

Appleseed Report Highlights Policy Challenges of Local Police Enforcing Federal Immigration Law

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Appleseed recently released a report, with assistance from WilmerHale and a number of other legal and community advocates, titled: “Forcing Our Blues Into Gray Areas: Local Police and Federal Immigration Enforcement,” containing legal and practical guidelines to combat local anti-immigrant ordinances.

The report, which has received media attention from outlets such as CNN's Lou Dobbs Tonight and from the *Arizona Republic*, found that asking state and local law enforcement to don a second hat as federal immigration officers is poor public policy. It also describes troubling legal and political efforts to involve local police in federal immigration matters. These efforts are opposed by several national law enforcement organizations, dozens of major cities, and civil rights organizations.

The opponents note that most state and local police departments are already under funded and overworked. In addition, police believe that requiring them to enforce federal civil immigration laws makes them less effective public safety officers. When a community fears the police, it becomes less likely that crimes – from domestic violence to human trafficking to possible terrorist activity – will be reported, or that witnesses will come forward.

Appleseed, a nonprofit network of 16 public interest justice centers in the United States and Mexico, uncovers and corrects social injustices through legal, legislative and market-based structural reform. For more information and to view the full report, visit: www.appleseednetwork.org.

WilmerHale Associate Jonathan Thessin contributed to the Report, as well as former WilmerHale lawyers Angela Pegram and Pooja Bhatia.