Executive Order 2008-06

Combating the Use of "Drop Houses" to Facilitate Human Smuggling

WHEREAS, recent human smuggling investigations have identified a disturbing trend involving the purchase and rental of Arizona homes for use as human drop houses; and

WHEREAS, residential properties, combined with stolen vehicles, illegal money transfers and fraudulent documents, are all criminal tools of the human smuggling trade, necessary to facilitate the movement of illegal immigrants to their target destinations throughout the state and country; and

WHEREAS, as law enforcement intelligence identifies these components of this lucrative criminal activity, counter-measures must be developed to disrupt the use of these structures for this purpose; and

WHEREAS, aggressive, zero-tolerance enforcement philosophies and investigations have yielded significant results in disrupting the criminal use of stolen vehicles, money transfers and fraudulent identification; and

WHEREAS, in just the last year, state and federal investigations into human smuggling and illegal immigration have identified over 156 drop houses in Maricopa County alone, containing over 3,000 undocumented aliens, many of whom had been subject to kidnapping, extortion, assault or robbery by their smugglers, and all of whom have been returned to their country of origin or are the subject of pending deportation or criminal justice proceedings; and

WHEREAS, this disturbing trend requires a coordinated effort among state agencies to identify illegal use of residential properties, disrupt "shell" realty companies that specialize in establishing drop houses to facilitate human smuggling, and share information to raise awareness among the real estate and rental home industry;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Janet Napolitano, Governor of the State of Arizona, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of this State, hereby order as follows:

1. The Arizona Department of Real Estate shall gather data on the sale or lease of homes used as drop houses.

2. The Arizona Department of Real Estate and the Arizona Department of Public Safety ("DPS") shall enter into a memorandum of understanding for the collection and sharing of data and information on Arizona homes used as drop houses.

3. The Arizona Department of Real Estate shall cooperate fully with and assist DPS in any criminal investigations related to an Arizona drop house.

4. The Arizona Department of Real Estate and DPS shall prepare a report for Governor and Legislature on drop house trends in Arizona and make recommendations regarding any statutory changes that may be necessary for better law enforcement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Arizona.

GOVERNOR

DONE at the Capitol in Phoenix on this ___ day of January in the Year Two Thousand and Eight and of the Independence of the United States of America the Two Hundred and Thirty-second.

ATTEST:

SECRETARY OF STATE