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**FOR RELEASE ON September 19, 2011**

***“Left Back” Report Documents Negative Impact of SB 1070 on Arizona Youth***

A report released today by the University of Arizona’s Bacon Immigration Law and Policy Program and the Southwest Institute for Research on Women provides a troubling account of the long-term impact of SB 1070 on Arizona’s youth. Despite the fact that the law was passed over one year ago and the majority of its provisions have never gone into effect, this report provides compelling evidence that its mere passage has had lasting adverse effects on the education and safety of young people in Arizona.

The report, *Left Back: The Impact of SB 1070 on Arizona’s Youth*, is based on interviews with over 70 individuals, including young people ages 14-20, parents, and public school personnel. All of the interviews were conducted in the spring of 2011 in Pima County.

“The interviews we conducted depict an already vulnerable community unsettled further by the prospect of massive state immigration enforcement,” said Tomas Lopez, the lead researcher and author of the report. “Some families fled the state in reaction to the bill, and many families struggled with the decision of whether to stay or go. All the turmoil has taken a serious toll on young people in this state.”

In the report, interviewees describe family and community upheaval in the aftermath of the law’s passage, and a corresponding increase in schools of anxiety-related health issues and poorer academic performance. In addition, participants describe how the law’s passage further strained the relationship between immigrant families and public institutions, especially law enforcement. Many of the youth interviewed, including U.S citizens, reported that they would hesitate to call the police out of the fear that police would call immigration enforcement and deport their family members. Parents and teachers described families scared to go out in public fear of police stops.

“The negative economic impact that the passage of SB 1070 has had on the state is well documented. What this report highlights are the less visible impacts of SB 1070,” said Nina Rabin, Associate Clinical Professor at the Rogers College of Law and Director of the Bacon Immigration Law and Policy Program. “Even without going into effect, the law has destabilized and disillusioned many young people in the state, including many U.S. citizens. The harm done to these youth

has implications for the future of the state that have not been adequately recognized in the debate surrounding SB 1070.”

Key findings of the report include:

**Social Disruption:** SB 1070’s passage led a significant number of immigrants to leave and/or debate leaving Arizona. These departures, both anticipated and actual, had a range of consequences for those left behind, including the loss of friends and family, social and academic problems, anxiety-related health effects, and loss of trust in schools. Findings of the report include:

- A school counselor who specializes in working with students who live without their parents reported that the number of students she served nearly doubled after the passage of SB 1070. She attributed much of this leap to the fact that many parents left the state and left their children behind to complete their schooling.
- Several high school personnel shared their suspicions that SB 1070 triggered an increase in teenage marriages for immigration purposes.
- School nurses and health staff for several schools reported an increase in stress-related health problems in their schools in the aftermath of the law’s passage.
- Several schools reported lost funding and resulting job cuts due to dropping school enrollment numbers.

**Institutional Mistrust:** SB 1070’s passage and signing reinforced and deepened an existing mistrust of institutions in the immigrant community. This mistrust reshaped people’s daily routines and reduced their civic and social engagement. It extended not just to law enforcement but also, at least in some cases, to schools as well. Findings of the report include:

- A school principal spoke of having to convince parents his school was safe after receiving several calls from parents in the aftermath of SB 1070 who had heard that there were immigration “sweeps” going on at local schools.
- School parent liaisons discussed decreased participation in their programs.
- A number of youth spoke of their reluctance to contact police when they otherwise might, out of a fear that police would call immigration authorities.

The report is available at [http://www.law.arizona.edu/depts/bacon\\_program](http://www.law.arizona.edu/depts/bacon_program)

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*The Bacon Immigration Law and Policy Program is an interdisciplinary program at the University of Arizona's James E. Rogers College of Law.*

*The Southwest Institute for Research on Women (SIROW) is a regional research and resource center in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Arizona.*