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February 22, 2011

A U.S. Immigrant Program

To the Editor:

Re “U.S. Hardens Its Stance on an Immigrant Policy” (news article, Feb. 18): As part of a coalition that seeks to end New York’s participation in the Secure Communities program, we are disappointed to learn the extent to which our state was misled by federal agencies more concerned with instituting a dangerous program than with operating honestly and transparently.

New York signed up for Secure Communities last May without any public debate or scrutiny.

Secure Communities undermines everything New York stands for: diversity, equality and fairness. It throws immigrants into the black hole of deportation, endangers our safety by promoting fear of the police, and threatens to cost our state millions of dollars.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement has proved repeatedly to be an unreliable partner. Its Secure Communities program is designed to deport immigrants en masse, not to protect the public. New York should stand up to federal duplicity and bullying. Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo must immediately rescind the Secure Communities agreement.

Michelle Fei
Mizue Aizeki
New York, Feb. 18, 2011

The writers are, respectively, co-director, Immigrant Defense Project, and community liaison, Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights.