



# TALKING POINTS:

## Show Me Your Papers Law

Laws known as 'show me your papers' laws are usually coupled with anti-sanctuary city laws and are essentially laws that require local law enforcement to check the immigration status of everyone they encounter — even if the encounter is not predicated on something illegal.

### WHY IS 'SHOW ME YOUR PAPERS' LEGISLATION BAD FOR OUR COMMUNITIES?

**Results in Racial Profiling** — a key problem with encouraging law enforcement to enforce a 'show me your papers' approach is because it will often lead to racial profiling. Police are used to the concept of reasonable suspicion or probable cause, and since the majority of immigrants are minorities, it basically leads to the reality that minorities are targeted as the most likely population that would need to have their immigration status checked — i.e. racial profiling. So, if you are brown and have an accent these laws will ultimately impact your civil liberties.

**Community Safety** — communication between immigrant residents and law enforcement, making everyone safer. If some people in the community are afraid to call the police when they're in danger, or to serve as a witness in a criminal case, it makes it harder for the police to solve crimes and harder for D.A.s to prosecute criminals. Many immigrants fear that calling 911 or speaking to police will lead to separation from family members making them more vulnerable to domestic abuse, wage theft and other crimes mistrust of local police among immigrant communities.

**Symptom of a broken system** — the other major issue with 'show me your papers' and anti-sanctuary laws is that these are symptoms of a broken immigration system. Currently there are an estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S., approximately 800,000 of which are Dreamers. Many of these immigrants were either born or grew up in the U.S. and are legitimately married to U.S. citizens. The vast majority are law abiding and tax paying members of our society. We therefore need a common-sense approach to fix our immigration policies at the federal level and not allow a confusing patchwork of state legislation, like SB64 and SJR18, that treats symptoms not the root cause.

### CURRENT MISSOURI LEGISLATION

The Missouri legislature is currently discussing a 'show me your papers' joint resolution — SJR18. It was introduced by Senator [Mike Cunningham](#) and creates new requirements relating to the verification of the immigration status of certain persons. This proposed constitutional

amendment, if approved by the voters, would require all state and local law enforcement officers to make a *reasonable attempt* to verify the immigration status of any person stopped, detained, or arrested in the course of the enforcement of any state or local law if reasonable suspicion exists that such person is unlawfully present in the United States. Such verification shall be made by contacting the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

*Furthermore, any person who is arrested shall have his or her immigration status verified prior to being released.* A law enforcement officer may not solely consider race, color, or national origin in implementing the provisions of this amendment. Additionally, any person shall be presumed to be lawfully present in the United States if such person provides one of the following forms of identification:

- A valid Missouri driver's license;
- A valid Missouri non-driver's license; or
- Any valid United States, state, or local government issued form of identification.

### **What is a Senate Joint Resolution (SJR)?**

A MO joint resolution (could be senate or house) follows a similar process to that of a bill but is usually a legislative measure that proposes a change to the MO Constitution. This particular SJR is requesting a public vote, during the 2020 November elections, to change article VII of the MO Constitution which relates to Public Officers.

SJR18 proposes an amendment that would require local law enforcement to check immigration status during ANY lawful stop. To get on the ballot in 2020, SJR needs to (1) clear the Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety Committee, (2) passed by a majority in the senate and the house and (3) be passed by majority of the people in the 2020 November election.

Laws known as 'show me your papers' laws are usually coupled with anti-sanctuary city laws (see SB4 in Texas), but SJR18 isolates the 'show me your papers' piece of legislation (note SB64 an anti-sanctuary city bill continues to work its way through the senate).