

# ARIZONA CAPITOL TIMES

## State and local anti-immigration efforts are unmitigated failures

By Todd Landfried  
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This year marks nearly a decade of my involvement in pushing for sensible immigration policies and reform in Arizona and across the U.S. I've seen and learned a lot.

In 2005, I attended former County Attorney Andy Thomas' immigration conference, where the first evidence appeared that one-sided perspectives, distorted statistics and demonizing an entire population of people would soon become the political norm. This heated rhetoric led to voter passage of a state constitutional amendment and other laws meant to deny social services to people who weren't eligible for them in the first place.

It led to the Maricopa County sheriff launching neighborhood "saturation patrols" that landed him in federal court, accused of unconstitutionally racially profiling Latinos. The court found his office had, and placed the MCSO under court-ordered supervision to ensure those practices were stopped.

Most notably, the rhetoric led to passage of SB1070, which not only resulted in long-lasting economic, reputational and social damage we still feel today, three of its main components were overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court and the fourth will be changed under an agreement between Gov. Jan Brewer and the U.S. Department of Justice.

The fear of "non-citizens," meaning "undocumented immigrants," registering and voting led the Legislature to pass HB2305 in 2013, despite zero evidence that any citizen of another country successfully registered, received a voter card and actually cast a ballot in any election. The only "non-citizens" brought to court and convicted of illegally voting in Arizona elections are citizens from other U.S. states.

The Arizona record of immigration law failure is not unique. Nowhere in the U.S. have similar or more extreme laws been passed where they directly achieved any of the economic, law enforcement or social promises made by their proponents. Anti-immigration efforts at the state and local levels are unmitigated failures no matter what you call them or how you wordsmith them. This is the main reason why we need federal reform.

Unfortunately, these important lessons and impacts are seemingly lost on nearly every Republican candidate for governor, secretary of state, attorney general and the Legislature. It's as if none of them have paid attention or learned a thing from Arizona's failed attempts to address a problem the courts have said must be addressed at the

federal level. It's as if the analyses from ASU, UCLA, the Cato Institute, legislative testimony by Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry president and CEO Glenn Hamer, a letter signed by 60 Arizona CEOs, guidelines for immigration reform by the Real Arizona Coalition and even a book co-written by the Goldwater Institute's Clint Bolick documenting the economic failures of Arizona's past efforts didn't exist. It's as if they lived in a parallel universe where failure equals success and promising to do something we know doesn't work again and again and expecting a different result is something we must do.

I understand candidates need to say things to attract voters. I know some of them know better. But professing a firm belief in fallacy or pandering to voters who believe the fallacies does nothing to advance a real solution and threatens to set our state back at a time when we can least afford it.

Regardless of who or from which party Arizona's next governor, secretary of state, attorney general or legislators may come, they must have a practical, fact-based understanding of immigration and use their offices to lead and pressure Congress and the White House to address the problem as quickly and as competently as possible. The last thing we need are elected officials returning to the SB1070 well and continuing to spout "solutions" and policies that have time and again proven to do one thing extremely well: fail.

Read more: <http://azcapitoltimes.com/news/2014/08/21/state-and-local-anti-immigration-efforts-are-unmitigated-failures/#ixzz3B84sdUS8>