

Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

Joe Arpaio, Sheriff



Date: January 21, 2010

SHERIFF'S DEPUTIES ARREST 29 ILLEGAL ALIENS ENTERING U.S. AHEAD OF STORM

HEAD OF I.C.E. COMES TO PHOENIX – DEFENDS ARPAIO'S ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION 287(g) JAIL PROGRAM

(Maricopa County, AZ) Just in front of the massive rain, Sheriff's deputies find 29 illegal aliens trying to make their way into the country in three separate load vehicles. Twenty six were arrested on state felony human smuggling charges and three were turned over to ICE officials for possible deportation, Sheriff Joe Arpaio says.

The illegal aliens were found by the Sheriff's human smuggling unit during three different traffic stops, all on highways in the north part of the county.

The arrests come at the same time that national Director of ICE, John Morton, is in Phoenix and only days after a 10,000 person protest against Arpaio's illegal immigration efforts took place in the downtown area.

Published reports today indicate that Morton is actually defending Arpaio's 287(g) program in the Sheriff's jails where already over 274,000 people have been investigated by Sheriff's officers. Over 31,000 of those investigated have been identified as being in the country illegally making them ineligible for release onto the streets of our community. Morton says that local law enforcement "cannot turn a blind eye to people who are here illegally even if they have no criminal record."

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Morton's statements are a bit perplexing to Sheriff Arpaio given that it is Morton's agency that was responsible for partially dismantling Arpaio's 287G program when he took away the authority of over 100 deputies to enforce illegal immigration laws by acting as immigration agents on the street of Maricopa County.

"It is a little strange that Director Morton agrees with my zero tolerance policy in the jails yet disagrees with the crime suppression operations we conduct on the streets."

Despite the fact that in October of 2009, Morton revoked some of the Sheriff's authority regarding his fight against illegal immigration, Arpaio's office remains the only law enforcement agency to enforce all aspects of the state and federal immigration laws. Just since October, 215 people have been arrested on immigration charges.

Arpaio reiterates his unwillingness to be deterred in this fight and in fact has plans to implement a new plan soon which will augment his fight to reduce the number of illegal aliens entering the county. ##

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