Department of Homeland Security

WASHINGTON, DC– Today, MALDEF and NDLOM met with other civil rights organizations in front of the Department of Homeland Security to call on Secretary Janet Napolitano to take immediate steps to prevent implementation of Arizona Senate Bill 1070 should Governor Jan Brewer move to enact it. The groups condemned SB 1070 as one of the most draconian anti-immigrant legislation approved by a state body in the nation.

"If implemented, SB 1070 will have dire fiscal, economic, and public safety consequences for Arizona and all its residents," stated **Thomas A. Saenz, MALDEF President and General Counsel**. "In addition, this unconstitutional law could adversely affect federal law enforcement by upsetting developed enforcement priorities and diverting limited resources. It is therefore incumbent on Secretary Janet Napolitano and Department of Homeland Security to state clearly the federal government's opposition to SB 1070 and to commit not to alter federal practices and not to cooperate in the implementation of this draconian law."

Margaret Huang, Executive Director, Rights Working Group stated, "This law is the natural conclusion of a long process that has transferred the enforcement of federal immigration law to the states, and created an

environment ripe for racial profiling. The federal government must reassert its exclusive authority to enforce the law. Until that happens, unconstitutional laws like the one in Arizona will continue to be passed and people's human rights will continue to be violated.”

Gustavo Andrade, Organizing Director, CASA de Maryland and NDLOM Member stated, “Communities from Arizona to Maryland feel under siege. As a candidate, Barack Obama promised immigration reform in his first year, but instead, president Obama and his administration have unleashed a racial reign of terror upon the Latino community in the United States. This is the moment where the President must use his leadership and moral courage to strike down SB1070 and move forward to pass immigration reform.”

If Governor Brewer does not veto SB 1070, Arizona will become the first state to criminalize illegal immigrants and allow local police to enforce federal immigration laws. On Monday, the State Senate endorsed SB 1070 by a vote of 17-11 and the legislation is now sitting onto the Governor's desk.

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