



SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION, CTW, CLC

For Immediate Release

## Daimler and its shareholders urged to seek repeal of Alabama's racial profiling law

### U.S. labor files complaint with United Nations' ILO

WASHINGTON, D.C./BERLIN, 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2012. – A delegation representing civil rights and labor leaders will be in Berlin, Germany, on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> April, to urge Daimler AG and its shareholders to seek repeal of Alabama's racial profiling law, H.B. 56. The law denies fundamental civil rights to immigrants and minorities and impacts trade union activities between and among union members, inhibiting freedom of association, according to a complaint being filed today with the International Labor Organization (ILO) of the United Nations by Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and its affiliate, the Southern Regional Joint Board of Workers United.

Daimler, which produces Mercedes-Benz vehicles in Alabama, is a founding signatory of the United Nations Global Compact, which calls on businesses to "make sure they are not complicit in human rights abuses." Until now, Daimler and Mercedes-Benz have been silent on this law which violates human rights, even though one of its German executives was arrested under the Alabama law.

The complaint, submitted to the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association alleges the U.S. government's "inability to act promptly and decisively to put in place a national policy related to immigration – attentive to international guarantees related to individual workers' rights as well as to the rights of trade unions with immigrant members – has given the space to individual states to enact laws that are in flagrant violation of international norms."

"The fact that the violations in this case are the work of an individual State, does not insulate the U.S. from responsibility," said SEIU International President Mary Kay Henry and International Secretary-Treasurer Eliseo Medina, in a letter that accompanied the complaint to the ILO. "Furthermore, the efforts of the executive branch of the U.S. government to challenge the law are simply insufficient to protect these workers and our trade union now, or into the future, without a deeper commitment to federal legislative reform."

Only federal legislative reform can stop the proliferation of laws like Alabama's H.B. 56 that penalize unauthorized immigrants who apply for jobs or work; fine anyone who transports or harbors an undocumented immigrant; and prevent courts from enforcing contracts that involve a person without legal status, the complaint states. Such provisions jeopardize the ability of workers to form and join trade unions and to bargain collectively.

Documents and videos related to the campaign against the Alabama law can be found at: [repealhb56.org](http://repealhb56.org) and <http://seiu.me/de-2012>

SEIU ([www.seiu.org](http://www.seiu.org)) represents more than 2.1 million members across the U.S. Workers United represents 150,000 workers in the South, including Alabama. SEIU and Workers United are parties to a lawsuit filed by civil rights and labor organizations seeking to strike down H.B. 56.

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