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Border Patrol Policy Change Important Victory for Border Communities

Seattle, WA – In an important victory for border communities, Northwest Immigrant Rights Project (NWIRP) called the decision by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), made public today, to immediately halt the practice of using Border Patrol agents as interpreters for state and local law enforcement agencies a step in the right direction. This policy change helps safeguard the rights and safety of immigrant communities residing in border regions throughout the country.

Earlier this year, NWIRP and two cooperating attorneys filed a civil rights complaint on behalf of six Washington residents. The complaint was a critical part of the advocacy effort that prompted this policy change.

“We commend the Department of Homeland Security for stopping the practice of Border Patrol agents providing interpretation assistance in routine local law enforcement matters,” said Jorge L. Barón, NWIRP’s Executive Director. “We are grateful for the courage of the clients who spoke up against this discriminatory practice and who have helped bring about a change of policy that will affect communities throughout the country. We also applaud the work of numerous partners at the local and national level who advocated for an end to this practice.”

The complaint, addressed to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the U.S. Department of Justice, asserted that the practice of Border Patrol agents providing interpretation assistance to local law enforcement agencies violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other protections. The complaint requested that, among other steps, DHS issue policy guidance to curtail this practice.

The original civil rights complaint can be found [here](#). The complaint was filed on behalf of six individuals who had been detained and placed in removal proceedings by Border Patrol agents. The agents ostensibly had been called to the scene to provide interpretation for other law enforcement agencies. The complaint to DHS and DOJ was filed after the USDA’S Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, known as OASCR, issued a decision on a related complaint filed earlier by NWIRP. On April 28, 2012, OASCR issued a [decision](#) finding that the U.S. Forest Service violated individuals’ civil rights by calling the Border Patrol to ostensibly provide translation assistance and law enforcement support.

The New York Times was among the many news organizations that reported on incidents in the Olympic Peninsula. Click [here](#) for the New York Times story.

To view a pdf of this media release, please click [here](#).

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Northwest Immigrant Rights Project promotes justice for low-income immigrants by pursuing and defending their legal status. We focus on providing direct legal services, supported by our education and public policy work. NWIRP is the only entity in the list of “Free Legal Services” that is given to individuals placed in removal (aka deportation) proceedings in Washington State.

Northwest Immigrant Rights Project Press Releases:

- [NWIRP Expanding Statewide Efforts to Help Undocumented Youth Gain Education and Career Opportunities](#)
- [NWIRP and Partners Ask Federal Court to Block Deportation Hearings for Children Without Legal Representation](#)
- [Final Order Provides Hundreds of Class Members in Duran-Gonzalez v. Holder with New Opportunity to Remain in US with Family](#)
- [NWIRP and Partners Sue Federal Government over Failure to Provide Legal Representation for Children Placed into Deportation Proceedings](#)
- [Federal Court Rules Immigrant Detainees Must Be Given Bond Hearings](#)
- [Federal Judge Approves Settlement Agreement in National Class Action Lawsuit on Work Authorization for Asylum Seekers](#)
- [Federal Judge Preliminarily Approves Amended Settlement Agreement in National Class Action Lawsuit on Work Authorization for Asylum Seekers](#)
- [Settlement Reins in Border Patrol Stops on the Olympic Peninsula](#)
- [Court Rules Law Enforcement Can't Prolong Stop to Question an Individual About Immigration Status](#)
- [Federal Judge Grants Preliminary Approval of Settlement Agreement in National Class Action Lawsuit on Work Authorization for Asylum Seekers](#)
- [Vulnerable Immigrants in Deportation Proceedings Unable to Represent Themselves Must Get Counsel and a Hearing](#)
- [Northwest Immigrant Rights Project to Recognize Regional Leaders](#)
- [Class Action Lawsuit Forces Policy Change to Protect Detained Immigrants with Serious Mental Disabilities](#)
- [Agreement Reached in National Class Action Lawsuit on Work Authorization for Asylum Seekers](#)
- [UW Report: Collaboration between King County jails and ICE results in unfair and costly impact](#)
- [Widespread Abuse by U.S. Customs and Border Protection Documented in National Wave of Complaints](#)
- [Legal Groups to Announce Wave of Cases Highlighting Nationwide Abuses By U.S. Customs and Border Protection](#)
- [Granger Community Legal Workshop: Get Free Attorney Help With DREAMer Deferred Action Forms](#)
- [Seattle/Des Moines Community Legal Workshop: Get Free Attorney Help With DREAMer Deferred Action Forms](#)
- [NWIRP places two members on key Shriver Center Leadership Program](#)
- [Border Patrol Policy Change Important Victory for Border Communities](#)
- [Granger Community Legal Workshop: Talk to an Attorney About DREAMer Deferred Action](#)
- [Omak Community Legal Workshop: Talk to an Attorney About DREAMer Deferred Action](#)
- [Bellevue Community Legal Workshop: Talk to an Attorney About DREAMer Deferred Action](#)
- [Spokane Community Legal Workshop: Talk to an Attorney About DREAMer Deferred Action](#)
- [Yakima Community Legal Workshop: Talk to an Attorney About DREAMer Deferred Action](#)
- [Everett Community Legal Workshop: Talk to an Attorney About DREAMer Deferred Action](#)
- [Mattawa and Yakima Community Legal Workshops: Talk to an Attorney About DREAMer Deferred Action](#)
- [Olympia/Lacey Community Legal Workshop: Talk to an Attorney About DREAMer Deferred Action](#)
- [NWIRP Presents: An Evening at Wing Luke Celebrating 28 Years of Reuniting Families](#)
- [Walla Walla Community Legal Workshop: Talk to an Attorney About DREAMer Deferred Action](#)
- [Pasco Community Legal Workshop: Talk to an Attorney About DREAMer Deferred Action](#)
- [Seattle/Des Moines Community Legal Workshop: Talk to an Attorney About DREAMer Deferred Action](#)
- [Wenatchee Community Workshop: Talk to an Attorney About DREAMer Deferred Action](#)
- [10 Members of Congress Join Northern Borders Coalition Demand for Civil Rights Audit of Border Patrol](#)

Federal Judge Rules that Lawsuit Against Border Patrol Actions on Olympic Peninsula May Move Forward

- Granger Community Workshop: Do you qualify for DREAMer Deferred Action?
- Tacoma Community Workshop – Do you qualify for DREAMer Deferred Action?
- Wednesday: Press Conference - The DREAMer Deferred Action Program Unveiled
- Immigrant Rights and Civil Rights Leaders React to SB1070 Decision and Announce Renewed Efforts to Fight
- Federal Agency Rules Against Use of Border Patrol Agents as Interpreters
- Northwest Immigrant Rights Project Presents: 28th Anniversary Celebration
- NWIRP Challenges Local Law Enforcement Use of U.S. Border Patrol Agents as “Interpreters”
- Lawsuit Challenges Unconstitutional Stops and Interrogations by Border Patrol Agents on Olympic Peninsula
- Federal Judge Certifies Class Action Asserting Right to Counsel for Immigrant Detainees with Mental Disabilities
- Northwest Immigrant Rights Project & Partners Target “Asylum Clock” in Class Action Lawsuit
- Northwest Immigrant Rights Project Presents: An Evening at Wing Luke, Celebrating 27 Years of Reuniting Families
- Minor Changes to “Secure Communities” Do Not Address Inherent Problems with the Program
- Man Nearly Deported Awaiting Asylum Decision for Sixteen Years
- Northwest Immigrant Rights Project Celebrates 27 Years of Service to Washington State Immigrants and Refugees
- DHS Agrees to Pay \$400,000 to U.S. Citizen, Army Veteran, Unlawfully Detained by Immigration for Over Seven Months
- Federal Court Rules in Favor of NWIRP Client, Reaffirms Protections for Immigrant Survivors of Domestic Violence
- Immigrants Win Right to Representation
- Northwest Immigrant Rights Project & Center for Justice Achieve Settlement in Case of Immigrant Detained Unlawfully
- Northwest Immigrant Rights Project & Partners File First Class-Action Lawsuit On Behalf of Immigrants with Mental Disabilities
- United States v. Arizona racial profiling law
- Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, Legal Voice, Latina/o Bar Association of Washington, National Employment Law Project and ACLU of Washington Unite to Praise Washington Supreme Court Decision Protecting the Integrity of the Court System
- NWIRP to receive national recognition
- NWIRP to Celebrate 25 Years of Serving Immigrant Communities
- NWIRP E.D. Jorge Baron on KUOW 94.9
- NWIRP Wins “Moving Mountains” award from Office of Crime Victims Advocacy
- NWIRP wins City of Seattle Human Rights Award
- Federal Appeals Court Rules For Jamaican Gay Man and NWIRP Client, Finds “Pattern or Practice” of Persecution Against Gay Jamaican Men
- Settlement Reached in Lawsuit Challenging Unreasonable Delays Granting Citizenship
- U.S. Citizen and Army Veteran Spends Nine Months In Detention While U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Denies Detaining Citizens
- NWIRP Expresses Its Opposition to Planned Expansion of DHS Detention Center
- Matt Adams Wins National Excellence in Litigation Award

