

## **The Hypocrisy of Arizona's Opponents**

The federal government has failed to stem our nation's illegal immigration and border security problems and as a result, state and local governments have been forced to bear the responsibility and costs associated with these ongoing issues. As such, the State of Arizona recently enacted the Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act to better equip its law enforcement to protect citizens and legal immigrants residing in the Copper State.

Although opponents have been spinning the intent and effects of the bill, in actuality the new Arizona law mirrors federal law which already requires aliens to register and carry their documents with them. Arizona's law simply states that violating federal immigration law is now a state crime as well. Because illegal immigrants are by definition in violation of federal immigration laws, under the new provisions they can now be arrested by local law enforcement in Arizona.

What is more, the new statute only allows police to ask about immigration status in the normal course of a "lawful stop," such as a traffic stop or if the individual is suspected of having committed a crime. While opponents of the Arizona law argue it will lead to racial profiling, if they actually read the text of the law they may be interested to know that it explicitly bars racial profiling four times.

Despite these facts, both the City and County of Los Angeles erroneously decided to boycott the State of Arizona following the enactment of the bill. This boycott is outright hypocritical because Los Angeles participates in several federal programs to stem illegal immigration and California has an immigration law of its own on the books.

Ironically, Los Angeles County is a participant in the 287(g) program, which provides state and local law enforcement officers with statutory immigration enforcement authority, in addition to their inherent authority. Like the Arizona law, this program is not limited to "dangerous" criminals, as some have suggested, but designed to let state and local law enforcement officials help enforce all immigration laws and to remove illegal immigrants from the streets before they go on to commit preventable crimes.

In addition, every year Los Angeles implores their federal representatives for increased State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP) funding. In fact, last year alone Los Angeles County was reimbursed millions of dollars for incarcerating illegal immigrants. Just last month, Los Angeles County officials were again in Washington, DC asking for more federal money.

Los Angeles officials cannot talk out of both sides of their mouth by voting to boycott Arizona while at the same time accepting millions of dollars in federal reimbursement for jailing illegals and working with the federal government to check the immigration status of aliens that have been detained.

If the County thinks that Arizona is wrong to simply enforce federal immigration laws, then it should reimburse the millions of dollars it has received from the federal government for jailing illegal immigrants. At least this would be consistent policy.

Rather than side with those that have recklessly disregarded our nation's immigration laws, it is time the City and County of Los Angeles get on side the side of the American people and support the rule of law.

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