

In Phoenix, too many chiefs and not enough law enforcement

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Legal group **Judicial Watch** is suing the City of Phoenix to release any documents relating to "communications between Police Chief Jack Harris and the Obama administration" regarding the Justice Department's lawsuit challenging Arizona's new immigration law.

The public interest watchdog group says that Chief Harris' **sworn declaration** that enforcement of the law "will have a negative effect on ... community policing efforts" was attached to the Justice Department's motion seeking a preliminary injunction to prevent provisions of the new law from going into effect. In July, a federal judge granted the injunction, putting parts of the law on hold.

However, in May the Phoenix City Council voted to stay neutral in the legal battle, even though violent drug cartels have turned their city into the second "kidnapping capital" of the world, where the amputation of victims' hands and crushing of their fingers is considered business as usual.

Judicial Watch cited the city's administrative regulations forbidding employees to engage in "activities that are inconsistent, incompatible, in conflict with, or harmful to their duties" as the basis for request of the documents, which to date have still not been turned over.

"There's obvious collusion between Chief Harris and the Justice Department," Judicial watch president Tom Fitton told *The Examiner*. "The community has a right to know why their chief of police took a stance on this litigation when their elected representatives said they were remaining neutral... As a city employee, Chief Harris was required to stay out of it."

The Phoenix Law Enforcement Association supports SB1070, saying the new state law gives its rank-and-file union members **another tool to combat illegal immigration**.

Last October, Fitton's group also sued the Phoenix Police Pension Board for what it claims are illegal pension payments to Harris, who wears the police chief's uniform and identified himself as such in the SB 1070 filing even though he officially retired as chief in 2007.

"He's getting a \$90,000-a-year pension for a job he currently holds," Fitton told *The Examiner*. "We think that's illegal."