



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose M. Serrano

## Senator Serrano Applauds Governor Cuomo's Decision on Secure Communities Program

JOSÉ M. SERRANO June 1, 2011

| ISSUE: **IMMIGRATION**

(Albany, NY)- Senator José M. Serrano (D-Manhattan/Bronx) today applauded Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's decision to suspend New York's participation in the federal Secure Communities program.

"Local law enforcement does not belong in the business of deportation," said Senator Serrano. "Secure Communities is a program with the potential to have a devastating effect, not only on the residents of my district, but on New Yorkers throughout the state. Aside from the civil and human rights implications, S-Comm also threatens the fiscal health of our local police precincts. I commend Governor Cuomo for taking action, and for seriously examining why this program would be a destructive departure from what our state represents."

S-Comm is a federal program that checks fingerprints at local jails against Department of Homeland Security (DHS) database while booking detainees, providing Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) with a constant technological presence at local police stations and jails.

On May 4, 2011 Governor Pat Quinn terminated the S-Comm Memorandum of Agreement with ICE in the State of Illinois. Senator Serrano then led a [sign-on letter](#), alongside Assembly members Brian Kavanaugh and Guillermo Linares, asking Governor Cuomo to also end the program in New York, where ICE statistics show that approximately 80 percent of those detained by ICE through S-Comm were never convicted of a crime. The legislators also stressed that “ S-Comm undermines the critical work we all have undertaken for so long to protect due process, end racial profiling, restore trust in the police, and stop unfair deportations.” A total of 50 legislators signed on to the final letter sent to the Governor.

“For the past 2 years, I have been working with the [Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights](#), other immigration advocates and my colleagues to stop this program from hitting our streets because it would lead to an increase in racial profiling, break up of families, and damage trust between immigrants and police,” continued the Senator. “The impact of deportation throughout New York’s counties is absolutely heartbreaking. Governor Cuomo understands that S-Comm’s dragnet does not work for our state. Given his strong record on immigrant’s rights issues, even as Attorney General, I am confident that he will continue to support immigrants and their families in New York.”

In October 2009, Senator Serrano wrote a [letter to the New York Times](#) explaining why such programs put our communities at risk. However, on May 18, 2010 the New York Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) signed a Memorandum of Agreement with ICE with no public input. In response, Senator Serrano [led a letter to Governor Paterson](#), to which 11 of his Senate colleagues signed on, asking him to rescind the S-Comm MOA.

As of May 2011, S-Comm was in 1315 of 3181 jurisdictions in 42 states (41%). In New York, the program was present in 27 of 62 counties.

###