

Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

Joe Arpaio, Sheriff



Date: April 19, 2009

ARPAIO HAD NO INTENTION OF APPEARING BEFORE MONDAY'S SENATE PANEL ON ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

(Phoenix, AZ) Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio said today that he never intended to appear before Senators John McCain and Joe Lieberman as they hold hearings on Monday, April 20th inside Mayor Gordon's conference room at Phoenix City Hall on the topic of illegal immigration and border violence.

Prior to any knowledge about the Senate hearings coming to Phoenix, Arpaio had accepted an invitation to be a guest on Comedy Central's "Colbert Report" where he will discuss illegal immigration enforcement with the political pundit.

Although the Sheriff had already accepted the invitation to appear on the comedy show, he decided several days ago that to maintain the integrity of the hearings, he would instead file a statement with the panel outlining his illegal immigration policies and enforcement programs rather than appear in person. That statement is now with the committee overseeing the hearings.

"A written statement by this Sheriff is a far better alternative for everyone involved in these hearings considering today's political climate" Arpaio said.

These days Sheriff Arpaio is constantly hounded by numerous critics and open-border activists who protest against him daily both outside his office and next door in front of Phoenix City Hall. News conferences criticizing Arpaio are also routinely held there by elected officials and others who disagree with Arpaio's philosophies. In fact, the political debate has become so heated lately that even the controversial Reverend Al Sharpton is reportedly coming to Phoenix to demand that Arpaio step down as Sheriff.

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Given these distractions, Arpaio was concerned that a personal appearance before Monday's Senate panel in City Hall would be far too disruptive and ultimately disrespectful to the process.

Tomorrow, the senators will hear from such officials as Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon, Phoenix Police Chief Jack Harris, and others who share very different views from Sheriff Arpaio about illegal immigration enforcement.

"The irony is that all of us will be talking about the same thing, just to vastly different audiences" Arpaio said. The Sheriff departed for New York City this morning. "The Colbert Report" featuring the Sheriff airs Monday night, April 20, 2009 at 8:30PM.

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