

THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

PRESS RELEASE

November 21, 2011

Contact:

Lenore Ostrowsky
Acting Chief, Public Affairs Unit
202-376-8591

U.S. CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION TO HOLD 2012 BRIEFING ON THE CIVIL RIGHTS IMPACT OF STATE IMMIGRATION LAWS

WASHINGTON, DC - The United States Commission on Civil Rights announces that at its monthly business meeting on November 18, 2011 the eight-member Commission unanimously voted to look into the civil rights impact of state-enacted immigration enforcement laws, with a special focus on Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina.

Commission Chairman Martin R. Castro stated, "I believe that the enactment of these state immigration enforcement laws presents a pressing national civil rights issue that affects immigrants and U.S. citizens alike. I'm proud that my fellow Commissioners joined me in voting unanimously and in bipartisan manner to have the Commission look into this important issue."

The Commission will analyze whether the state-enacted immigration enforcement laws have adversely affected the civil rights of both naturalized and native-born U.S. citizens and non-citizen immigrants on the basis of color, race, and/or national origin, and whether they cause a denial of equal protection in the administration of justice. In particular, the Commission will examine whether the state-level immigration laws foster discrimination and/or contribute to an increase in hate crimes; cause elevated racial and ethnic profiling; affect students' rights to public primary and secondary school education; and compromise public safety and community policing. A briefing will be held in 2012 that will allow the Commission to receive testimony as to the impact that these state-enacted laws have had on local communities.

#####

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is an independent, bipartisan agency charged with monitoring federal civil rights enforcement. Members include Chairman Martin Castro and Commissioners Roberta Achtenberg, Todd Gaziano, Gail Heriot, Peter Kirsanow, David Kladney, Abigail Thernstrom, and Michael Yaki. Commission meetings and briefings are open to the general public. The Commission's website is <http://www.usccr.gov>.