

BY FACSIMILE AND FIRST CLASS MAIL

June 10, 2010

Raymond Kelly
Commissioner
New York City Police Department
1 Police Plaza
New York, N.Y. 10038

Dear Commissioner Kelly:

We write on behalf of 55 organizations representing diverse immigrant and non-immigrant communities throughout New York City to urge you to add your voice to the list of police chiefs, prosecutors and law enforcement experts from around the country who have publicly condemned the passage of Arizona's anti-immigrant SB1070.

We strongly believe that laws such as SB1070, in addition to inviting racial profiling and discrimination, work to break down trust between immigrant communities and police, jeopardizing public safety for everyone. Immigrant communities must have every confidence that reporting a crime, participating as witnesses in criminal investigations or interacting with police in any way will not risk compromising sensitive information such as immigration status that could lead to further local or federal law enforcement consequences.

On May 26th, eight chiefs of police departments in major U.S. cities, including Los Angeles, Houston, Philadelphia and Salt Lake City, met with U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder to convey their concern that laws like Arizona's will increase crime in the U.S.—not decrease it—by driving a wedge between immigrant communities and law enforcement.¹ These chiefs joined a much broader group of law enforcement professionals who have strongly opposed SB1070 and cautioned against the strategy of charging local police with enforcing federal immigration law.

We were disappointed that New York City was not represented in this meeting with Attorney General Holder and that you have not made any public statements criticizing the passage of SB1070.

As you know, approximately 36 percent of New York City residents are immigrants and nearly 170 languages are spoken here on a daily basis. Immigrants are vital to New York City, live in every neighborhood in each borough and participate in every industry here, including law enforcement. New York has a proud tradition of promoting and defending immigrants' rights and at this time of rising anti-immigrant sentiment, much of the country is looking to New York for leadership.

As the chief law enforcement officer of New York City and as the head of the largest police department in the United States, we ask that you publicly oppose SB1070 and join the effort of police chiefs from across the country in conveying your opposition to Attorney General Holder and the White House. We call on you to join Mayor Bloomberg, Public Advocate De Blasio, Comptroller Liu and the New York City

¹ Hsu, Spencer S. "U.S. police chiefs say Arizona immigration law will increase crime." *Washington Post*. 27 May 2010. < <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/05/26/AR2010052601200.html>>.

Council in opposing the law.

Your voice would add gravitas and momentum to the growing national consensus opposed to discriminatory policies like SB1070 and at a moment of great uncertainty would serve to reassure both immigrant and non-immigrant New Yorkers that New York City does not share the counterproductive law enforcement strategy being implemented in Arizona.

We look forward to your statement publicly condemning the passage of Arizona law SB1070.

Sincerely,



Donna Lieberman
Executive Director
New York Civil Liberties Union

On behalf of:

American Friends Service Committee Immigrant Rights Program
American Immigration Lawyers Association - New York
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee New York
Amnesty International USA
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund
Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN)
Association of Latin American Students, Medgar Evers College, CUNY
Association of Legal Aid Attorneys, UAW Local 2325
Bill of Rights Defense Committee
Black Institute
Breakthrough
Cabrini Immigrant Services
Center for Constitutional Rights
Center for Family Life in Sunset Park
Chinese Progressive Association
Churches United to Save and Heal
Council on American-Islamic Relations - New York
Democracy For New York City
Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM)
Drum Major Institute for Public Policy
El Centro del Imigrante
Good Shepherd Services
Greater New York Labor-Religion Coalition
Haitian Americans United for Progress
Harlem Tenants Council, Inc.
Human Services Consortium of East Harlem
Judson Memorial Church

La Fuente: NYCPP & LICPP
La Union de La Comunidad Latina
Latino & Latin American Students' Association/Asociación de Estudiantes Latinos y Latinoamericanos (AELLA), Graduate Center, CUNY
LULAC - Syracuse Chapter
Metropolitan Russian American Parent Association
MinKwon Center for Community Action
NAACP New York State Conference
National Lawyers Guild NYC Chapter
New Sanctuary Coalition of New York City
New York Democratic Socialists of America
New York Immigration Coalition
New York Law School Racial Justice Project
New York State Youth Leadership Council
NICE New Immigrant Community Empowerment
Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights
Out4immigration.org
Professional Staff Congress, CUNY
Public Science Project, Graduate Center, CUNY
Queens Community House
Riverside Language Program
Rockland Immigration Coalition
SCAN New York
Sikh Coalition
Urban Justice Center
Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center
Working Families Party