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Once again Arizona stands poised to set the right example for America. I implore that you embrace and **Vote for the Civil Rights Initiative** to ensure equal opportunity for all. As firefighters we had to take our case all the way to the Supreme Court to ensure that our leaders were selected based on their knowledge, skills, and abilities. The belief that citizens should be reduced to racial statistics is flawed and only divides people who don't wish to be divided along racial lines.

While diversity is an important goal, it has become a code word for a quota system that thrives on mediocrity. Especially in public safety the public has the right to know that the men and women who serve were selected fairly and equitably. There are no due overs on the scene of an emergency. Officials must not only provide appropriate direction to safely mitigate the incident, they also must ensure that their members are trained and competent to answer the next alarm. Moreover this initiative leaves in place all of the protections against discrimination. No one should be given an unfair advantage. Low expectations are also a form of bigotry that results in low performance holding individuals back and harming all races. No one should obtain a position or contract under a cloud of suspicion it only sets them up for failure. Anyone regardless of race can succeed in America.

Achievement is neither limited nor determined by race but by skills, dedication, commitment, and character. Arizona has an opportunity to ensure equal opportunity, by voting for "**The Civil Rights Initiative**". Chief Justice Roberts stated "The Way to Stop Discrimination on the Basis of Race Is to Stop Discriminating on the Basis of Race."

Frank Ricci

BETZAIDA RAMOS
NOTARY PUBLIC
My Commission Expires March 31, 2012