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Subject: Statement by the President on the Supreme Court's Ruling on Arizona v. the United States

To:

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 25, 2012

Statement by the President on the Supreme Court's Ruling on Arizona v. the United States

I am pleased that the Supreme Court has struck down key provisions of Arizona's immigration law. What this decision makes unmistakably clear is that Congress must act on comprehensive immigration reform. A patchwork of state laws is not a solution to our broken immigration system – it's part of the problem.

At the same time, I remain concerned about the practical impact of the remaining provision of the Arizona law that requires local law enforcement officials to check the immigration status of anyone they even suspect to be here illegally. I agree with the Court that individuals cannot be detained solely to verify their immigration status. No American should ever live under a cloud of suspicion just because of what they look like. Going forward, we must ensure that Arizona law enforcement officials do not enforce this law in a manner that undermines the civil rights of Americans, as the Court's decision recognizes. Furthermore, we will continue to enforce our immigration laws by focusing on our most important priorities like border security and criminals who endanger our communities, and not, for example, students who earn their education – which is why the Department of Homeland Security announced earlier this month that it will lift the shadow of deportation from young people who were brought to the United States as children through no fault of their own.

I will work with anyone in Congress who's willing to make progress on comprehensive immigration reform that addresses our economic needs and security needs, and upholds our tradition as a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants. And in the meantime, we will continue to use every federal resource to protect the safety and civil rights of all Americans, and treat all our people with dignity and respect. We can solve these challenges not in spite of our most cherished values – but because of them. What makes us American is not a question of what we look like or what our names are. What makes us American is our shared belief in the enduring promise of this country – and our shared responsibility to leave it more generous and more hopeful than we found it.

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