



ALABAMA COALITION FOR IMMIGRANT JUSTICE

NEWS ADVISORY

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ALABAMA COALITION FOR IMMIGRANT JUSTICE CRITICIZES THE CITY OF IRONDALE'S RESOLUTION ON IMMIGRATION STATUS CHECKS

We are disappointed by the city of Irondale's decision which, in effect, puts a target on the backs of all immigrants in Irondale. It will breed chaos on the ground, stretch already limited city resources, destroy community policing, and cost Irondale taxpayers – all while failing to meet the public's cry to restore control and order to the broken immigration system.

Caitlin Sandley, Organizing and Education Coordinator with the Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama (¡HICA!), said that “the resolution recently passed by the City of Irondale disregards the federal government's sole jurisdiction over immigration enforcement and distracts local police officers from their core duty of protecting our communities.”

City officials have stated that the resolution was not put forth to be aimed at any particular racial group, but this type of enforcement attempt can lead to racial profiling. Allison Neal, Legal Director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Alabama said, “Using local police officers who are untrained in the complexities and proper enforcement of federal immigration law is a recipe for racial profiling.”

“Irondale's 2010R23 exemplifies the fallacy that local police can ‘legally’ enforce federal immigration laws. It calls for illegal profiling without providing any training or oversight to its officers and lacks even the most basic protections for immigrant victims of crime and for immigrant witnesses to crime,” said Sam Brooke, Soros Justice Fellow, Southern Poverty Law Center. “If the City Council does not act promptly to repeal 2010R23, it will be struck down after a costly battle in the courts, just as happened in Hazleton, Pennsylvania and Valley Park, Missouri.”

Just this week, the U.S. Department of Justice announced that it is suing the state of Arizona, on grounds that the state's new immigration law illegally intrudes upon federal prerogatives; the legal doctrine of preemption, a concept in the Constitution's supremacy clause that says federal law supersedes state statutes. “The DOJ lawsuit evidences the seriousness of the issue and pinpoints the heart of our opposition. The public sentiment over the broken immigration system is one of frustration. However, aggravation over Congress' failure to act, does not grant anyone else the authority to act in their stead,” adds Shay Farley, Legal Director at Alabama Appleseed Center for Law & Justice.

The law says the fix must happen in Washington, D.C., not in local communities like Irondale.

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Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice's membership is comprised of 100 individuals and various organizations dedicated to providing a unified voice to ensure the social, legal, and civic rights of immigrants in Alabama; to promoting equal participation and involvement; and facilitating the organizing and building of grassroots leadership within the immigrant community. www.acij.net