

Truth in Testimony Disclosure Form

In accordance with Rule XI, clause 2(g)(5)* of the *Rules of the House of Representatives*, witnesses are asked to disclose the following information. Please complete this form electronically by filling in the provided blanks.

Committee: Judiciary

Subcommittee: Crime and Federal Government Surveillance

Hearing Date: 02/13/2026

Hearing Title :

The Monitoring Racket: The Grift that Keeps on Giving

Witness Name: Debbie Lesko

Position/Title: Maricopa County Board of Supervisor

Witness Type: Governmental Non-governmental

Are you representing yourself or an organization? Self Organization

If you are representing an organization, please list what entity or entities you are representing:

Maricopa County.

FOR WITNESSES APPEARING IN A NON-GOVERNMENTAL CAPACITY

Please complete the following fields. If necessary, attach additional sheet(s) to provide more information.

Are you a fiduciary—including, but not limited to, a director, officer, advisor, or resident agent—of any organization or entity that has an interest in the subject matter of the hearing? If so, please list the name of the organization(s) or entities.

N/A

Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) related to the hearing's subject matter that you or the organization(s) you represent have received in the past thirty-six months from the date of the hearing. Include the source and amount of each grant or contract.

N/A

Please list any contracts, grants, or payments originating with a foreign government and related to the hearing's subject that you or the organization(s) you represent have received in the past thirty-six months from the date of the hearing. Include the amount and country of origin of each contract or payment.

N/A

Please complete the following fields. If necessary, attach additional sheet(s) to provide more information.

- I have attached a written statement of proposed testimony.
- I have attached my curriculum vitae or biography.

*Rule XI, clause 2(g)(5), of the U.S. House of Representatives provides:

(5)(A) Each committee shall, to the greatest extent practicable, require witnesses who appear before it to submit in advance written statements of proposed testimony and to limit their initial presentations to the committee to brief summaries thereof.

(B) In the case of a witness appearing in a non-governmental capacity, a written statement of proposed testimony shall include— (i) a curriculum vitae; (ii) a disclosure of any Federal grants or contracts, or contracts, grants, or payments originating with a foreign government, received during the past 36 months by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness and related to the subject matter of the hearing; and (iii) a disclosure of whether the witness is a fiduciary (including, but not limited to, a director, officer, advisor, or resident agent) of any organization or entity that has an interest in the subject matter of the hearing.

(C) The disclosure referred to in subdivision (B)(ii) shall include— (i) the amount and source of each Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof) related to the subject matter of the hearing; and (ii) the amount and country of origin of any payment or contract related to the subject matter of the hearing originating with a foreign government.

(D) Such statements, with appropriate redactions to protect the privacy or security of the witness, shall be made publicly available in electronic form 24 hours before the witness appears to the extent practicable, but not later than one day after the witness appears.

False Statements Certification

Knowingly providing material false information to this committee/subcommittee, or knowingly concealing material information from this committee/subcommittee, is a crime (18 U.S.C. § 1001). This form will be made part of the hearing record.

Dlesko

2/10/26

Witness signature

Date

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee.

As a Maricopa County Supervisor, I am here today to talk about the long-term damage caused by the federal court orders in *Melendres v. Arpaio*—and more specifically, the unchecked and costly monitor regime that has grown out of this case.

It has become a clear example of how federal oversight, when left unchecked, can drift far beyond its original purpose, at great cost to local control and taxpayers.

This all started with a complaint against, then Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio, alleging racial profiling of Latino drivers and passengers.

Fourteen years, 3 sheriffs and millions and millions of dollars per year later, the Sheriff's office is still under this burdensome and costly federal monitor regime.

For more than a decade, this monitoring process appears to be operating with virtually no limiting principle. What began as targeted oversight has evolved into an open-ended system where compliance seems to be constantly redefined, new requirements are layered on and progress is never allowed to be final. The monitor's role has expanded far beyond verifying constitutional policies and instead has expanded into day-to-day operation micromanagement.

And the consequences have been severe.

Every dollar spent feeding this monitoring bureaucracy is a dollar **not spent on deputies, patrols, training, crime prevention, or victim services**. Every hour spent satisfying reporting demands is an hour **not spent protecting neighborhoods**. The cumulative effect has been a long-term erosion of public safety capacity in Maricopa County.

The public is told this is all necessary—but necessary for whom?

The monitor is paid to find deficiencies, and the system seems structured so that deficiencies are always found. Even when benchmarks are met, new interpretations seem to appear. New metrics emerge. The finish line moves. For example, just last month, the monitor reversed himself and declared that the Sheriff's Office is not in compliance with a paragraph that has been in compliance for years. That paragraph required MCSO to submit training materials within 90 days of the order, which was satisfied back in June 2016. Now, after a decade, the goalposts have been moved.

The monitor in this case is the same monitor who has been monitoring the Oakland, CA police department for the last 25 years!

And do you know what the kicker is?

Lesko Comments at 2/13/26 Field Hearing

Existing court orders—dating back to 2014—prevent taxpayers from fully knowing where their money is going. Detailed monitor billing and time entries are provided only to the Court. The County itself is restricted from seeing that information much less sharing that information with the public.

That is not transparency.

That is not accountability.

And twelve years later, it is not justified.

I want to be very clear: this is not about rejecting constitutional policing or resisting oversight. Maricopa County has made significant reforms, many of them at great expense and in good faith.

In fact, today, there is NO evidence of ongoing civil rights violations. There are NO new allegations of targeted immigration enforcement. And the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office has achieved 100 percent compliance with required policy changes.

The 2023 Traffic Study Annual Report that the court requires found no statistically significant difference between White drivers and Hispanic drivers across any measured benchmark.

Late last year, the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors filed a Rule 60 motion seeking relief from this federal oversight and I am happy to say that the United States Department of Justice supports our motion and agrees that this oversight should end.

So, let's be clear:

The County says it's time.

The data says it's time.

The Monitor's findings say it's time.

And the United States Department of Justice says it's time to end this burdensome, bureaucratic, costly federal oversight of the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office.

It's time to recognize that federal monitoring is no longer needed.

Enough is Enough.

Debbie Lesko,

Maricopa County Supervisor



Vice Chair Debbie Lesko represents District 4 on the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors. She was elected in November 2024 and took office in January 2025.

From May 7, 2018 to January 3, 2025, Lesko represented Arizona's 8th Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives. She served on the Energy and Commerce, Judiciary, Homeland Security, Rules, Space & Science and Coronavirus Pandemic Committees. She was also selected by Republican leadership to serve on the Whip team and by her peers to serve on the Republican Steering Committee.

Supervisor Lesko founded the Protect Kids Caucus, served as a Co-Chair of the Women in STEM Caucus, Co-Chair of the Values Action Team, Executive Steering member of the Republican Study Committee and was a member of the Congressional Western Caucus and Border Security Caucus.

Prior to her role in the U.S. House of Representatives, Lesko served in the Arizona Legislature for nine years – the last three of which were in the Arizona Senate. She served as Senate President Pro-Tempore and Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee. She was honored by numerous organizations during her time at the Arizona Legislature, including, "Champion of the Taxpayer," "Guardian of Small Business," and "Senator of the Year."

Supervisor Lesko received her Bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin. She lives in Peoria with her husband, Joe, and they have three children and six grandchildren.