BUILDING TRULY SECURE COMMUNITIES

Who are we?
The Anti-Violence Advocates Against Deportation is a subcommittee of the New York State Working Group Against Deportation. We are intimate partner and domestic violence survivors, LGBTQ people, youth, sex workers, labor and sex trafficking survivors, people of color, people living with HIV/AIDS, and immigrants. We are individuals, community organizations, and legal service providers working to end all forms of violence, including interpersonal and structural violence. We understand that we cannot speak out against violence between individuals without also speaking out against the violence our communities experience from the police, the criminal “justice” system, deportation policies, and many state-sanctioned laws and policies. We have come together to end deportation and the collaboration between police and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Why now?
Over the past three years, the U.S. Government has deported over 1 million people. The government’s mass deportation effort has named the so-called “criminal alien” as the primary target—a category that ICE constantly changes and expands to meet deportation quotas. Deportation is a violent act that separates people from biological and chosen family and other community support networks. The criminal “justice” system—most notably the police and jails—are increasingly partnering with ICE to identify people for deportation. One devastating example of this flawed collaboration is ICE’s “Secure Communities” program (S-Comm)—which requires that local police send an arrestee’s fingerprints to immigration at booking, and is now a primary tool used by ICE to funnel people into an unjust deportation system. Despite the governors of New York, Illinois, and Massachusetts taking a stand against S-Comm, ICE continues to push this fundamentally flawed program across the country with a planned nationwide rollout by the end of 2013.

Why should we care?
We live and work in communities that have been negatively affected by and have long fought against unjust laws and policing practices that fuel mass incarceration. We continue to fight against the racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, and Islamophobia that are reflected in and perpetuated by the criminal “justice” system. We continue to suffer because resources are diverted for increased policing rather than community needs. We cannot give police additional power to harass and profile people of color. Community policing relationships are already fragile, and will deteriorate even further with the growing collaboration between police and ICE.

For more information, contact maizeki@immigrantdefenseproject.org
Anti-Violence Advocates against Deportation

POINTS OF UNITY

What kind of violence are we fighting against?

- We fight to end intimate partner violence, family violence, rape and sexual assault, sexual harassment, labor exploitation, racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia and Islamophobia.
- We fight to end the violence our communities experience from the police, the criminal “justice” system, deportation policies, and many state-sanctioned laws and policies.

Enforcement is not the answer:

- We recognize that we cannot rely on the criminal “justice” system to end violence. We fight against enforcement-only policies because they create more violence and make our communities less secure.
- We fight to ensure that all people in contact with the criminal “justice” system are treated fairly. Programs like S-Comm exacerbate the differential treatment of non-citizens in courts and jails. When identified as potentially deportable by ICE, noncitizens are routinely denied bail, jailed for longer periods and disqualified from alternative release programs.
- We challenge assumptions that increased policing and surveillance leads to increased safety. We fight against discriminatory policing practices that target individuals because of their race, sexual orientation, or gender non-conformity, or a combination of these factors. Racial profiling and gender policing, and discrimination based on sexual orientation are endemic in our criminal “justice” system. We cannot give police additional power to harass and profile people of color. Community policing relationships are already fragile, and will deteriorate even further with the growing collaboration between police and ICE.

We fight to end collaboration between ICE and Police:

- We fight against the growing police and ICE collaboration that makes immigrant survivors of violence even more likely to remain silent about abusive, discriminatory and exploitative conditions. Even when non-English speakers choose not to be silent, they are silenced by the routine denial of language access. When some members of a community are afraid to access essential services, we are all less secure.
- We fight to stop the unjust detention and deportation system. The draconian immigration system offers little legal opportunity for people to fight back against deportation and is devastating communities.

Why we don’t fight for the rights of the “good” immigrant at the expense of all immigrants:

- We push back against anti-violence responses that privilege the rights of some at the expense of others. Privileging the “good” or “innocent” immigrant from the “bad” or “criminal” immigrant dehumanizes and minimizes the complexities of people’s lives. It also perpetuates the scapegoating of immigrants and fuels policies that justify the mass deportation of those who are deemed less worthy of rights.
- We work to ensure that efforts to protect and promote the safety of immigrants who may be survivors of violence, including efforts to address trafficking in persons, do not harm people by increasing profiling and criminalization of survivors and their communities.

We fight for all kinds of families:

- We fight to protect all families whether they are biological or chosen. LGBTQ non-citizens in particular often have strained relationships with biological family members and their chosen family is not recognized under U.S. immigration laws. Current deportation policies place these families at heightened risk of being torn apart.

We fight to build truly secure communities

- We fight to ensure that all people have equal access to rights such as education, language access, employment, housing, freedom of movement, and reproductive justice.