

Judicial Watch Statement Regarding Phoenix P. D. Reversal of Illegal Alien Sanctuary Policy

<http://www.borderfirereport.net/latest/judicial-watch-statement-regarding-phoenix-p.-d.-reversal-of-illegal-alien-sanctuary-policy.html>



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Washington, DC

Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton issued the following statement today in response to Phoenix, Arizona Police Chief Jack Harris's changes to the city's Operations Order 1.4.3, which had prohibited police officers from inquiring about the immigration status of individuals and from cooperating with federal immigration officials. Under the new policy, everyone arrested in Phoenix, America's fifth largest city, will be questioned about his or her citizenship.

Facing a Judicial Watch investigation and a potential lawsuit, Chief Harris announced changes to the Operations Order on Thursday, May 22, 2008. Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon announced on December 3, 2007 that he no longer supported the policy, and commissioned an illegal immigration expert panel to study the policy and to recommend changes. The new policies go much further than the panel's flawed recommendations and try to address concerns of Judicial Watch and the Phoenix law enforcement community.

"There is no question Judicial Watch's investigation and the threat of a lawsuit prompted both Mayor Gordon's sudden change of heart on illegal immigration enforcement and Chief Harris's complete revision of Operations Order 1.4.3. Gordon's and Harris's sanctuary policies have severely damaged business owners and taxpayers who are the lifeblood of Phoenix. We are pleased the mayor and the police chief finally have tried to address the illegal immigration crisis.

"Chief Harris's new regulations better address the procedural realities and dangers faced by officers on patrol who confront illegal aliens on a daily basis. The new police immigration policies are a step forward, but still fall short of what federal law requires – which is the unfettered ability of any local Phoenix police officer to make inquiries with Immigration Custom Enforcement about an individual's immigration status.

"Judicial Watch will continue to monitor the implementation of Chief Harris's new policies. As the new police immigration policies seem to remain at odds with federal law, a Judicial Watch lawsuit may still be on the table."

For the past ten months, Judicial Watch has worked with businesses, community and law enforcement leaders to bring about a change in Phoenix's status as an illegal alien "sanctuary city." This work included presenting testimony and information to the mayoral panel that considered changes to police policies. Judicial Watch is in the midst of a comprehensive investigative and public education campaign concerning the City of Phoenix's immigration enforcement policies. Judicial Watch's investigative team, led by Chris Farrell interviewed dozens of people, filed numerous public records act requests, and analyzed public documents.