



As Holiday Weekend Approaches, ACLU of Wisconsin Issues Alert To State Residents Traveling To Arizona

Arizona Racial Profiling Law Threatens Civil Liberties

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MILWAUKEE – In response to civil liberties threats caused by the recent passage of Arizona’s racial profiling law, the American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin issued a travel alert today informing Wisconsin residents of their rights when stopped by law enforcement when traveling in Arizona. The unconstitutional law, known as SB 1070, requires law enforcement agents to demand "papers" from people they stop who they suspect are not authorized to be in the U.S. If individuals are unable to prove to officers that they are permitted to be in the U.S., they may be subject to warrantless arrest without any probable cause that they have committed a crime.

Although the law is not scheduled to go into effect until July 29, the ACLU of Wisconsin is concerned that some law enforcement officers are already beginning to act on provisions of the law. Moreover, there has been a history of rampant racial profiling by law enforcement in Arizona, especially in Maricopa County, as well as a stated anti-immigrant policy of "attrition through enforcement" by Arizona lawmakers meant to create a hostile enough environment for Latinos and other people of color that they voluntarily leave the state.

"Wisconsin residents traveling in Arizona may be subject to racial profiling if Arizona law enforcement officers don't like the way you look or sound," said Executive Director of the ACLU of Wisconsin, Chris Ahmuty. "Biased policing occurs in Wisconsin, too, but the new Arizona law makes it acceptable in the eyes of Arizona lawmakers and police to ask for your 'papers.'"

In addition to the travel alert, the ACLU has made available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) materials on individuals' rights if stopped by law enforcement in Arizona or other states as a result of SB 1070 or for any other reason. The materials include a downloadable card with instructions – applicable in any state – on coping with vehicle stops and questioning by police, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents or the FBI, as well as a Frequently Asked Questions document about SB 1070.

The Wisconsin Legislature recently passed a requirement that all Wisconsin law enforcement agencies collect data on traffic stops in order to identify where biased policing may exist. Under the Wisconsin law, police will not be asking motor vehicle operators or their passengers to give their race or ethnicity.

Ahmuty expressed his concern for Wisconsin travelers in other states. “The radically different approaches to racial profiling in Arizona and Wisconsin may make the shock of profiling in Arizona more disturbing to unlucky Badgers traveling in Arizona.”

The ACLU and other leading civil rights organizations [filed a lawsuit challenging the Arizona law](#) in May, but until the law is struck down, the ACLU warns that individuals traveling in Arizona must be aware of their rights if stopped there.

The travel alert is available at: <http://www.aclu.org/immigrants-rights-racial-justice/holiday-weekend-approaches-aclu-affiliates-issue-alerts-individuals>

Materials informing individuals of their rights when stopped by law enforcement and more information about the Arizona law, including an ACLU video and slide show, can be found at: <http://www.aclu.org/what-happens-arizona-stops-arizona>

Materials informing individuals of their rights when stopped by law enforcement optimized for mobile devices is available at: mobile.aclu.org

More information about the ACLU’s lawsuit, including information on co-counsel and plaintiffs, can be found at: www.aclu.org/immigrants-rights-racial-justice/aclu-and-civil-rights-groups-file-legal-challenge-arizona-racial-pr

The ACLU of Wisconsin has approximately 8,500 members who support its efforts to defend the civil liberties and civil rights of all Wisconsin residents. For more on the work of the ACLU of Wisconsin, visit our [webpage](#). You can also get news and opinion on civil liberties in Wisconsin on our [Cap City Liberty blog](#). Find us on [Facebook and Twitter at ACLUMadison and ACLUofWisconsin](#).

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