

## Statement on Arizona Anti-Immigrant Legislation



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With a stroke of her pen – the simple act of signing her name – Arizona Governor Jan Brewer confirmed on Friday afternoon what our country’s immigrant advocates have feared for years: That Washington’s inaction would result in piecemeal overreaction. Arizona’s newly-minted immigration law – rightly dubbed as ‘wrongheaded’ in the Tribune’s April 23 “Arizona’s answer” editorial – requires local law enforcement to verify a person’s immigration status on mere “reasonable suspicion” (e.g. being brown) and will, ultimately, prove ineffective in addressing the real roots of our nation’s immigration quandary: supply and demand.

Illinois’ immigrant advocate community is disappointed, but not surprised, by the Arizona outcome. In light of Washington’s inability to fix a system so desperately in need of repair, Arizona took up the project itself. Given that their solution has gone beyond what is necessary or even tolerable, we can only hope that “Arizona’s answer” to immigration reform serves as a wake-up call. Our elected officials in Washington are asleep at the wheel of the stalled car that is immigration reform. The call for a fair and just solution has never been more urgent than it is today.

Optimistic that Friday’s outcome would be different, one national immigrant organization declared in solidarity, “We are all Arizona!” With Governor Brewer’s signature now dry on such harsh anti-immigrant legislation, we implore that President Obama prevent the creation of 49 additional “Arizonas.” Immigration reform must become a legislative priority – and now.

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