

Tracking the Hate behind Measure 105

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

groups throughout the U.S., including the Ku Klux Klan.

To offset that effort, Oregonians United Against Profiling, which includes the American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon, launched a kickoff campaign on July 28 where more than 500 volunteers went door-to-door and canvassed in more than a half dozen communities “from Astoria to Medford and Bend to Portland” to spread the word to “Vote No on 105.”

“We’re working hard to make sure that our friends and neighbors to vote no on Measure 105 and we went to different businesses across the state to gain support and put up our posters to show that we won’t allow this law to pass,” Marquez said.

It all started than 40 years ago, in 1977 in the Hi Ho Restaurant in Independence, Ore. A local police officer and three Polk County deputies came into the café and confronted four Hispanic men about their citizenship status. A deputy grabbed the arm of one of the men, Delmiro Trevino, made him stand up and interrogated him in front of other customers. Trevino, of Mexican descent, was a U.S. citizen and said he was humiliated. He later filed a class action suit about the incident, which evolved into Oregon’s sanctuary law.

Ten years later, Trevino’s attorney, who by then was Rep. Rocky Barilla, introduced a bill that became the nation’s first sanctuary law. It passed with almost unanimous bi-partisan support in July



PHOTO BY DOUG BROWN

Activists kick-off a campaign with Oregonians United Against Profiling, which includes the American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon, to oppose Ballot Measure 105 in the November General Election that would repeal Oregon’s sanctuary law, passed 31 years ago because of racial profiling.

1987.

Ironically, Barilla told Oregon Public Broadcasting last year, the statute was not intended to be a sanctuary law, but “was meant to protect local city resources from using them to supplant federal spending,” he said.

But because local government agreed and supported his bill, it became law.

Civil rights leader Ramon Ramirez of Woodburn, according to the ACLU Oregon website, says he remembers what it was like before the sanctuary law was put in place.

“Before Oregon had this law, I saw immigration agents, aided

by local police, busting down doors and grabbing people off the street, with no way of knowing their immigration status,” he said. “My friends and neighbors, including U.S. citizens, were being harassed by local police demanding to see their papers. Passing this law made things a lot better. Throwing it out would turn

back the clock and open the door to more profiling.”

Ron Louie, retired Hillsboro police chief, said the law has helped increase trust in law enforcement, which is critical for officers who rely on community members to tell them when they are victims of crime.

“Our Oregon law provides clear

guidance to local law enforcement officers on how to handle complicated immigration issues,” he said. “It creates a bright line that says local police should be focusing on local problems.”

Marquez said the Vote No on 105 campaign has heavy support from both large and small businesses, including Nike, Columbia Sportswear, the Portland Timbers and the Portland Thorns, the Portland Business Alliance, Living Room Realty, Henkels Law LLC, and other organizations, including the National Immigration Law Center, the Oregon Education Association, Service Employees International Union, The AFL-CIO, Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste, Northwest Treeplanters, and Farmworkers United.

A complete list of about 100 business supporters can be found at orunited.org, where people can also sign up to volunteer, make donations, register their support, and be notified of future events to combat Measure 105.

“From here on it’s going to be a grassroots campaign, with concerned people coming together and talking to our neighbors and friends about why it’s important that we keep our current law,” Marquez said.

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