

## **EDITORIAL: A reasonable, permanent immigration policy needed**

Moscow-Pullman Daily News (Idaho)

June 29, 2012 Friday

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Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Business News

**Section:** COMMENTARY

**Length:** 434 words

**Byline:** Moscow-Pullman Daily News, Moscow, Idaho

### **Body**

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June 29--Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer and the radical right can claim victory after Monday's Supreme Court ruling on the state's immigration law all they want, but reality portrays a different picture.

The court struck down three-fourths of Arizona's much publicized 2010 statute in a 5-3 ruling, including provisions that made it a crime not to carry immigration papers in the state and a crime for an undocumented immigrant to apply for a job or to work there. The court also struck down a section that gave state officers power to arrest -- without a warrant -- anyone they had "probable cause to believe" had committed a crime that could make that person subject to deportation.

Simply put, the court affirmed that creating and enforcing immigration law is a federal responsibility and not a matter left to the states. States and even local governments would have been allowed to regulate immigration had the ruling gone the other way. Imagine the chaos that would have created.

Unfortunately, the court left one provision -- the so-called show-your-papers rule -- in place, albeit likely for only a short time. The rule requires officers to check the immigration status of anyone they stop, arrest or detain on some other legitimate basis -- if the officer has a "reasonable suspicion" the person is in the country illegally. While the law includes language that supposedly prohibits police from stopping people based on race or national origin, critics say that law opens the door to racial profiling -- count us among them.

Justice Anthony Kennedy, who authored the majority opinion, wrote that until that particular provision is put into operation, the court could not assume it would be applied in a manner that conflicts with federal law.

It won't take long to see the law for what it is.

The simple fact is, most of the illegal immigrants in this country are here looking to work -- mostly doing jobs Americans won't -- and provide a better life for the families here in the states or back in Mexico. Arizona's plan -- or what's left of it -- will likely do little to curb the flow of illegal immigrants and mostly will serve as a harassment to those lawfully here and to immigrants who are productive members of our society, regardless of their status. One good may come of it, however, and that would be spurring national debate and a more comprehensive, reasonable and permanent immigration policy.

- Devin Rokyta, for the editorial board

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## Classification

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**Language:** ENGLISH

**Publication-Type:** Newspaper

**Journal Code:** 1MW

**Acc-No:** 20120629-1MW-EDITORIAL-~~***A-reasonable-permanent-immigration-policy-needed***~~-0629-20120629

**Subject:** ***IMMIGRATION*** (93%); US STATE ***IMMIGRATION*** LAW (90%); DECISIONS & RULINGS (90%); ARRESTS (90%); LITIGATION (90%); ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS (89%); ***IMMIGRATION*** REGULATION & ***POLICY*** (89%); PUBLIC ***POLICY*** (89%); EDITORIALS & OPINIONS (82%); LAW COURTS & TRIBUNALS (78%); REGIONAL & LOCAL GOVERNMENTS (78%); SUPREME COURTS (78%); POLITICAL DETAINEES (78%); PROBABLE CAUSE (78%); POLICE MISCONDUCT (77%); ARREST WARRANTS (76%); RACE & ETHNICITY (75%); EMPLOYMENT SEARCH (70%); CIVIL RIGHTS (69%); RACIAL PROFILING (64%)

**Industry:**

**Person:** JAN BREWER (58%)

**Geographic:** ARIZONA, USA (93%); IDAHO, USA (92%); UNITED STATES (79%)

**Load-Date:** June 29, 2012