N E W S RELEASE

Contra Costa County
JOHN GIOIA (joy-a)
Chair, Board of Supervisors

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE June 15, 2010

Contra Costa County Supervisors call on President Obama and Federal Representatives to declare Arizona immigration law unconstitutional

What: Letter signing ceremony by County Supervisors to repeal Arizona immigration law
Where: On the front steps of the Peter L. Spinetta Law Center
751 Pine Street, Martinez, CA
Who: John Gioia, Chair, Board of Supervisor; Susan Bonilla, Supervisor, District 4; Federal Glover, Supervisor, District 5; United Latino Voice of Contra Costa County ; community leaders and activists
When: Tuesday, June 15, 2010 @ 11:30 a.m. (Approximate Time)

Martinez, Calif., Three members of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors will be making a united stand today by signing a letter to President Obama calling for an end to Arizona's highly-controversial immigration law – SB 1070.

In the letter, Board Chair John Gioia, and Supervisors Federal Glover and Susan Bonilla say the divisive law will result in racial profiling and human rights violations of Latinos because law enforcement officers will be mandated to stop individuals who, "…fit the description of an 'illegal alien' and who are suspected of looking for work…" the letter states.

"We are joining with others who believe the Arizona law is unjust and are calling on President Obama to end this form of legalized discrimination," said Supervisor Gioia whose West County district includes the cities of Richmond and San Pablo, which has the highest number of Hispanic or Latino families in the County.

The Supervisors are the latest in a growing list of cities and counties including Seattle, Austin, TX; Boston, Los Angeles, St. Paul, MN; Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose to speak out against the law. In Contra Costa County, cities and agencies that have passed resolutions condemning the law include the cities of Richmond and San Pablo, the West Contra Costa Unified School District, AC Transit District, and the El Cerrito Democratic Club.

According to the 2000 Census, Hispanic and Latino families make-up for nearly 20% of the County's total population and live mostly in West and East County.

United Latino Voice – a coalition of Latino Leaders representing West, Central, and East Contra Costa County -- say the 2000 Census data is a conservative number because Latino residents have increased.

"United Latino Voice joins with our Board of Supervisors in opposing Arizona SB 1070. It is unconstitutional and violates Federal preemption," said Concepcion James, Executive Chair of United Latino Voice of Contra Costa County. "It tears apart the fabric of our society by targeting Latinos and their families. It has the potential to criminalize civil immigration law".

Note to editors and reporters: Spanish-language speakers will be available at today's letter signing ceremony.

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Chair, Board of Supervisors
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June 15, 2010

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As a majority of members of the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors, we want to individually express our opposition to Arizona's Senate Bill 1070 which became law on April 23, 2010.

We believe that Senate Bill 1070 will result in racial profiling and human rights violations of Latinos by authorizing immigration status checks on anyone violating laws no matter now minor, by stopping those on the street who fit the description of an "illegal alien" and who are suspected of looking for work and by stopping those who look like they are transporting an "illegal alien."

Senate Bill 1070 and its revision under HB 2162 do not put measures in place to gather data on law enforcement stops, detentions, or arrests to determine if profiling is occurring and do not specify how law enforcement will be trained to spot suspected "illegal aliens" or to not profile Latinos.

Senate Bill 1070 holds the false promise to improve the safety and security of the State of Arizona. Instead, it will cause division between local law enforcement and communities. We call upon the U.S. Department of Justice to determine whether SB 1070 is unconstitutional.

We respectfully request that you convene immigration experts (including policy makers, constitutional and civil rights legal organizations, immigrant rights organizations and community coalitions) to draft immigration reform policy that is fair, humane and free of violations to civil, human and constitutional rights.

Respectfully,

John Gioia
Chair
Board of Supervisors

Susan Bonilla
Supervisor, District 4

Federal Glover
Supervisor, District 5

cc:
U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer
U.S. Representative George Miller, III
Arizona Governor Jan Brewer
Connie James, Executive Chair, United Latino Voice of Contra Costa County
Cecilia Valdez, West County Regional Chair, United Latino Voice of Contra Costa County
Carmen Angulo, Central County Regional Chair, United Latino Voice of Contra Costa County
Paul Ramirez, East County Regional Chair, United Latino Voice of Contra Costa County