

Defending the Public

By David Euchner
Pima County Chair

Upon losing the 2004 election for Pima County Attorney, I followed the old adage: "If you can't beat them, join the opposition." I have been working as a public defender since 2005 as a trial and appellate attorney as well as counseling those just arrested prior to their initial appearance in court.

In nearly three years on the job, I have seen up close the damage to a large section of Arizona's population caused by our immigration policy.

While all sides of the immigration debate are represented in Arizona just as they are nationally, in Arizona there has been enough political will to make the changes sought by the most extreme of the right wing, led by Rep. Russell Pearce of Mesa. Pearce's coalition has three principal achievements in immigration law "reform" in recent years. In 2004, voters passed Proposition 200, which made statutory changes that precluded illegal

immigrants from being able to vote or collect welfare. While this proposition was not inconsistent with libertarian philosophy, it was a solution in search of a problem. Illegal aliens do not vote, and to the extent they are on the dole their numbers pale in comparison to the citizens of the United States who collect welfare.

Emboldened by his success, Pearce then had a constitutional amendment placed on the ballot in 2006 for voters to consider. Prop 100 expanded the list of crimes for which a judge can deny bail to a defendant beyond murder, rape, and molestation of a child. After voters passed that proposition, judges now can hold individuals who have entered or remained unlawfully in this country and are charged with a "serious" crime. For purpose of this law, "serious" means any class 1, 2, 3, or 4 felony. Those familiar with Arizona's criminal code realize that this includes most drug offenses and the result has been further overcrowding of our jails with minor drug offenders.

Recently, Pearce has succeeded in suckering Gov. Napolitano into sign-

ing an employer sanctions law that seeks to put out of business every employer who hires an undocumented worker. Though I have not yet seen it, I understand that Pearce still intends to submit a stiffer bill to the voters this fall.

The local economy is already starting to take a hit.

Pearce made his true intentions known in 2006 when he stated publicly that he wants to institute a program similar to the old "Operation Wetback" to effect massive deportations as quickly as possible. For civilized Arizonans who do not share Pearce's racism, there seems to be lacking an understanding of the impact on our communities.

Many of those deported to Mexico are people who crossed the border when they were minors, even babies. These people grew up in the United States and have never known a life in Mexico. They have social security numbers, they pay their taxes, and they help the landlady take out the garbage. They have families of their own. The ones I have come to know

have been charged with a felony, sometimes a violent offense and sometimes a simple drug offense.

Federal law governs which offenses are deportable, and the smallest of drug offenses, where the sentence in state court is mandatory probation, will lead to deportation. Because of the refusal of prosecutors to acknowledge this problem, our courts have become backlogged with drug cases that could plead out if the prosecutor would offer a plea to a similar offense that does not require deportation.

I believe that the employer sanctions law will destroy our communities even further by taking more people from their jobs, their homes, and the only homeland they've ever known. We also know from experience that immigration enhances the local economy, and therefore the Pearce Plan will destroy the local economy. Libertarians need to denounce Russell Pearce and his plan to rid our community of productive people who clearly want to work.

Why Go On?

By Mike Shoen

We now know that Ron Paul will not receive the Republican presidential nomination. In fact, we know that, even with the most effective volunteers in the country and with the best message, he received maybe seven percent of the Republican vote. So why go on?

For years I have been working to oppose the statist and their warfare state. Activists like Ed Vallejo, Charles Goyette and Ernie Hancock have put in 100 times my effort. So why continue?

One reason is that some of us simply cannot stomach an aristocracy of warfare statist and all-purpose statist

ists who have hijacked our country. These elitists mouth platitudes about freedom and security, but smirk as they speak. They are the military-industrial-governmental complex whose goal is to take wealth and power from the citizenry and make it their own. With the help of mainstream media, they have done a pretty good job. Some of us just can't stomach liars and bullies, and we will continue to oppose them, no matter what.

Another reason is that things may change. While it is true that Ron Paul received only three to seven percent of the vote, it is also true that a much larger percentage of voters admitted that Ron Paul was "the candidate who made sense" or that Paul was the only candidate who "dealt with the real issues". A much larger percentage of citizens are edging ever closer to voting for freedom. Libertarians and lovers of freedom have brought this

about.

Another accomplishment of the Ron Paul campaign is that it has identified mainstream media as a central part of the problem. The Fox News fiascos, their shabby treatment of Paul at the debates, the obviously untrue allegations, the trivialization, marginalization and flat-ignoring the candidate are conclusive evidence that mainstream media is in bed with the military-industrial-governmental statist. We have identified another enemy of freedom, mainstream media. This is progress.

Another accomplishment is that our philosophies of economic liberty are now widely discussed in the mainstream economic media, primarily because of the profound problems caused by the irresponsible, warfare-state, money-sucking, dollar-printing, central-banking, spendthrift leviathan,

military-industrial-governmental complex. But it was Ron Paul and his supporters who forced the discussion of this issue and only happenstance that the statist economic house of cards is collapsing after Paul's economic warnings. Libertarians and freedom lovers now have broad support amongst academic economists and economic commentators. Our message of economic freedom and responsibility has brought us legitimacy.

But, for me, the most important reason to continue is Karma. There is a force in the universe, call it what you like – Providence, God, Destiny, Cosmic Power – which demands that each of us do what we know is right. If we do not, then in some way our lives are diminished, and not just our

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Pima County Needs YOU

By David Euchner and
Bennett Kalafut

Rapid growth, rising property valuations, and complacent, bond-friendly taxpayers have allowed the Pima County Board of Supervisors to more than triple their budget in the last ten years while cutting tax rates. The housing slump and the more general economic recession are putting an end to that.

When individuals or businesses go through lean times, they cut back on spending. When government experiences a shortfall, officials raise tax rates. The Supervisors have not cut the size or scope of county government, making a rate hike inevitable,

although it may not come until after the November general election.

Anxiety over taxes, latent resentment over subsidy of growth, everyday mismanagement, and the crass act of scheduling an off-season Regional Transportation Plan election in 2006 have combined to make the Pima County Supervisors more vulnerable to electoral challenges than they have been in recent years. The three Democratic Supervisors, having opposed their own party's requests for release of election databases following evidence that vote tampering might have occurred, are facing primary challenges.

There are signs—public meetings, ballot initiatives—that voters are fed up with seeing home

sales in their neighborhood drive up their property valuations, in some cases doubling in a span of five years. County Assessor Bill Staples insists that there is but one legal way of computing valuations and so his hands are tied. But he has responded derisively to the suggestion that, if this is so, he should ask the legislature to give him more flexibility.

The incumbents' fiscal irresponsibility and contempt for the taxpayer have made 2008 a prime year for local Libertarians to advocate fiscal restraint, outsourcing, and reduction of the scope of county government. The Pima County Libertarian Party seeks candidates to challenge all five Supervisors, as well as candidates for Assessor, Sheriff, County Attorney, and the state legislature.

We will assist you in navigating the required paperwork and provide suggestions for talking points and platform planks. The impact you will have on the race depends on your degree of motivation and the amount of time you can commit to campaigning. At the very least, a good part-time candidate will introduce libertarian ideas to the debate.

We are also seeking candidates to run for nonpartisan offices such as school, water, and fire protection boards. These offices often serve as "stepping stones" to city councils and the Legislature. Three of our members are already serving in nonpartisan office.

Contact David Euchner at pclp_chair@pimalp.org for more information.

