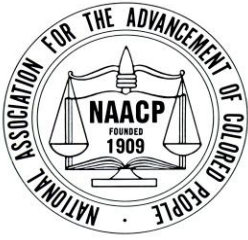


National Association for the Advancement of Colored People  
Tennessee State Conference of Branches

*Gloria J. Sweet-Love, President*



June 21, 2010

The Honorable Phil Bredesen  
Governor of Tennessee  
State Capitol  
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Bredesen:

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (TN NAACP) is writing to express of strong opposition to SB 1141/HB 670 and to urge you to veto this very dangerous legislation.

The NAACP has a long history of fighting to protect and promote civil rights and social justice. For 101 years we have worked to ensure equal treatment, protection under the law and working to end racial profiling and discrimination.

SB 1141/HB 670 challenges the values of fairness and equality, invites disparate treatment and discrimination of minority groups of color and encourages racial profiling. This legislation requires local sheriffs to send booking information to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) for those persons arrested who are unable to prove their legal status. This legislation effectively creates a police state and takes us back to the days of apartheid in South Africa, where every person of color had to have a pass book or carry documentation at all times so that they could prove they were legal in case they were arrested.

Under SB 1141/HB 670, local sheriffs are directed to carry out the complex task of acting as federal immigration agents. However, the legislation provides no access to funding, federal databases or training for these law enforcement officers who will be required to attempt to identify undocumented person. Using local law enforcement officers who are untrained in the complexities and proper enforcement of federal immigration law is a recipe for racial profiling.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People  
Tennessee State Conference of Branches

*Gloria J. Sweet-Love, President*

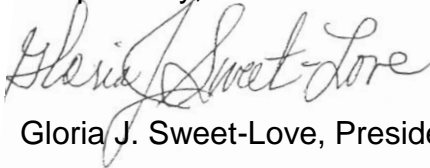
Governor Bredesen, it was just 2008, when we passed into law the TN Racial Profiling Prevention Act, that prohibits “the detention, interdiction or other disparate treatment of an individual solely on the basis of their actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, national origin or religion. SB 1141/HB 670 invites racial profiling at two junctures – on the street and at the jail. This legislation would essentially require local sheriffs to engage in unlawful racial and ethnic profiling.

This is a dangerous time in history for communities of color. Arizona’s recent anti-immigrant legislation has created a national climate that further criminalizes hardworking members of communities of color and sanctions the unequal treatment of anyone who looks or sounds foreign-born. Under this legislation, local law enforcement might be more likely to arrest an individual for a minor infraction rather than to issue a citation in order to trigger an immigration investigation. A law that encourages arrest in order to check people’s immigration status creates the potential for racial bias in the application of Tennessee’s citation v. arrest statute.

Governor, SB 1141/HB 670 is a disturbing piece of legislation. We urge you to veto this legislation in the name of all that is fair and just. This legislation will take Tennessee down the same dangerous road that the state of Arizona is taking. THAT IS NOT WHERE WE NEED TO GO!

On behalf of fairness for all Tennesseans committed to moving Tennessee forward, we urge you to veto SB 1141/HB 670.

Respectfully,



Gloria J. Sweet-Love, President

cc. NAACP Washington Bureau