

Arizona Judge Delineates Between State and Federal Authority

Focus Must Now Return to Comprehensive Federal Solutions

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Washington, D.C. - Today, Phoenix district court judge Susan Bolton enjoined key provisions of Arizona's controversial immigration law, SB1070. The judge recognized that the federal government has primary authority over making and enforcing immigration law, and that while states have limited authority in this arena, they cannot interfere with federal enforcement or undermine federal priorities. The decision acknowledges the complex nature of immigration law and the harmful consequences of local police attempting to make immigration determinations. The judge also recognized the serious strain that the Arizona law would place on federal resources, which would detract from the federal government's ability to enforce immigration laws in other states and target resources toward serious criminals.

The following is a statement from Benjamin E. Johnson, Executive Director of the American Immigration Council.

"It is clear that the Judge Bolton has a strong grasp on the complexity of immigration issues and the challenges facing the state. She blocked the most controversial and troubling parts of the law that not only intrude on the Federal government's authority over immigration, but were also likely to violate the civil rights of legal immigrants and U.S. citizens. While it is important to acknowledge that there are serious problems in Arizona, if Arizonans truly want to target human trafficking, human smuggling, and other serious crimes, they must focus their efforts and resources on those criminal networks, and nothing in today's decision prevents them from doing so.

Now the question is whether politicians at the state and federal level will stop playing politics or start solving problems. Arizona must start focusing on serious criminals and the federal government must assume its Constitutional duty of fixing the broken immigration system. America needs real solutions that make our communities safer, our border more secure, and creates an immigration system meets the needs of our Nation."

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