New York Advocates Applaud Authoritative Report Calling for End of Controversial Deportation Program

New York, NY (August 16, 2011): New York immigrant rights advocates expressed support for a national report issued today that condemns the much-maligned deportation program known as “Secure Communities” and recommends its termination.

The report, released by the National Day Laborer Organizing Network, adds to the continued opposition across the country and in New York against Secure Communities. Although New York, Illinois, and Massachusetts have all rejected the program, which targets immigrants for deportation by checking fingerprints taken at booking against immigration databases, ICE in a surprise announcement stated in early August that it did not need states’ participation to implement Secure Communities.

“Rather than listen to the concerns that states have raised about Secure Communities, ICE is trying to skirt these issues entirely,” said Mizue Aizeki of the Northern Manhattan Coalition of Immigrant Rights. “This report properly centers the debate again on the unjustness of our deportation system and the families that Secure Communities destroys.”

“In contrast to the taskforce that the Department of Homeland Security appointed in June in response to complaints about Secure Communities, this report actually includes contributions of affected communities and scholars, and a thorough review of the program and its impact,” said Michelle Fei of the Immigrant Defense Project. “It makes clear how Secure Communities is fundamentally flawed and why it needs to be immediately ended.”

Despite ICE’s unilateral rescission of its Secure Communities agreements with states, New York has maintained its opposition to the program since Governor Cuomo pulled out of the program in June. Thirty-four state and local elected officials today issued a letter to President Obama calling for a
nationwide termination of the program. In the past week, U.S. Congressman Serrano and State Senator Serrano issued letters to ICE Director John Morton objecting to ICE’s declaration that participation in the program is now mandatory.

“The increased collaboration between police and ICE will only fuel anti-immigrant sentiment,” said Omar Angel Perez of the National Day Laborer Organizing Network in Long Island. “The report confirms that this program only makes our communities less safe.”

“President Obama, you made a pledge to listen to communities—you cannot continue to ignore us,” said Betsy Dewitt of Families for Freedom. “After two years of mass deportation and destroying our families, you have no choice but to stop the lies and to end Secure Communities.”


Background on Secure Communities is available at [http://newyorkagainstdeportation.wordpress.com/](http://newyorkagainstdeportation.wordpress.com/)

_The New York State Working Group Against Deportation is a broad coalition of domestic violence, immigrant rights, family services, labor, faith-based, civil rights, and community-based organizations that aims to stop Secure Communities and other deportation programs._

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