



The National Voice of the Hispanic Legal Community.

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Border Vigilantes Represent America At Its Worst

(Washington, DC—March 27, 2006) — The Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA) denounces the so-called Minuteman Project.

The president of the Minuteman group recently called for a one thousand-person “Minuteman Civil Defense Corp” to patrol a small section of the Arizona - Mexico border to take place during the month of April. The purported objective of the patrol is to stop trafficking in illegal aliens. In a press release on the subject, the president of the Minuteman group stated, “all illegal entries would be treated as enemies of the state and will be detained and held in contempt of invading the United States of America.” President George W. Bush has expressed opposition to the group, labeling them “border vigilantes.”

The renewed call for action by these border vigilantes is a disgrace to America. The mentality of harassment, confrontation, and detention of persons within the United States without due process and the safeguards afforded under the U.S. Constitution is an affront to democracy. It is a form of racism that represents America at its worst. Acting under self-imposed color of law, the vigilantes are no more than street thugs engaging in activities whose sole measurable result is increased resentment, discrimination, and potential for violence toward the Latino community.

“This fringe group should not be allowed to further a racist agenda under color of law,” said Nelson A. Castillo, HNBA National President, and an immigrant to the United States. “That they compare themselves to the true Minutemen of the Revolutionary War is beyond ironic. These vigilantes are neither vigilant, nor brave and they should pack their lawn chairs, lunch sacks, and guns and go home to learn greater respect for the tenets that make America great.”

The HNBA is a non-profit, national association representing the interests of over 27,000 Hispanic American attorneys, judges, law professors, law graduates, law students, legal administrators, and legal assistants or paralegals in the United States and Puerto Rico. Its continuing mission: to improve the study, practice, and administration of justice for all Americans by ensuring the meaningful participation of Hispanics in the legal profession.

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