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March 11, 2009
SB 381
Room 137 House Judiciary

The Montana Democratic Women's Caucus urges you to please oppose Senate Bill 381, a bill that will have drastic consequences on immigrants and women of color living in Montana.

SB 381 would deputize Montana Peace officers to enforce federal immigration law through training provided by the Department of Homeland Security.

Local law enforcement must foster and maintain trust in immigrant communities and communities of color to do their job, and SB 381 will cause that trust to erode if passed. If our peace officers are required to enforce civil violations of federal immigration law, people in these communities will stop reporting crimes and stop coming forward as witnesses. And this erosion of trust will have a chilling effect for survivors of domestic violence as they attempt to navigate a local law enforcement system that have become acting agents of federal immigration enforcement.

All people in Montana, regardless of where they have come from, deserve to live in a safe environment. We urge you to please oppose SB 381.