



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on April 1, 2011

Sheriff Claims Border Patrol Officials Want Reduced Border Arrests

An exclusive Fox News report [reads](#):

“Cochise County Sheriff Larry Dever told FoxNews.com that a supervisor with the U.S. Border Patrol told him as recently as this month that the federal agency’s office on Arizona’s southern border was under orders to keep apprehension numbers down during specific reporting time periods.”



Dever explains:

The senior supervisor agent is telling me about how their mission is now to scare people back. I had to go back to my guys and tell them not to catch anybody, that their job is to chase people away.... They were not to catch anyone, arrest anyone. Their job was to set up posture, to intimidate people, to get them to go back.

According to Dever, the most recent conversation with the Border Patrol supervisor was merely one of a number of discussions on the subject over two years. Dever has even reported that he will bring these conversations to Congress’ attention next month when he testifies under oath before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. “I will raise my hands to tell the truth and swear to God, and nothing is more serious or important than that,” said Dever. “I’m going to tell them that, here’s what I hear and see every day: I had conversation with agent A, B, C, D and this is what they told me.”

Regarding Napolitano’s assertions about the security of the border, Dever assertively declares it to be untrue.

Critics have questioned the calculation and conclusions of the Homeland Security statistics that show the border to be more secure.

Fox News writes:

Mark Hanna, CEO of Real Life Enterprises, a Phoenix-based technology integration and security company, has testified before the Arizona Senate about what he called Homeland Security’s flawed methodology used to compile border security statistics. Hanna maintains the numbers are dangerously misleading.

Hanna, who is currently working on a private/public partnership pilot program along the Arizona border, said he attended a February conference at which Michael Fisher, chief of the United States Border Patrol, and Mark S. Borkowski, assistant commissioner for technology and innovation acquisition, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, showed off charts indicating arrests



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were decreasing and argued the border was more secure. The charts also showed an increase in marijuana seizures along the border and an increase in Border Patrol agents.

According to Hanna, the charts left out crucial data. "Since we don't know how many illegal crossings are occurring, then a decrease in apprehensions might mean that there are fewer illegal crossings, and the border is more secure. But it could also just as easily mean that more illegal border crossing are occurring, and we're just not catching as many. In order to know how secure the border is, you need to know how many are crossing and the threat level of those who are crossing illegally," Hanna explains.

Hanna adds, "It is a very dangerous condition for the secretary of Homeland Security to be using incomplete data to form such a conclusion, and then repeatedly announce these conclusions as fact."

The Department of Homeland Security has not responded to Hanna's statements.

While the DHS is in the position of having to contend with Hanna's assertions, U.S. Customs and Border Protection commander Jeffrey Self adamantly denies Dever's allegations regarding arrests at the border: "The claim that Border Patrol supervisors have been instructed to underreport or manipulate our statistics is unequivocally false," Self asserts. "I took an oath that I take very seriously, and I find it insulting that anyone, especially a fellow law enforcement officer, would imply that we would put the protection of the American public and security of our nation's borders in danger just for a numbers game. Our mission does not waiver based on political climate, and it never will. To suggest that we are ambiguous in enforcing our laws belittles the work of more than 6,000 CBP employees in Arizona who dedicate their lives to protect our borders every day."

Similarly, Santa Cruz County Sheriff Tony Estrada remarked that any instructions to turn illegal immigrants back to Mexico rather than arresting them is "news to me."

"It comes as a complete surprise that that would be something that's going around," said Estrada. "I meet with Dever all the time and I have great respect for him, so I expect he'd come around forward and say what he knows and give the source. Not knowing who the source is, how reliable that source is, I really don't have much of a position."

Estrada adds, "I've been around a real long time and haven't heard anything like this. By the same token, you learn new things every day."

Photo of Sheriff Dever: AP Images



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