ACLU FOUNDATION
AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

CAMPAIGN
AGAINST
RACIAL
PROFILING

RACIAL PROFILING ALERT

212-549-2500 / www.aclu.org/profiling   **TO COMPLAIN: TOLL-FREE HOTLINE 1-877-634-5454 or online**

Highlights in the Fight Against Racial Profiling!

- **Racial profiling is a nationwide problem.** Stories have been reported across the country-- not only by everyday citizens, but doctors, lawyers, judges, legislators, police/military officers, and celebrities.

- **People believe racial profiling is a problem.** Polls show that a majority of both African Americans and whites believe that racial profiling is "widespread."

- **Racial profiling is based on false assumptions.** False #1: People of color are most of the drug users and sellers. Government studies show that each racial group uses and sells in proportion to their percentages in the population (for example, whites are ~70% of the population and ~70% of all users and sellers; blacks are ~15% of the population and ~15% of all users and sellers).

  False #2: People of color commit "most" crime. Corporate and white collar crime (the savings and loan--"S&L", accounting --"Enron" and subprime frauds) are not investigated or prosecuted as seriously as "street crime" even though they cost victims and taxpayers billions of dollars more.

- **Racial profiling is ineffective.** "Hit rate" studies of traffic stops and searches show that people of color, including African Americans and Latinos, are no more likely, and very often less likely, to have drugs or weapons than whites.

- **Data points to the problem.** Studies around the country have shown large differences in the rate of stops and searches for African Americans and Latinos, and often, Indians (Native Americans) and Asians, even though these groups are less likely than whites to have drug or weapon contraband.

- **Racial profiling causes resentment in the targeted communities.** It makes them less likely to cooperate in investigations. Independent stop/search data collection & reporting show openness and build trust.

- **Data collection is becoming common practice.** Racial stop and search data has now been collected by 22 states, 4000 cities, including over half of the 50 largest, and 6000 police departments.

- **Data collection cost is minimal.** Departments with in-vehicle computer terminals (MDT's) will have almost no additional costs (information can be entered on the screen); those without MDT's can use scanner card systems. Departments only pay for cost of paper cards, collect the cards and turn them into the analyzing agency, usually a college, for scanning. Scanner software and hardware (only one unit needed) costs under $10,000.

- **Video cameras are not enough.** While we recommend cameras as an important law enforcement tool that protects citizens and police, they do not always record the reason for the stop or the driver's race, and can be turned off by officers. Also, it is expensive and time-consuming to review the videotapes to collect stop and search data.

- **There ought to be a (federal) law.** Congressman John Conyers and Senator Russ Feingold have re-introduced the End Racial Profiling Act, which bans racial profiling, requires and funds data collection and reporting, requires independent complaint and officer discipline procedures, allows withholding of federal funds for police non-compliance, and gives victims the right to sue.

- **Data collection is an important supervisory tool.** "You can't manage what you don't measure."