

Embargoed until Tuesday, July 16 at 11 am

Press Statement: Monday, July 15, 2019

Contact: Melissa Taveras, melissa@floridaimmigrant.org, 786-956-0352

**** Interviews available in English, Spanish and Haitian Creole ****



Immigrant Rights Groups File Federal Lawsuit Over Unconstitutional Immigration Enforcement Bill

Bill is unconstitutional, vague and will separate families while hurting most vulnerable communities

WHO: Plaintiffs include the City of South Miami, [Florida Immigrant Coalition](#), [Farmworker Association of Florida](#), [Family Action Network Movement](#), [QLatinx](#), [WeCount!](#), [Westminster Presbyterian United Church](#) of Gainesville, [Americans for Immigrant Justice](#), [Guatemalan-Maya Center](#) and [Hope CommUnity Center](#).

WHAT: Immigrant Rights Groups Announce Federal Lawsuit Over SB 168

WHEN: Tuesday, July 16th at 11 am

WHERE: Florida Immigrant Coalition 2800 Biscayne Blvd. Suite 200, Miami, FL 33137

(MIAMI) – The **Florida Immigrant Coalition** joins attorneys from the Southern Poverty Law Center, the Community Justice Project and the University of Miami School of Law Immigration Clinic in a lawsuit against Governor Ron DeSantis and Attorney General Ashley Moody over Senate Bill 168, a new Florida state law requiring local governments to collaborate with federal immigration enforcement.

This lawsuit, filed in federal court in the Southern District of Florida, **will seek an injunction** stopping any further implementation of the law. It will argue that the law violates the U.S. Constitution and request a ruling on the legality of mandating arrests on the basis of immigration detainees.

The following is a statement by Thomas Kennedy, Political Director for the Florida Immigrant Coalition:

“This bill does nothing for Florida’s safety and actually does more harm than good. Miami’s chief of police expressed his concerns over the erosion of trust in law enforcement and the greater public security concerns for all Americans, regardless of status. Tying immigration to law enforcement increases racial profiling, especially among already vulnerable immigrant communities, and promotes family separation. Neither are good for the country. When immigrants are forced to live in the shadows, it has a negative effect on all Americans.”

The following is a statement from Alana Greer, Attorney for Community Justice Project:

“We are asking the court to halt the enforcement of SB 168 because it violates Floridian’s constitutional right to due process and equal protection under the law. The bill forces local police to act as rogue ICE agents, in violation of the supremacy clause of the US Constitution, and prevents local governments from enacting policies necessary to public safety.”

The law also instructs local governments and law enforcement agencies to use their “best efforts” to support federal immigration laws without defining what that means. The lawsuit argues that is unconstitutionally vague because it is unclear how “best efforts” will be defined, or who will define it.

###

The [Florida Immigrant Coalition](#) is a statewide alliance of over 60 member organizations, including farmworkers, students, service providers, grassroots organizations and legal advocates, who come together for the fair treatment of all people