



## PRESS RELEASE

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## U.S. Department Of Justice Files Lawsuit Against Arizona's Racial Profiling Law

*APALC, AAJC, and Other Groups Also Challenging Law  
Laud Obama Administration's Action*

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) filed a lawsuit today challenging Arizona's recently enacted racial profiling law known as SB 1070. In taking this extraordinary action, the federal government has sent a clear message that it will not tolerate state laws that invite racial stereotyping and profiling and interfere with federal immigration priorities and policies.

The Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC) and the Asian American Justice Center (AAJC), as members of the Asian American Center for Advancing Justice, long with a coalition of leading rights groups, filed a lawsuit in May challenging the constitutionality of the law.

Besides APALC and AAJC, the civil rights coalition includes the ACLU, MALDEF, National Immigration Law Center (NILC), ACLU of Arizona, National Day Laborer Organizing Network (NDLON) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The law firm of Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP is serving as pro bono co-counsel in the case.

The following statements can be attributed to members of the coalition, as listed below.

*Julie Su, Litigation Director, Asian Pacific American Legal Center, a member of Asian American Center for Advancing Justice:*

"We welcome the Department of Justice's action against Arizona's law that invites racial profiling of anyone who might be perceived as being foreign, including Asian Americans. We hope the DOJ's challenge to this discriminatory law signals a willingness on the part of the federal government to address the myriad ways that our country's broken immigration system affects Americans and those who seek a

better life by coming to America. We need federal action to prevent more cities and states from introducing copycat measures that violate core American values of fairness and equality."

*Lucas Guttentag, Director of the ACLU Immigrants' Rights Project:*

"We commend the Obama administration for taking this critical step to negate Arizona's unconstitutional usurpation of federal authority and its invitation to racial profiling. The administration's lawsuit is a cannon shot across the bow of other states that may be tempted to follow Arizona's misguided approach. We will continue to aggressively pursue our legal challenge and welcome the Justice Department's participation in the battle to preserve American values of fairness and equality."

*Linton Joaquin, General Counsel of NILC:*

"States planning to follow in Arizona's misguided footsteps should take note: the United States cannot and should not allow immigrants and communities of color to be targets of hateful racial profiling legislation that puts their civil liberties on the line. We are pleased to see that the government has exercised its legal right to protect the rights of those within its borders and ensure that federal issues remain squarely in the federal domain."

*Alessandra Soler Meetze, Executive Director of the ACLU of Arizona:*

"The Obama administration's action against this 'show me your papers' law sends a loud and clear message against state laws that institutionalize racial profiling of Latinos and result in an erosion of trust between law enforcement and the community. There has been a long history of racial profiling of Latinos in our state, particularly in Maricopa County, causing witnesses and victims of crime to be less willing to come forward. We will fight vigorously to keep this law from going into effect, and welcome the administration's efforts toward the same goal."

*Chris Newman, Legal Director, NDLO:*

"The Department of Justice has the legal and moral obligation to challenge SB 1070, not just to protect civil rights in Arizona but also to defend the federal government's exclusive authority to define and implement United States immigration policy."

*Benjamin Todd Jealous, President and Chief Executive Officer of the NAACP:*

"In filing this lawsuit, the Obama administration has taken a strong and principled stand against Arizona's discriminatory law. African-Americans have the misfortune of being all too familiar with the pernicious effects of racial profiling, and we welcome the addition of the administration to the broad spectrum of organizations already challenging this unconstitutional law. Laws that encourage discrimination have no place in this country. We are confident that the courts will prevent it from ever taking effect."

Organizations and attorneys on the case, *Friendly House et al. v. Whiting et al.*, include:

- ACLU Immigrants' Rights Project: Guttentag, Omar Jadwat, Cecillia Wang, Tanaz Moghadam and Harini P. Raghupathi
- MALDEF: Thomas A. Saenz, Nina Perales, Cynthia Valenzuela Dixon, Victor Viramontes, Gladys Limón, Nicolás Espiritu and Ivan Espinoza-Madriral
- NILC: Joaquin, Karen Tumlin, Nora A. Preciado, Melissa S. Keaney, Vivek Mittal and Ghazal Tajmiri
- ACLU Foundation of Arizona: Dan Pochoda and Annie Lai
- APALC: Julie Su, Ronald Lee, Yungsohn Park, Connie Choi and Carmina Ocampo
- NDLO: Newman and Lisa Kung

- NAACP: Laura Blackburne
- Munger Tolles & Olson LLP: Bradley S. Phillips, Paul J. Watford, Joseph J. Ybarra, Susan T. Boyd, Yuval Miller, Elisabeth J. Neubauer and Benjamin Maro
- Roush, Mccracken, Guerrero, Miller & Ortega: Daniel R. Ortega, Jr.

More information about the Arizona law is available at [www.apalc.org](http://www.apalc.org) as well as the website of the other civil rights organizations.

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*Founded in 1983, the Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to advocating for civil rights, providing legal services and education, and building coalitions to positively influence and impact Asian Pacific Americans and to create a more equitable and harmonious society. APALC is a member of Asian American Center for Advancing Justice, which also includes Asian American Institute (Chicago, IL), Asian American Justice Center (Washington, DC) and Asian Law Caucus (San Francisco, CA).*