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**NATIONAL IMMIGRATION LAW CENTER JOINS CALLS FOR AN END TO
CONTROVERSIAL PROGRAM ALLOWING STATE AND LOCAL POLICE TO ACT
AS IMMIGRATION AGENTS**

**521 Organizations Send Letter to White House Condemning 287(g) Program for Causing
Racial Profiling and Endangering Public Safety**

WASHINGTON — 521 local and national organizations signed a letter delivered to President Obama on Aug. 25 demanding the administration terminate the 287(g) program, which grants state and local law enforcement agencies federal immigration enforcement authority. The program, a legacy of the Bush administration, has caused serious civil and human rights abuses, including racial profiling, and endangers public safety.

“The Obama administration has responded to documented violations within the 287(g) program by expanding it and creating an illusory complaint process,” said Marielena Hincapié, executive director of the National Immigration Law Center. “Ostracizing potential victims of and witnesses to crime and providing them with a disincentive to trust the authorities will make all our communities less safe.”

Local organizations that signed the letter will host vigils, marches, and other activities across the country to voice their discontent with the administration’s decision to expand the 287(g) program despite evidence that it makes immigrant communities and the general public more vulnerable and less safe. Since its inception, the 287(g) program has drawn sharp criticism from federal officials, law enforcement, community groups, and press reports. They say that the program has caused Latinos and other minority groups to be stopped or arrested because of their appearance or accent, which has resulted in the wrongful detention of U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents. The program has failed to meet the federal government’s own objectives or priorities in immigration enforcement, and has interfered with local law enforcement’s ability to implement sound community policing practices designed to ensure public safety.

“The 287(g) program encourages civil rights abuses and makes it more difficult for police to do their primary job of fighting crime, endangering public safety for everyone,” said Carlos Garcia, a Phoenix community organizer with the Macehualli day labor center. “I hope President Obama, as a former community organizer, will recognize that, in defense of their civil rights, immigrant communities have organized around the country in opposition to this failed experiment of the Bush administration.”

**For more information about local activities to protest the 287(g) program, please
contact Sarahi Uribe at 202-285-9673.**

Letter to White House: www.nilc.org/immlawpolicy/LocalLaw/287g-Letter-2009-08-25.pdf

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