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THE STATE OF ARIZONA
PREMIERES ON *INDEPENDENT LENS*
MONDAY, JANUARY 27, 2014 ON PBS

**New Documentary Explores the Human Stories Behind Arizona’s Controversial
“Show Me Your Papers” Immigration Law**



(San Francisco, CA) — *The State of Arizona* captures the explosive emotions and complex realities behind Arizona’s headline-grabbing struggle with illegal immigration. Following Arizona’s controversial Senate Bill 1070, dubbed the “show me your papers” law, the film tells the stories of Arizonans on all sides of this divisive issue from ground zero of the nation’s

immigration debate. Produced and directed by Carlos Sandoval and Catherine Tambini (*Farmingville*), *The State of Arizona* premieres on the PBS series *Independent Lens*, hosted by Stanley Tucci, on Monday, January 27, 2014, 10:00-11:30 PM ET on PBS ([check local listings.](#))

Between 1996 and 2009, illegal immigration rose 300% in Arizona, to an estimated 460,000 people. Frustrated with federal inaction and rising border tensions, Arizona lawmakers ignited a national maelstrom by instituting the SB 1070 law that requires police officers to ask for papers from people they reasonably suspect to be undocumented in the course of an otherwise lawful stop. Designed to encourage self-deportation, the law’s stated purpose is to “deter the unlawful entry and presence of illegal aliens and economic activity by illegal aliens in the United States.” Supporters call it a common sense law enforcement tool; opponents see it as a dangerous infringement of civil rights that would inevitably lead to harassment and racial profiling. The film follows the journey of the law all the way to the Supreme Court through the voices of those who wrote and support it and of the many who dread its power.

SB 1070 is meant to enforce immigration laws, “one traffic stop at a time,” according to its author, State Senator Russell Pearce. He’s on a zealous mission to preserve America from lawless intruders and the violence of the drug cartels. But as Pearce’s SB 1070 is on the brink of becoming law and a model for the nation, it galvanizes resistance. The movement is spearheaded by the immigrant rights organization Puente, led by Carlos Garcia. For Garcia, once undocumented himself, the struggle is painfully personal as members of his family are being deported.

The Puente movement is faced with the challenge of influencing elected officials on behalf of a population that can’t vote. With a coalition of state and national organizations, they organize a campaign to fight back on the streets, in the courts, at the ballot box, and with boycotts. Soon civil rights groups and the US Department of Justice sue to block SB 1070 from becoming law.

Despite the protests, on July 29, 2010, SB 1070 becomes law. It’s been modified thanks to a federal court’s partial blockage announced the day before, but Russell Pearce’s political star is on the ascent. Mitt Romney cites SB 1070 as a model during his presidential campaign. With momentum building, a new wave of even stricter laws is introduced in the Arizona legislature, including the first ever challenge to the 14th Amendment’s guarantee of U.S. citizenship through birth on American soil.

As the new bills are about to be voted on, Republican senators unexpectedly vote against the measures, convinced by CEOs from across the state that Arizona’s economy is suffering from the boycott and negative publicity. Several months later, Pearce is recalled, a first in Arizona history. “He misunderstood the support for 1070,” reflects Mesa Mayor Scott Smith. “People didn’t sign up for a challenge to the 14th Amendment.” A line is drawn on intolerance in the Arizona sand.

Almost two years later, in June 2012, the Supreme Court announces its opinion in the case of *The United States v. Arizona*, ruling that immigration law largely belongs to the federal government, not the states. But it allows the “show me your papers” portion to stand, so long as it can be implemented without racial profiling or unduly long detention.

Like everything else in Arizona’s conflict over immigration, no victory or defeat is simple because families, lives, and civic values lie in the balance in either direction. However, one thing is certain — SB1070 galvanized Latino voters across the country who turned out in record numbers to re-elect President Obama largely based on his campaign promise of immigration reform. Their show of strength changed the political landscape and pushed immigration reform to the forefront of the national agenda.

Visit the *State of Arizona* companion website (<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/state-of-arizona>) which features information about the film, including an interview with the filmmakers and more information. The site also features a Talkback section for viewers to share their ideas and opinions, preview clips of the film, and more.

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About the Participants, in Order of Appearance

Joe Arpaio is the sheriff of Maricopa County, Arizona.

Jorge Martinez is an undocumented businessman and homeowner who has lived and worked in Phoenix for more than 15 years. Jorge owns an ice cream truck that he operates with his partner, **Amparo Mendez**; they have a teenaged son, **Joey Mendez**.

Carlos Garcia is a leader of the immigrant rights organization, Puente Movement.

Russell Pearce, Former Arizona State Senator, is the author of SB 1070.

Kathryn Kobor is an avid and active supporter of SB 1070.

Salvador Reza is a founder of the Puente Movement.

Scott Smith is the Republican mayor of Mesa, Arizona.

Kyrsten Sinema is a former Arizona State Representative and a current member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Jennifer Allen is the former director of Border Action Network, based in Tucson, AZ.

Alfredo Gutierrez is a former Arizona state senator.

Carlos Clark is a deputy sheriff of Santa Cruz County.

Duncan and Susan Blair are cattle ranchers in Patagonia, AZ, along the Mexico border.

Ezequiel Hernandez is an immigration attorney who represented Jorge Martinez.

Steve Smith is an Arizona state senator.

About the Filmmakers

Carlos Sandoval (Co-Producer/Co-Director)

The State of Arizona is Sandoval's second collaboration with Catherine Tambini, having previously directed and produced the highly acclaimed *Farmingville* about a small suburban town in the wake of the hate-based attempted murder of two Mexican day laborers. The film won the Sundance Special Jury Prize and aired on PBS's *P.O.V.*

With acclaimed filmmaker Peter Miler, Sandoval also co-produced and co-directed the award-winning *A Class Apart* about a little-known landmark Supreme Court case. The film won the Imagen Award for Best Television Documentary and aired on PBS's *American Experience*. The film has been optioned by Eva Longoria's unbeliEVable Entertainment and is soon to be a major motion picture.

Sandoval's writing has appeared in *The New York Times* and been included in anthologies. He holds a law degree from The University of Chicago; his practice areas included telecommunications and complex litigation. Prior to attending law school, Sandoval worked on immigration and refugee affairs as a member of the U.S. delegation to the United Nations, and as a program officer for The Century Foundation. He has participated on public television funding and programming panels, as well as on film festival juries. Of Mexican American and Puerto Rican descent, Sandoval grew up in Southern California and is a graduate of Harvard College.

Catherine Tambini (Co-Producer/Co-Director)

The State of Arizona is Ms. Tambini's second collaboration with Carlos Sandoval, having previously directed and produced the highly acclaimed *Farmingville*. The film won the Sundance Special Jury Prize and aired on PBS's *P.O.V.*

With renowned filmmaker Anne Belle, Ms. Tambini co-produced the Academy Award nominated documentary *Suzanne Farrell: Elusive Muse*. She field produced and shot portions of MTV's *I'm From Rolling Stone* and TLC's *Pageant Perfect*. She also assisted in the production design of many well-known Hollywood films including *The Hand That Rocks the Cradle*, *Steel Magnolias*, *True Colors* and *The Secret of My Success*.

Ms. Tambini's work has earned grants from the Sundance Institute and the MacArthur Foundation, among others. Born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, she holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Oklahoma and a Master of Fine Arts degree from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.

CREDITS

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| Produced and Directed by | Carlos Sandoval and Catherine Tambini |
| Editors | Mona Davis Mary Angelica Molina |
| Cinematographer | Catherine Tambini |
| Music by | Kevin Kiner |
| Sound Recordists | Peter Miller Michael Jordi Valdés |
| Additional Camera | Dennis Gilman Salvador Reza Carlos Garcia |
| Executive Producer for ITVS | Sally Jo Fifer |
| Executive Producer for Latino Public Broadcasting | Sandie Viquez Pedlow |

The State of Arizona is a co-production of Camino Bluff Productions, Inc., CatTails, LLC, and the Independent Television Service (ITVS) in association with Latino Public Broadcasting (LPB) with funding provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB).

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About *Independent Lens*

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing on PBS. The acclaimed anthology series features documentaries united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement, and unflinching visions of independent filmmakers. Presented by Independent Television Service (ITVS), the series is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding from PBS and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. The senior series producer is Lois Vossen. More information at www.pbs.org/independentlens. Join *Independent Lens* on Facebook at www.facebook.com/independentlens.