



# Coalición de Derechos Humanos

Post Office Box 1286  
Tucson, Arizona 85702

September 3, 2010

## **Yo Soy Testigo: Our Community Call to Witness and Document Abuse**

For more than a decade, Derechos Humanos has attempted to draw attention to and engage in dialogue around the issues of the growing state of militarization and policing of our border communities. While those in power dismissed us as alarmists and/or naïve, we continued to point out that the stripping of rights and civil liberties of migrants would ultimately result in the demise of our own rights. From the dramatic increase in enforcement and methods of surveillance to the denial of basic due process, Arizona has become the active laboratory for the nation.

In the last several months, Arizona has gained the shameful notoriety of being the most anti-immigrant—and anti-Mexican—state in the country, with many now realizing that what we have warned against has come to pass. SB 1070 declared us as a police state. Although the recent ruling by a federal judge in Phoenix enjoined certain portions of the law, it is very clear that the collaboration between local law enforcement and Border Patrol/ICE has escalated racial profiling and racial discrimination.

When looking at the current events in Arizona, we must reference history. We now live in a state where leaders and lawmakers encourage us to turn against each other. The xenophobia and racism have found welcome homes in the laws promulgated by our legislature. Intentional misinformation and lies permeate both the airways and sound waves, impacting even our children.

We are called upon by our different faiths and spiritualities to be the keepers of our sisters and brothers, to bear witness to the injustices, and to speak out, loud and clear, against them. As in other difficult moments in history, when all human decency seems to be lost, we must, at the very least, be witness to both the injustice and the hopeful struggle for human rights and dignity.

As we launch this community campaign to document and report abuses in our neighborhoods, we call for all Arizonans to commit to the struggle for justice and peace. Be part of the change that we know must take place. We must care for each other, as the denial of rights of any one of us is the denial of all of our rights.

###