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## **National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence Calls Arizona Ex-Sheriff's Actions "Unpardonable"**

Washington, D.C. — The National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence (NTF)\* has grave concerns about the message the pardon of former Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio sends to survivors of violence as well as law enforcement officers throughout the country. A pardon for Sheriff Arpaio undermines the rule of law, denigrates respect for civil rights, and erodes the confidence of marginalized communities that they can turn to law enforcement for help. It also is an affront to those in law enforcement who are dedicated to serving and protecting their communities within the confines of the laws and the Constitution of the United States.

Arpaio, defeated last fall in his reelection effort, was found by a federal judge to have abused his power as a law enforcement official. He engaged in systematic racial profiling and intimidation of the Latino community in Maricopa County, of which Phoenix is the largest city. He was ultimately convicted of criminal contempt for disobeying a federal court order to stop the unconstitutional practice of detaining individuals based solely on suspicion about their immigration status. Additionally, it is well documented that he ignored hundreds of sex crime cases—including many alleged child abuse cases—and failed to go after tens of thousands of active warrants in the county, instead choosing to divert critical resources and personnel to illegally detaining Latinos in violation of their civil rights.

This pardon sends a clear message to other persons who share Arpaio's animus toward Latinos, immigrants, and members of other marginalized communities – they are free to engage in racial profiling and otherwise abuse their power. A criminal conviction for failing to obey a federal court's order to uphold the rights provided for under the Constitution is meaningless when immediately pardoned, especially when a sentence was yet to be determined by the Court. With this pardon, those sworn to uphold and enforce the law have received a clear message that they can now violate civil rights with impunity. This undermines community trust in law enforcement and makes all of our communities less safe.

A recent [survey](#) completed by more than 700 advocates and attorneys from around the country revealed heightened uncertainty and fear among immigrant survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. When victims can no longer turn to the police to protect them or are afraid to bear witness to crime within the criminal justice system, victimization continues and public safety erodes. Local police departments know that when all individuals can report dangerous situations and seek protection from violence without the fear of being deported and separated from their families, safety increases for everyone.

We need to continue standing side-by-side with immigrant survivors of violence to make their voices heard, so that they and all of our communities can be safe. The NTF urges cities and counties to strengthen policies that foster community trust among immigrant communities, marginalized populations, and local law enforcement and that protect the constitutional rights of all.

For more information or questions, contact Rosie Hidalgo <[rhidalgo@casadeesperanza.org](mailto:rhidalgo@casadeesperanza.org)>

References:

[Victims Wonder why Arpaio let sex abuse cases languish](#)

[ICE Plans to Start Destroying Records of Immigrant Abuse, Including Sexual Assault and Deaths in Custody](#)

[The Arpaio pardon displays Trump's disdain for the rule of law](#)

[Why Did Trump Pardon Arpaio](#)

[Trump abuses his power in the cause of bigotry](#)

[What you need to know about former Arizona sheriff Joe Arpaio's record on illegal immigration](#)

\*The NTF comprises national, state, tribal, territorial and local leadership organizations and advocates working to end domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. As such, we advocate with and for survivors of violence, including those from immigrant and marginalized communities.