

# Police Speak Out Against Arizona Immigration Law

## Police Chiefs and Sheriffs in Arizona

### **Arizona Association of Chiefs of Police**

“The provisions of the bill remain problematic and will negatively affect the ability of law enforcement agencies across the state to fulfill their many responsibilities in a timely manner. While AACOP recognizes immigration as a significant issue in Arizona, we remain strong in our belief that it is an issue most appropriately addressed at the federal level.”

([“AACOP Statement on Senate Bill 1070”](#), April 21, 2010)

### **Sheriff Clarence Dupnik, Pima County, AZ**

“[I have] no intention of complying. I think the law is one of the worst pieces of legislation I’ve seen in 50 years. [It’s] racist, disgusting and unnecessary...[There will be racial profiling.] If I tell my people to go out and look for A, B, and C, they're going to do it. They'll find some flimsy excuse like a tail light that's not working as a basis for a stop, which is a bunch of baloney.”

([“The Dupnik rebellion: Pima’s top cop says ‘no’ to SB 1070.”](#) KGUN-TV, April 27, 2010)

### **Chief Jack Harris, Phoenix, AZ**

“I don't really believe that this law is going to do what the vast majority of Americans and Arizonans want, and that is to fix the immigration problem. This law adds new problems for local law enforcement.”

([“Arizona police chief criticizes immigration law,”](#) Reuters, April 30, 2010)

### **Chief Roberto Villaseñor, Tucson, AZ**

“We are in a tenuous position as law enforcement. No matter which way we go, there are lawsuits in the wings. The ones who are going to get beaten up on this most are the law enforcement agencies.”

([“Arizona law on immigration puts police in tight spot,”](#) *Washington Post*, April 30, 2010)

### **Sheriff Bill Pribil, Coconino County, AZ**

“At this point, I see it interesting on the one hand counties are being eviscerated by the state Legislature when it comes to budget ... and yet they continue to find ways for us to spend our precious resources on programs we can't support.”

([“Proposed new Arizona immigration bills draw concern,”](#) *Arizona Daily Sun*, March 16, 2010)

### **Chief Frank Milstead, Mesa, AZ**

“[The law will require] people to prove their innocence [before being charged with a crime].”

([“Mesa police unsure of new immigration bill’s impact,”](#) *Arizona Republic*, April 14, 2010)

**Chief Jack Harris, Phoenix, AZ**

“When you get a law that leads a state down this path, where the enforcement is targeted to a particular segment of the population, it’s very hard not to profile.”

([“Ariz. immigration law divides police across US,”](#) Associated Press, May 17, 2010)

**Police Chiefs from Around the Nation**

**Chief Art Acevedo, Austin, TX**

“During his tenure as chief of police in Mesa, George Gascon, now the chief in San Francisco, focused the efforts of his police officers on the reduction of crime through the COMPSTAT process — the use of historical and real-time crime data to deploy resources and fight crime — and resisted calls to have his officers engage in immigration enforcement. On the other end of the spectrum, Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio ordered his deputies to aggressively conduct immigration enforcement operations. Arpaio publicly chided Gascon for refusing to adopt his approach. Results of these divergent approaches speak for themselves: During the same three-year period, Mesa residents experienced a 30 percent reduction in crime and Maricopa County residents were subjected to a marked increase in crime, especially violent crime.”

([“Measure is bound to distract officers from fighting serious crime, deter noncitizens from assisting with enforcement,”](#) *Austin American-Statesman*, May 1, 2010)

“Women subjected to rape and domestic abuse will once again be hesitant to come forward; families robbed of their life savings will remain silently quivering in the confines of their homes; and neighbors of known human and drug traffickers will remain quiet. Ultimately, we will all suffer from Arizona's foolhardy and shortsighted approach to dealing with illegal immigration. Arizona has essentially declared open season for criminals to target illegal immigrants and their families.”

([“Measure is bound to distract officers from fighting serious crime, deter noncitizens from assisting with enforcement,”](#) *Austin American-Statesman*, May 1, 2010)

**Chief Robert Davis, San Jose, CA, president of the Major Cities Chiefs Association**

“[Regarding the Arizona legislation, the Major Cities Chiefs Association stands by its policy that] immigration enforcement by local police would likely negatively effect and undermine the level of trust and cooperation between local police and immigrant communities.”

([“Arizona immigration law creates rift,”](#) *USA Today*, April 25, 2010)

**Chief George Gascon, San Francisco, CA**

“It would have a negative impact on community policing and public safety. Neighbors [in Hispanic neighborhoods] would be more hesitant to report crimes if they think their neighbors and family are here without authority.”

([“Dolan bucks immigration checks,”](#) *Raleigh News & Observer*, April 22, 2010)

“Just because it is in Arizona doesn’t mean it’s likely to remain there.”

([“Arizona’s Effort to Bolster Local Immigration Authority Divides Law Enforcement,”](#) *New York Times*, April 22, 2010)

**Chief Richard Myers, Colorado Springs, CO**

“It’s a very troubling bill. It’s wrong to racially profile. We try to profile human behavior. I will not accept that this is the responsibility of local police departments.”

([“Gascon, other chiefs blast immigration bill,”](#) *East Valley Tribune*, April 21, 2010)

“Right now, Arizona is ground zero with the extreme challenges of immigration and the absence of federal resources necessary to do the job, but my state is connected to Arizona. If this happens in Arizona, it won’t be long for it to become a hot button issue here.”

([“Arizona immigration bill: Police chiefs criticize measure,”](#) *Arizona Republic*, April 22, 2010)

**Sheriff Bill Haley, Washoe County (Reno), NV**

“Any unfunded mandate, any direction by the federal government, that I use my precious resources to affect a federal outcome would affect my ability to do what the taxpayers in my county have asked me to do, and that is to keep them safe from criminals.”

([“3 police leaders oppose Arizona immigration law,”](#) *Arizona Republic*, May 18, 2010)

**Chief J. Thomas Manger, Montgomery County, MD**

“Immigration law is as complicated, if not more, than tax law. I don’t want one of my officers stopping somebody for running a stop sign and then spending the next two hours trying to determine if they’re here illegally or not.”

([“Immigrant checks could hush witnesses, Montgomery police chief says,”](#) *Washington Post*, May 17, 2010)

**Former Chief Arturo Venegas, Sacramento, CA; Project Director, Law Enforcement Engagement Initiative**

“[The law] essentially legislates racial profiling, putting police in the middle of the train tracks to face an onslaught of civil-rights violations lawsuits. No other law in the country allows citizens to sue a government agency for not arresting enough people.”

([“Gascon says immigration bill ‘catastrophic,’”](#) *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 22, 2010)

**Additional Law Enforcement Officials in Arizona**

**Sergeant Brian Soller, Mesa, AZ; President, Mesa Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police**

“What’s going to happen is you’re going to fear the police...[immigrants are] going to shy away from us instead of coming forward with information.”

([“Unfunded mandate?”](#), KPNX-TV, April 18, 2010)

**Sgt. Russ Charlton, Tucson, AZ**

"We're way too busy [to question anyone suspected to be here illegally]. We don't have enough officers on the street to look for other stuff like that. If they're not doing anything, they're just being normal people. Why would I do that?"

([“Arizona law on immigration puts police in tight spot,”](#) *Washington Post*, April 30, 2010)

**Officer David Salgado, Phoenix, AZ**

*Officer Salgado is suing the state of Arizona to stop the law from being implemented.*

“Before the signing of this bill, citizens would wave at me. Now they’re afraid to make eye contact.”

([“Ariz. immigration law divides police across US,”](#) Associated Press, May 17, 2010)

**Officer Martin Escobar, Tucson, AZ**

*Officer Escobar is suing the state of Arizona to stop the law from being implemented.*

“[The law will] seriously impede law enforcement investigations and facilitate the successful commission of crimes. [There are] no race-neutral criteria or basis to suspect or identify who is lawfully in the United States.”

([“Arizona officer files lawsuit against immigration law,”](#) *Catholic Online*, April 30, 2010)

**Assistant Chief Mike Denney, Mesa, AZ**

“What does it do to our already limited resources? Officers are going to have to spend a lot of time determining whether someone is or is not in the country illegally.”

([“Mesa police unsure of new immigration bill’s impact,”](#) *Arizona Republic*, April 14, 2010)

**Sergeant Brian Soller, Mesa, AZ; President, Mesa Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police**

“If we’re getting hammered with calls, is a misdemeanor [trespassing by an illegal immigrant] more important than a stabbing or shooting? No. The problem with this law is that it’s an unfunded mandate and could eat up a lot of manpower and cost a lot of money.”

([“Police unions: Immigration bill taxes officers,”](#) *East Valley Tribune*, April 18, 2010)