

Human Rights Alert Human Rights Alert Human Rights Alert

ICE raids in Mississippi across in Mississippi result in the imprisonment of hundreds of undocumented workers.

Mississippi Immigrants Rights Alliance (MIRA) has issued an emergency call for volunteer criminal attorneys to help represent the undocumented workers that now face criminal charges under SB 2988 (for more information please see USHRN release below). If you are a criminal attorney and/or would like more information on the legal team, please contact Patricia Ice at 601 940 6749.

MIRA is also calling for a repeal (see text below) of SB 2988.

You can contact Governor Haley Barbour at:

Telephone 601 359 3100

Fax at 601 359 3741

Email at governor@governor.state.ms.us,

Below is the USHRN release that was issued on Monday. For more information on this unfolding crisis, please contact MIRA at (601)968-5182.



For Immediate Release

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Contact Information

Janvieve Williams, jwilliams@ushrnetwork.org

404 610 2807

Bill Chandler

601 594 3564

US Human Rights Network calls for halt to ICE raids in Mississippi

On Monday August 25, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) conducted a raid at Howard Industries in Laurel, Mississippi that resulted in the arrest of more than 350 undocumented workers. Among the many arrested workers were heads of households and pregnant women. While Catholic Social Services and other community organizations have accounted for more than 150 children of the workers, dozens are still unaccounted for.

This ICE raid is the latest blow to undocumented workers and employers in Mississippi, coming soon after legislative passage of an anti-immigration bill (SB 2988), which mandates that employers conduct verification checks of all employees and subjects undocumented employees as well as employers who do not comply to harsh sanctions. The arrested workers now face not only deportation but the real possibility of criminal prosecution. The new law makes working in the state of Mississippi while undocumented a felony and calls for

“imprisonment in the custody of the Department of Corrections for not less than one (1) year nor more than five (5) years, a fine of not less than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) nor more than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) or both... Anyone charged with the crime of working without papers will not be eligible for bail.”

“The raids in Mississippi have a significance that go well beyond the borders of that state,” says Ajamu Baraka, Executive Director of the US Human Rights Network. “These raids violate international human rights standards and are designed to evoke fear in migrant communities across the country. Lou Dobbs and the Minutemen should not be setting U.S. immigration policy.”

The US Human Rights Network has information that immigration raids might continue in Mississippi until Wednesday, which means that families will continue to be torn apart, more children will be abandoned, and more workers will be charged as felons for the crime of seeking to provide for their families. “It is a real contradiction with our supposed values that ICE is arresting workers and locking up their families,” says Bill Chandler, Executive Director of Mississippi Immigrant Rights Alliance. “In the name of fighting terror, ICE is creating terror in communities in Mississippi.”

In conjunction with their failure to pass comprehensive immigration reform legislation, states across the country have increasingly taken it upon themselves to undermine the rights and dignity of workers under the guise of upholding U.S. law. To anyone who values universal human rights and the obligations that come with them, this is unacceptable.

For more information please visit US Human Rights Network member organization Mississippi Immigrant Rights Alliance page at www.yourmira.org or www.ushrnetwork.org. The US Human Rights Network is a membership based organization of more than 250 U.S.-based organizations and over 1200 individuals working on the full spectrum of human rights issues. For more information, please visit our website: www.ushrnetwork.org

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