

ARIZONA CHAPTER
AMERICAN IMMIGRATION LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

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ARIZONANS DESERVE BETTER: VOTE “NO” ON PROPOSITION 200

The Arizona Chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) urges all Arizona voters to oppose Proposition 200 and on November 2 vote “NO” on this poorly drafted measure. Do not be fooled by this wolf in sheep’s clothing.

Proposition 200 will not help resolve the problems Arizona faces today. In fact, it will make these problems worse. It will not stop smuggling, deaths at the border, or people crossing Arizona’s desert. Even the proponents of this measure acknowledge that it will do nothing to stop illegal immigration. If passed, what it will do is stop the real reforms that are needed to fix our broken immigration system. Such reform is necessary, especially in a post-September 11 world in which enhanced security is key. Under our current immigration system, people are forced to live an underground existence, hiding from government for fear of being separated from their families and jobs. The current enforcement system fails to prevent illegal immigration, and precious resources that should be spent on enhancing our security are wasted. Our immigration system needs to be reformed comprehensively so that legality is the norm, and immigration is legal, safe, orderly, and reflective of the needs of American families, businesses, and national security

Proposition 200 is so poorly drafted that it would put police, fire fighters, paramedics, state and local officials and other first responders under a legal cloud in carrying out their duties as public servants. Thus the strong opposition to this measure of the Governor, leading mayors in our state, and the entire Arizona delegation. This measure also would encourage racial profiling at our public schools, hospitals, universities, public libraries and at the voting booth. Anyone who “looks like” or “sounds like” an immigrant would be treated with suspicion. Proposition 200 also would cost our state more than \$200 million, the amount that state officials estimate would need to be spent to implement this ill-conceived measure. This funding would be much better spent on education, healthcare and other services that will make Arizona an even better place to live.

Arizonans are justifiably concerned about the issues surrounding our borders and immigration. But we must not fall prey to false solutions to real problems. Proposition 200 would make our laws worse, divide us as a state, divert needed resources, and make our government less effective. What Arizonans and the rest of America need is not Proposition 200, but comprehensive immigration reform and an immigration system that works for Arizona and for America.

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Founded in 1946, AILA is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that provides its Members with continuing legal education, information, and professional services. AILA advocates before Congress and the Administration and provides liaison with the DHS and other government agencies. AILA is an Affiliated Organization of the American Bar Association.

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