

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ALABAMA**

HISPANIC INTEREST COALITION)
OF ALABAMA, *et al.*,)
)
Plaintiffs,)

vs.)

ROBERT BENTLEY, in his official capacity)
as Governor of the State of Alabama; *et al.*,)
)
Defendants.)

Case Number:
5:11-cv-02484-SLB

RT. REV. HENRY N. PARSLEY, JR., in his)
official capacity as Bishop of the Episcopal)
Church in the Diocese of Alabama; *et al.*)
)
Plaintiffs,)

vs.)

ROBERT BENTLEY, in his official capacity)
as Governor of the State of Alabama; *et al.*,)
)
Defendants.)

Case Number:
5:11-cv-02736-SLB

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)
)
Plaintiff,)

vs.)

STATE OF ALABAMA; GOVERNOR)
ROBERT J. BENTLEY,)
)
Defendants.)

Case Number:
2:11-cv-02746-SLB

STATE DEFENDANTS' SUPPLEMENTAL BRIEFING
ADDRESSING EQUAL PROTECTION CHALLENGE

This Court has requested supplemental briefing as to the Equal Protection challenge to Section 28 of Act No. 2011-535. Section 28 calls for data collection and reporting in public elementary and secondary schools.

The Equal Protection clause prohibits disparate treatment of persons similarly situated. As the United State Supreme Court has stated,

The Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, § 1, commands that no State shall “deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.” Of course, most laws differentiate in some fashion between classes of persons. The Equal Protection Clause does not forbid classifications. It simply keeps governmental decisionmakers from treating differently persons who are in all relevant respects alike. *F.S. Royster Guano Co. v. Virginia*, 253 U.S. 412, 415 (1920).

Nordlinger v. Hahn, 505 U.S. 1, 10 (1992). Here, there is no disparate treatment at all. On the contrary, the Act is clear and the evidence is undisputed that the same questions are asked with respect to all children at the time of their enrollment. Doc. 82-3. Moreover, it is undisputed that there is no requirement of an answer. *Id.* There is no evidence that any use will be made of the data collected, other than the compiling of statistics requested by the Alabama Legislature. *Id.* Under these circumstances, the Equal Protection clause is not triggered.

Local, state, and federal governments often collect and compile statistical data, including data that relate to gender, race, and ethnicity. Doing so does not

violate the Equal Protection clause, however, when persons are treated the same in the gathering of the data. It is disparate treatment that warrants scrutiny – not simple information gathering. *Nordlinger v. Hahn*, 505 U.S. 1, 10 (1992).

On this point, the State Defendants and the United States are in agreement,¹ and the State Defendants assert the same position advocated by the United States in *Morales v. Daley*, 116 F. Supp. 2d 801 (S.D. Tex. 2000). In that case, recipients of census decennial questionnaires sued the United States Secretary of Commerce and the Director of the United States Bureau of the Census, alleging that the federal government's asking – and demanding answers to – questions about race and medical conditions, among other things, violated their equal protection rights. 116 F. Supp. 2d at 803. In defense of that litigation, the United States denied that the Equal Protection Clause precludes the compilation of demographic data regarding protected groups, and, as summarized by the Court, asserted the following argument:

The government's position is that case law is clear that it is differential treatment, not classification, that implicates equal protection, and cites the opinion *Nordlinger v. Hahn*, 505 U.S. 1, 10, 112 S. Ct. 2326, 120 L. Ed. 2d 1 (1992): “The equal protection clause does not forbid classification. It simply keeps decision makers from treating differently persons who are in all relevant respects alike.”

¹ The motion of the United States challenges Section 28, but only on the grounds that its announced interpretation of *Plyler v. Doe*, 457 U.S. 202 (1982), should be given preemptive effect, not on equal protection grounds. *U.S. doc. 2* at 42.

The government also cites *Caulfield v. Board of Educ. of the City of N.Y.*, 583 F.2d 605 (2nd Cir.1978), which held “the Constitution itself does not condemn the collection of this data,” referring to a local census of the racial and ethnic breakdown of public school employees. *Id.* at 611. *Adarand [Constructors, Inc. v. Pena*, 515 U.S. 200 (1995)] held that equal protection guards against government actions based on race, but does not deal with government collection of data on race.

Morales v. Daley, 116 F. Supp. 2d at 813.

The facts in *Morales* were different from this case. In *Morales*, the plaintiffs faced criminal sanctions if they failed to respond to the federal government’s census form, *id.* at 812, whereas here, the State Defendants are posing their questions without any threat of prosecution for a failure to comply. Even so, in *Morales*, the United States District Court agreed with the United States, and granted the federal defendants summary judgment on all claims, including the Equal Protection claim. The same reasoning applies here – it is disparate treatment by the government that warrants Equal Protection scrutiny, not simple information gathering. *Nordlinger v. Hahn*, 505 U.S. at 10. Therefore, as a distinct and severable section of the Act, Section 28 withstands an Equal Protection challenge.

The *HICA* plaintiffs have argued, however, that the entire Act must be taken into account in order to measure the full effect of Section 28. (*See, e.g.*, doc. 109 at 40, “Section 28 does not exist in a vacuum, and sections 5, 6, and 10 make the reporting of children and families to the immigration authorities mandatory.”) The State Defendants and the *HICA* plaintiffs disagree on what the other sections

of the Act actually require of State employees. Even assuming for a moment that the *HICA* plaintiffs' reading of the Act is the correct one, it does not follow that Section 28 should be enjoined.

According to the *HICA* plaintiffs, when the information gathering under Section 28 is combined with the other sections of the Act, the result will be to deter or "chill students from gaining access to the classroom" – a result that they assert would be unconstitutional under *Plyler*. Doc. 109 at 38. That argument is a novel one, and no support is offered for it, other than the "Dear Colleague" letter from the United States Departments of Justice and Education.

In *Plyler*, the Court did not go so far as the *HICA* plaintiffs suggest. Although the Court held that persons illegally present in the United States are persons under the Equal Protection Clause, 457 U.S. at 210-11, the Court also made it clear that illegal aliens are not a suspect class meriting strict scrutiny. *Id.* at 223; *id.* at 219 n. 19 ("We reject the claim that 'illegal aliens' are a 'suspect class.'"). Illegal aliens are present in this country due to a violation of federal law, which is "not a constitutional irrelevancy." *Id.* at 223; *see also id.* at 219 at n. 19.

Constitutional concerns over the deterrent or chilling effect that a State statute may have arise primarily in the First Amendment context, where the fundamental right of freedom of speech is in jeopardy. *See Reno v. ACLU*, 521 U.S. 844, 871-72 (1997) (lack of notice in law that regulates expression "raises

special First Amendment concerns because of its obvious chilling effect on free speech”). Here, the only case cited by the *HICA* plaintiffs in support of their argument makes it clear that there is no fundamental right at stake: “Public education is not a ‘right’ granted to individuals by the Constitution.” *Plyler*, 457 U.S. at 221 (citing *San Antonio Independent School Dist. v. Rodriguez*, 411 U.S. 1, 35 (1973)). Also, contrary to the *HICA* plaintiffs’ assertions, the holding in *Plyler* addressed the denial of education, not imposing a deterrent effect on a fundamental right. *Plyler*, 457 U.S. at 230.

“Moreover, the existence of a ‘chilling effect,’ even in the area of First Amendment rights, has never been considered a sufficient basis, in and of itself, for prohibiting state action.” *Younger v. Harris*, 401 U.S. 37, 51 (1971). Rather, assuming the analysis applies at all, this Court must weigh the chilling effect of the statute against its plainly legitimate sweep. *Id.* Section 28 – even read as broadly as the *HICA* plaintiffs assert – does not burden a fundamental right.

In sum, Section 28 requires data collection, not disparate treatment, and thus the Equal Protection Clause is not triggered. Even if Equal Protection analysis were warranted here, no more than a rational explanation for Section 28 should be demanded of the State, and the Alabama Legislature has given one in Section 2 of the Act.

Respectfully submitted,

LUTHER STRANGE
(ASB-0036-G42L)
Attorney General

BY:

s/Margaret L. Fleming

Margaret L. Fleming
(ASB-7942-M34M)

Winfield J. Sinclair
(ASB-1750-S81W)

James W. Davis
(ASB-4063-I58J)

Misty S. Fairbanks
(ASB-1813-T71F)

William G. Parker, Jr.
(ASB-5142-I72P)

Assistant Attorneys General

Of counsel:

John C. Neiman, Jr.
Solicitor General
(ASB-8093-O68N)

Prim F. Escalona
Deputy Solicitor General
(ASB-7447-H69F)

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

501 Washington Avenue
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-0152
Telephone: 334.242.7300
Facsimile: 334.242-4891
jneiman@ago.state.al.us
pescalona@ago.state.al.us

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

501 Washington Avenue
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-0152
Telephone: 334.242.7300
Facsimile: 334.353.8440
mfleming@ago.state.al.us
wsinclair@ago.state.al.us
jimdavis@ago.state.al.us
mfairbanks@ago.state.al.us
wparker@ago.state.al.us

Attorneys for Governor Bentley, Attorney General Strange, and District Attorney Broussard

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on August 20, 2011, I electronically filed the foregoing with the Clerk of the Court using the CM/ECF system which will send notification of such filing to the following:

Mary Bauer
Samuel J. Brooke
Andrew H. Turner
SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER
400 Washington Ave.
Montgomery, Alabama 36104
Telephone: 334.956.8200
Facsimile: 334.956.8481
mary.bauer@splcenter.org
sam.brooke@splcenter.org
andrew.turner@splcenter.org

Cecilia D. Wang
Katherine Desormeau
Kenneth J. Sugarman
AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
39 Drumm Street
San Francisco, California 94111
Telephone: 415.343.0775 Wang
415.343.0778 Desormeau
415.343.0777 Sugarman
Facsimile: 415.395.0950
cwang@aclu.org
kdesormeau@aclu.org
irp_ks@aclu.org

Sin Yen Ling
ASIAN LAW CAUCUS
55 Columbus Avenue
San Francisco, California 94111
Telephone: 415.896.1701 ext. 110
Facsimile: 415.896.1702
sinyenL@asianlawcaucus.org

Michelle R. Lapointe
Naomi Tsu
Daniel Werner
SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER
233 Peachtree St., NE, Suite 2150
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
Telephone: 404.521.6700 Lapointe & Werner
404.221.5846 Tsu
Facsimile: 404.221.5857
michelle.lapointe@splcenter.org
naomi.tsu@splcenter.org
daniel.werner@splcenter.org

Erin E. Oshiro
ASIAN AMERICAN JUSTICE CENTER
1140 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 1200
Washington, DC 20036
Telephone: 202.296.2300
Facsimile: 202.296.2318
eoshiro@advancingequality.org

G. Brian Spears
G. BRIAN SPEARS PC
1126 Ponce de Leon Avenue
Atlanta, Georgia 30306
Telephone: 404.872.7086
Facsimile: 404.892.1128
bspears@mindspring.com

Ben E. Bruner
BRUNER LAW FIRM
1904 Berryhill Road
Montgomery, Alabama 36117
Telephone: 334.201.0835
brunerlawfirm@gmail.com

Andre Segura
Elora Mukherjee
Omar C. Jadwat
Lee Gelernt
Michael K.T. Tan
AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION FOUNDATION
125 Broad Street, 18th Floor
New York, New York 10004
Telephone: 212.549.2676 Segura
 212.549.2664 Mukherjee
 212.549.2620 Jadwat
 212.549.2616 Gelernt
 212.549.7303 Tan
Facsimile: 212.549.2654
asegura@aclu.org
emukherjee@aclu.org
ojadwat@aclu.org
lgelernt@aclu.org
mtan@aclu.org

Linton Joaquin
Karen C. Tumlin
Vivek Mittal
Melissa S. Keaney
Shiu-Ming Cheer
NATIONAL IMMIGRATION LAW CENTER
3435 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 2850
Los Angeles, California 90010
Telephone: 213.639.3900
Facsimile: 213.639.3911
joaquin@nilc.org
tumlin@nilc.org
mittal@nilc.org
keaney@nilc.org
cheer@nilc.org

Tanya Broder
NATIONAL IMMIGRATION LAW CENTER
405 14th Street, Suite 1400
Oakland, California 94612
Telephone: 510.663.8282
Facsimile: 510.663.2028
broder@nilc.org

Freddy Rubio
RUBIO LAW FIRM, P.C.
438 Carr Avenue, Suite 1
Birmingham, Alabama 35209
Telephone: 205.443.7858
Facsimile: 205.433.7853
frubio@rubiofirm.com

Herman Watson, Jr.
Eric J. Artrip
Rebekah Keith McKinney
WATSON, MCKINNEY & ARTRIP, LLP
203 Greene Street
Post Office Box 18368
Huntsville, Alabama 35801
Telephone: 256.536.7423
Facsimile: 256.536.2689
watson@watsonmckinney.com
artrip@watsonmckinney.com
mckinney@watsonmckinney.com

Diana S. Sen
LATINOJUSTICE PRLDEF
99 Hudson Street – 14th Floor
New York, New York 10013
Telephone: 212.219.3360
dsen@latinojustice.org

Foster S. Maer
Ghita Schwarz
LATINOJUSTICE PRLDEF
99 Hudson Street – 14th Floor
New York, New York 10013
Telephone: 212.219.3360
fmaer@latinojustice.org
gschwarz@latinojustice.org

Victor Viramontes
Martha L. Gomez
MEXICAN AMERICAN LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND
634 S. Spring Street, 11th Floor
Los Angeles, California 90014
Telephone: 213.629.2512
vviramontes@maldef.org
mgomez@maldef.org

Amy Pedersen
MEXICAN AMERICAN LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND
1016 16th Street, Suite 100
Washington, D.C. 20036
Telephone: 202.293.2828
apedersen@maldef.org

Jessica Karp
National Day Laborer Organizing Network
675 S. Park View Street, Suite B
Loa Angeles, California 90057
Telephone: 213.380.2785
jkarp@ndlon.org

J.R. Brooks, Jr.
Taylor P. Brooks
LANIER FORD SHAVER & PAYNE, P.C.
Post Office Box 2087
Huntsville, Alabama 35804-2087
Telephone: 256.535.1100
Facsimile: 256.533.9322
jrb@lfsp.com
tpb@lanierford.com

Donald B. Sweeney, Jr.
BRADLEY ARANT BOULT CUMMINGS LLP
One Federal Place
1819 Fifth Avenue North, Seventh Floor
Post Office Box 830709
Birmingham, Alabama 35283-0709
Telephone: 205.521.8000
Facsimile: 205.488.6275
dsweeney@babbc.com

C. Lee Reeves, II
Joshua Wilkenfeld
Varu Chilakamarri
U.S. DEPT OF JUSTICE, CIVIL DIVISION
FEDERAL PROGRAMS BRANCH
20 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20530
lee.reeves@usdoj.gov
Joshua.i.wilkenfeld@usdoj.gov
varudhini.chilakamarri@usdoj.gov

Joyce White Vance
Praveen Krishna
US ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
1801 4th Avenue North
Birmingham, AL 35203-2101
joyce.vance@usdoj.gov
praveen.krishna@usdoj.gov

Augusta S. Dowd
WHITE ARNOLD & DOWD PC
2025 3rd Avenue, North, Suite 600
Birmingham, AL 35203
adowd@waadlaw.com

Terry McElheny
DOMINICK FLETCHER YEILDING
WOOD & LLOYD
P.O. Box 1387
Birmingham, AL 35201
tmc@dfy.com

F. Grey Redditt, Jr.
VICKERS RIIS MURRAY & CURRAN LLC
106 St. Francis Street, 11th Floor
P.O. Drawer 2568
Mobile, AL 36652-2568
gredditt@vickersriis.com

John F. Whitaker
WHITAKER MUDD SIMMS LUKE
& WELLS LLC
2001 Park Place North, Suite 400
Birmingham, AL 35203
jwhitaker@wmslawfirm.com

William H. Orrick, III
OFFICE OF IMMIGRATION LITIGATION
USDOJ CIVIL DIVISION
950 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20530-0001
Bill.Orrick@usdoj.gov

Sister Lynn Marie McKenzie
KNIGHT GRIFFITH MCKENZIE
KNIGHT & McLEROY LLP
P.O. Box 930
Cullman, AL 35056
slm@knight-griffith.com

R. Champ Crocker
R. CHAMP CROCKER, LLC
P.O. Box 2700
Cullman, AL 35056-2130
champ@champcrocker.com

and I hereby certify that I have mailed by United States Postal Service the document to the following non-CM/ECF participants:

Nina Perales
MEXICAN AMERICAN LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND
100 Broadway, Suite 300
San Antonio, Texas 78205
Telephone: 210.224.5476
nperales@maldef.org

s/Margaret L. Fleming
Margaret L. Fleming
(ASB-7942-M34M)