



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

## Overhaul Our Immigration Laws, Now

RUBEN DIAZ April 26, 2010

| COMMITTEE: **LATINO CAUCUS**

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### Overhaul Our Immigration Laws, Now

by Senator Reverend Ruben Diaz, Chair/New York State Senate Puerto Rican/Latino Caucus

State Senator Rev. Ruben Diaz as Chair of the New York State Senate Puerto Rican and Latino Caucus along with its' members Senator Martin Malave-Dilan, Senator Pedro Espada, Jr. and Senator Jose Peralta rebuke yesterday's immigration bill signing by Arizona Governor Jan Brewer. The Arizona law would make the failure to carry immigration documents a crime and give the police broad power to detain anyone suspected of being in the United States illegally. "While we deplore this blatant attempt to legitimize the police when they stop and interrogate the Hispanic population of Arizona, we are hopeful that passage of this bill should finally motivate the members of the United States Senate and House of Representatives to pass a humane and comprehensive, nationwide policy in regard to immigration," stated Senator Diaz.

It is naïve to believe that the Arizona police can solve the problem of our nation's porous borders, undocumented and exploited workers, and the drain on our education and health care system by striking fear in heart of every Hispanic in Arizona who attracts the attention of the police when they are stopped.

Will arrests in Arizona discourage undocumented immigrants from educating their children or seeking health care? Will arrests in Arizona stop employers from hiring employees they know or suspect to be undocumented? Will arrests stop any detained and deported Hispanics in Arizona from returning illegally to Arizona after being deported?

It is essential that our federal legislators bring up for a vote a comprehensive immigration bill. Since the United States economy depends upon labor provided by immigrants, any temporary worker program must include fair wages and benefits for migrant workers, labor protection for migrant workers, a path to permanent residency and citizenship, mobility between the US and homeland. A just immigration system will reduce the visa backlog to enable family reunification.

"It is unfair and inappropriate for anyone to blur the lines and equate immigration with terrorism. Our nation's long and rich tradition of welcoming newcomers must not be a thing of the past," stated Senator Diaz.

Any failure of the United States Congress to act now and pass a comprehensive policy to preempt any misguided local attempts will create nationwide repercussions like Arizona's frustrated politicians' passage of this ill-willed bill. The same determination used to successfully pass the health care reform bill is required to pass Comprehensive Immigration Reform now.