

Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

Joe Arpaio, Sheriff



Date: July 2, 2007

ARPAIO WINS BACK GAMBLING CASE

MARICOPA COUNTY TAXPAYERS SHOULD SEE BIG WINDFALL

(Phoenix, AZ) It was a brief but tough fight that Maricopa County Sheriff Arpaio waged and won today to the benefit of Maricopa County taxpayers.

Last week, Attorney General Terry Goddard put millions of Maricopa County taxpayers' dollars at stake when he decided to divide the criminal and civil portions of the Internet gambling investigation conducted by Sheriff Arpaio's office. Goddard, who earlier had conflicted out the entire case because of an ongoing investigation into members of his Office by the Sheriff, returned the criminal part of the case to the Sheriff but, for reasons unknown, gave the lucrative civil asset forfeiture portion to the Pima County Attorney.

Those forfeitures could be worth up to \$30 million under the RICO statutes (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) - money that would be used to fight crime here in Maricopa County.

Arpaio argued that Maricopa County taxpayers should be the sole beneficiaries of the investigation's assets since the entire investigation occurred here.

"It would have been terribly wrong for taxpayers here to incur the expensive criminal litigation costs while Pima County taxpayers enjoyed the lucrative forfeiture proceeds," Arpaio says.

Late Friday, the Pima County Attorney's Office succumbed to Arpaio's request and returned all documents to the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office. Arpaio immediately asked County Attorney Andrew Thomas to oversee both parts of the case.

Thomas agreed and said, "I appreciate the Sheriff's confidence in my Office and promise to be equally aggressive in pursuing both parts of this Internet gambling crime syndicate case on behalf of Maricopa County taxpayers."

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News Release

100 West Washington, Suite 1900, Phoenix, Arizona 85003

Phone: (602) 876-1801 Fax: (602) 258-2081

Media Pager: (602) 238-8097

E-mail: SheriffsMediaRequests@MCSO.Maricopa.Gov