

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

JOSE SANCHEZ, ISMAEL RAMOS
CONTRERAS, and ERNEST GRIMES, on
behalf of themselves and all others
similarly situated,

Plaintiffs,

v.

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF BORDER
PATROL; UNITED STATES CUSTOMS
& BORDER PROTECTION;
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND
SECURITY; JOHN C. BATES, Chief
Patrol Agent, Blaine Sector of the United
States Border Patrol, in his official
capacity; JANET NAPOLITANO,
Secretary, Department of Homeland
Security, in her official capacity; DAVID
AGUILAR, Acting Commissioner, United
States Customs & Border Protection, in his
official capacity; MICHAEL J. FISHER,
Chief of the United States Border Patrol, in
his official capacity; and JAY CUMBOW,
Agent in Charge for the Port Angeles
Office of the Olympic Peninsula of the
United States Border Patrol, in his official
capacity,

Defendants.

No. _____

COMPLAINT FOR INJUNCTIVE AND
DECLARATORY RELIEF

CLASS ACTION

COMPLAINT FOR INJUNCTIVE AND
DECLARATORY RELIEF (No. _____) – 1

INTRODUCTION

1
2
3 1. This civil rights lawsuit seeks to vindicate the rights of individual Plaintiffs and
4 Class Members who have been—and/or who have a present fear that in the future they will
5 be—unreasonably seized and/or interrogated in violation of the Fourth Amendment of the
6 United States Constitution by the United States Border Patrol and its agents located throughout
7 Washington State’s Olympic Peninsula.
8
9

10
11
12 2. This action arises from the Border Patrol’s practice of stopping vehicles or
13 participating in vehicle stops on the Olympic Peninsula without appropriate reasonable
14 suspicion in order to interrogate and unreasonably seize the occupants of such vehicles.
15
16
17

- 18
19 3. Plaintiffs and Class Members hereby seek a declaration:
20
21 a. that Defendants have violated their Fourth Amendment rights;
22
23 b. that Defendants have exceeded their statutory authority;
24
25 c. that it is unlawful for Border Patrol agents to stop a vehicle or participate
26 in a vehicle stop without a valid search or arrest warrant, unless the
27 Border Patrol agent has a particularized reasonable suspicion based upon
28 specific and articulable facts and rational inferences therefrom that an
29 occupant of the vehicle is unlawfully in the United States.
30
31
32
33

34
35 4. Plaintiffs and Class Members seek an injunction prohibiting Defendants from
36 stopping vehicles or participating in vehicle stops:
37

- 38
39 a. without a reasonable suspicion that an occupant of the vehicle is
40 unlawfully in the United States;
41
42 b. until each Border Patrol agent on the Olympic Peninsula has received
43 training as to what constitutes reasonable suspicion for Border Patrol
44 to stop a vehicle or for Border Patrol to participate in a vehicle stop;
45
46
47
48 and
49
50
51

1 c. until each Border Patrol agent on the Olympic Peninsula has
2 demonstrated, through testing, that he or she understands what
3 constitutes reasonable suspicion for a Border Patrol agent to stop a
4 vehicle or to participate in a vehicle stop.
5
6
7

8
9 5. Plaintiffs and Class Members additionally seek an injunction requiring:

10 a. Defendants to maintain complete and accurate records that document
11 that each agent has received training as to what constitutes reasonable
12 suspicion to support a Border Patrol vehicle stop or for Border Patrol to
13 participate in a vehicle stop;
14
15
16
17

18 b. Defendants to maintain complete and accurate records that document
19 that each agent has been tested and understands what constitutes
20 reasonable suspicion to support a Border Patrol vehicle stop or for
21 Border Patrol to participate in a vehicle stop; and
22
23
24
25

26 c. Defendants to prepare documentation for all vehicle stops made by
27 Border Patrol agents or in which Border Patrol agents participate, that
28 sets forth in detail the basis for the reasonable suspicion used to justify
29 the vehicle stop or interrogation of its occupants, and to maintain this
30 documentation in such a manner that it is easily accessible for
31 examination by a court-appointed special master for compliance,
32 regardless of whether the Border Patrol ultimately determines that the
33 occupant(s) stopped are undocumented citizens.
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42

43 In support of this relief, Plaintiffs assert and allege as follows:

44
45 **PARTIES**

46
47 6. Plaintiff Jose Sanchez is a resident of Forks, Washington, on the Olympic
48 Peninsula. Plaintiff Sanchez is a correctional officer for Olympic Corrections Center. Plaintiff
49 Sanchez was born in the United States and is of Latino/Hispanic descent.
50
51

1 7. Plaintiff Ismael Ramos Contreras is a resident of Forks, Washington, on the
2 Olympic Peninsula. Plaintiff Ramos Contreras is an eighteen-year-old high school senior at
3 Forks High School. Plaintiff Ramos Contreras was born in the United States and is of
4 Latino/Hispanic descent.
5
6

7
8 8. Plaintiff Ernest Grimes is a resident of Neah Bay, Washington, on the Olympic
9 Peninsula. Plaintiff Grimes is a correctional officer at Clallam Bay Corrections Center and a
10 part-time police officer for the Neah Bay Police Department. Plaintiff Grimes was born in the
11 United States and is African-American.
12
13

14 9. Defendant Office of Border Patrol (“Border Patrol”) is a subagency within the
15 United States Customs & Border Protection (“CBP”), which is an agency of the United States
16 Department of Homeland Security (“DHS”). The Border Patrol is a federal law enforcement
17 agency responsible for the enforcement of the laws and regulations governing the admission of
18 foreign-born persons to the United States. The Border Patrol has responsibility for and
19 oversight over policies, procedures, and practices relating to stopping and interrogating
20 individuals on Washington State’s Olympic Peninsula.
21
22

23 10. Defendant United States Customs & Border Protection is an agency of the
24 United States Department of Homeland Security. The United States Customs & Border
25 Protection is responsible for securing the borders of the United States. The United States
26 Customs & Border Protection has authority over policies, procedures, and practices relating to
27 stopping and interrogating individuals on Washington State’s Olympic Peninsula.
28
29

30 11. Defendant Department of Homeland Security is a Cabinet-level department that
31 is responsible for the coordination and unification of national security efforts. The Department
32 of Homeland Security has authority over policies, procedures, and practices relating to stopping
33 and interrogating individuals on Washington State’s Olympic Peninsula.
34
35

36 12. Defendant John C. Bates is the Chief Patrol Agent for the Blaine Sector of the
37 Border Patrol. In that capacity, Defendant Bates has direct responsibility for and oversight over
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51

1 Blaine Sector Border Patrol policies, procedures, and practices relating to stopping and
2 interrogating individuals on Washington State's Olympic Peninsula. Defendant Bates is sued
3 in his official capacity.
4

5
6 13. Defendant Janet Napolitano is the Secretary of the DHS vested with all
7 functions of all officers, employees, and organizational units of DHS. Defendant Napolitano
8 has authority over all DHS policies, procedures, and practices relating to stopping and
9 interrogating individuals on Washington State's Olympic Peninsula. Defendant Napolitano is
10 sued in her official capacity.
11

12
13 14. Defendant David Aguilar is the Acting Commissioner of CBP. In that capacity,
14 Defendant Aguilar has authority over all CBP policies, procedures, and practices relating to
15 stopping and interrogating individuals on Washington State's Olympic Peninsula. Defendant
16 Aguilar is sued in his official capacity.
17

18
19 15. Defendant Michael J. Fisher is Chief of the Border Patrol. In that capacity,
20 Defendant Fisher has direct responsibility for and oversight over Border Patrol policies,
21 procedures, and practices relating to stopping and interrogating individuals on Washington
22 State's Olympic Peninsula. Defendant Fisher is sued in his official capacity.
23

24
25 16. Defendant Jay Cumbow is the Agent in Charge for the Port Angeles Office of
26 the Olympic Peninsula of the Border Patrol. In that capacity, Defendant Cumbow has direct
27 responsibility for and oversight over Border Patrol policies, procedures, and practices relating
28 to stopping and interrogating individuals on Washington State's Olympic Peninsula. Defendant
29 Cumbow is sued in his official capacity.
30
31

32 **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

33
34 17. The Court has jurisdiction over Plaintiffs' claims under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and
35 1343.
36

37
38 18. Venue in the Western District of Washington is proper under 28 U.S.C.
39 § 1391(e)(1).
40
41

1 appeared to the Border Patrol agents to be a person of color based on his complexion and hair
2 color.
3

4
5 24. During or around the fall of 2011, at Forks on the Olympic Peninsula, Plaintiff
6 Sanchez was traveling in a vehicle that was also stopped by one or more Border Patrol agents.
7 During the stop, Plaintiff Sanchez was interrogated by two Border Patrol agents regarding his
8 immigration status. Again, the Border Patrol agents told him that they had stopped him
9 because the windows of the vehicle were too dark. But the driver's side window was not
10 tinted. And again, the agents only wanted to see Plaintiff Sanchez's ID and asked him how
11 long he had been in the United States.
12
13
14
15
16
17

18
19 25. On information and belief, the Border Patrol lacked reasonable suspicion to
20 justify this stop and interrogation. On information and belief, it is alleged that the Border
21 Patrol selected this vehicle for this stop and interrogation solely because Plaintiff Sanchez
22 appeared to the Border Patrol agents to be a person of color based on his complexion and hair
23 color.
24
25
26
27

28
29 26. Shortly after the most recent stop, Plaintiff Sanchez tried to file a complaint with
30 Border Patrol because its agents were selecting his vehicles for stop and interrogation solely
31 because he appeared to Border Patrol agents to be a person of color based on his complexion
32 and hair color. The Border Patrol supervisor would not give him the names of the agents that
33 had stopped his vehicles and would not take a complaint over the phone. When asked by
34 Plaintiff Sanchez why Border Patrol agents repeatedly stopped and interrogated him regarding
35 his immigration status, the Border Patrol supervisor stated: "We have certain cars that we need
36 to pull over."
37
38
39
40
41
42
43

44
45 27. On or about July 22, 2011, at Port Angeles on the Olympic Peninsula, Plaintiff
46 Ramos Contreras and four others were traveling in a vehicle that was stopped by Border Patrol
47 agents. Once stopped, a Border Patrol agent tried unsuccessfully to grab the keys from the
48 vehicle. The driver handed the keys to the Border Patrol agent; the agent retained the keys for
49
50
51

1 the duration of the stop. During the stop, Plaintiff Ramos Contreras was interrogated by four
2 Border Patrol agents regarding his immigration status. The Border Patrol agents failed to
3 provide Plaintiff Ramos Contreras with a reason for the stop, but insisted that the occupants
4 hand over their identifying documents.
5
6

7
8
9 28. On information and belief, the Border Patrol lacked reasonable suspicion to
10 justify this stop and interrogation. On information and belief, it is alleged that the Border
11 Patrol selected this vehicle for this stop and interrogation solely because Plaintiff Ramos
12 Contreras and the other occupants appeared to the Border Patrol agents to be persons of color
13 based on their complexion and hair color.
14
15
16
17

18
19 29. Plaintiff Ramos Contreras was also questioned by Border Patrol outside the
20 Clallam County District Courthouse in Forks on the Olympic Peninsula. On or about
21 December 2, 2010, while walking out of the courthouse, Plaintiff Ramos Contreras was
22 approached by a plainclothes Border Patrol agent who questioned him regarding his
23 immigration status. The Border Patrol agent asked Plaintiff Ramos Contreras where he lived
24 and where he was born.
25
26
27
28
29

30
31 30. On information and belief, the Border Patrol agent selected Plaintiff Ramos
32 Contreras for this interrogation solely because he appeared to the Border Patrol agent to be a
33 person of color based on his complexion and hair color.
34
35
36

37 31. On or about October 15, 2011, near Clallam Bay on the Olympic Peninsula,
38 Plaintiff Grimes was traveling in a vehicle that was stopped by a Border Patrol agent. During
39 the stop, the Border Patrol agent approached the passenger window of Plaintiff Grimes' car and
40 had his hand on his holstered weapon. The agent seemed scared and volatile and yelled at
41 Plaintiff Grimes to roll down his windows. During the stop, the agent did not provide a reason
42 for stopping the vehicle. Instead, Plaintiff Grimes was interrogated by the Border Patrol agent
43 regarding his immigration status. Plaintiff Grimes was wearing his correctional-officer uniform
44 at the time of this stop.
45
46
47
48
49
50
51

1 32. On information and belief, the Border Patrol lacked reasonable suspicion to
2 justify this stop and interrogation. On information and belief, it is alleged that the Border
3 Patrol selected this vehicle for this stop and interrogation solely because Plaintiff Grimes
4 appeared to the Border Patrol agent to be a person of color based on his complexion and hair
5 color.
6
7
8
9

10 33. Each of the Plaintiffs has a reasonable fear that he is likely to again be stopped
11 and questioned on the Olympic Peninsula by Border Patrol agents without appropriate
12 reasonable suspicion for such actions.
13
14
15

16 34. Historical events, current developments, and public statements by Defendants
17 indicate that Border Patrol agents intend to continue stopping vehicles and interrogating vehicle
18 occupants on the Olympic Peninsula without appropriate reasonable suspicion.
19
20
21

22 35. Thirty years ago—in 1982—a class action complaint for injunctive and
23 declaratory relief was filed in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of
24 Washington, captioned *Nicacio v. United States Immigration & Naturalization Service*, Cause
25 No. C82-1018 RJM (“*Nicacio*”). The Chief Border Patrol agent for the Blaine Sector, which
26 has jurisdiction for the Olympic Peninsula, was one of the Defendants in that lawsuit. *See*
27 *Nicacio v. INS*, 595 F. Supp. 19 (E.D. Wash. 1984), *aff’d*, 769 F.2d 1133 (9th Cir. 1985),
28 *amended by* 770 F.2d 700 (9th Cir. 1985).
29
30
31
32
33
34
35

36 36. In *Nicacio*, the District Court found that:
37
38

39 INS agents were regularly conducting roving patrol motor vehicle
40 stops, detentions and interrogations in the Yakima Valley area of
41 the Spokane Sector. Many of the stops were based solely on
42 Hispanic appearance, or the agents’ subjective feelings or
43 intuition, or the suspected illegal aliens’ innocuous behavior or
44 appearance traits.
45

46 Persons stopped were required in most cases to provide
47 identification or documentation of legal presence in the United
48 States. Defendants keep no record of automobile stops in which
49 no illegal aliens are apprehended.
50

51 *Id.* at 21.

1 37. The District Court entered judgment for the plaintiffs and the certified class that
2 they represented (“All persons of Mexican, Latin, or Hispanic appearance who have been, are,
3 or will be traveling by motor vehicle on the highways of the State of Washington.”), the
4 operative portions of which are as follows:
5
6

7
8
9 1. IT IS HEREBY ORDERED: It is unlawful for the
10 United States Immigration and Naturalization Service, its agents
11 and employees and Border Patrol agents: To stop, detain, and
12 interrogate persons of Hispanic appearance traveling by motor
13 vehicle on the highways of the State of Washington without a
14 valid search or arrest warrant, or unless they have a particularized
15 reasonable suspicion based on specific articulable facts and
16 rational inferences therefrom that the occupant of a vehicle is an
17 alien unlawfully in the United States. Further, these specific
18 articulable facts justifying the motor vehicle stops must be based
19 upon particularized objective factors, and not solely upon the
20 agents’ individual subjective impressions.
21

22 2. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the United States
23 Immigration and Naturalization Service, its agents and employees
24 and Border Patrol agents: Shall not stop, detain, and interrogate
25 persons of Hispanic appearance traveling by motor vehicle on the
26 roadways of the State of Washington without documenting in
27 writing the specific articulable facts on which defendants base
28 their particularized reasonable suspicion for stopping, detaining
29 and interrogating these persons. Defendants shall maintain this
30 documentation for a period of not less than three years.
31

32 *Id.* at 26.

33
34 38. The District Court also required that “[c]opies of [its] Judgment shall be posted
35 in the various INS and Border Patrol offices within the region and the supervisory personnel of
36 INS shall proceed forthwith to implement the provisions of this Judgment.” *Id.*
37

38 39. The defendants in *Nicacio* appealed; the Court of Appeals affirmed. *Nicacio v.*
39 *INS*, 797 F.2d 700 (9th Cir. 1985). In addition to challenging the merits of the District Court’s
40 findings and conclusions, the defendants argued that the injunction requiring them to document
41 the grounds for vehicle stops that did not result in an arrest or seizure of property was
42 “excessively intrusive and burdensome.” *Id.* at 706. The Court of Appeals held that the record
43 did not support the defendants’ contention of burden and intrusiveness, and, in so holding,
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51

1 stated, “Indeed, it is difficult to imagine a remedy that would be less burdensome to the
2 government and at the same time serve in any way to prevent future constitutional violations.”

3
4 *Id.* Further, the Court of Appeals noted that the District Court would retain jurisdiction and that
5 the defendants could seek to have the injunction modified “if a change in circumstances so
6 requires.” *Id.*

7
8
9
10
11 40. The defendants in *Nicacio* never sought to modify or seek relief from the
12 affirmed judgment.

13
14
15 41. On September 2, 2004, with reference to *Nicacio*, a request pursuant to the
16 Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”) was made for documents regarding the interrogations of
17 persons who appeared to be Hispanic and were traveling on the State of Washington’s roads
18 and regarding the required postings of the *Nicacio* judgment. The Department of Homeland
19 Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, responded to this FOIA request on August 3,
20 2005, indicating that it had “located no records that are responsive to [the] request.” With
21 reference to *Nicacio*, this FOIA response stated as follows:
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

29 After reviewing *Nicacio v. U.S.*, we found no order requiring a
30 posting of the decision. It was ordered that INS could not stop,
31 detain, and interrogate persons of Hispanic appearance traveling
32 by motor vehicle in the State of Washington without
33 documenting, in writing, the specific facts for stopping, detaining
34 and interrogating these persons. INS is required to maintain this
35 documentation for a period of three years. Records of all
36 apprehensions are being documented on either an I-44 or an I-213
37 (Record of Deportable Alien) and then filed in the individual’s
38 alien file. Furthermore, Detention and Removal Operations
39 (DRO) does not initiate any stops unless they are targeting a
40 specific individual with a final order of removal.

41
42 42. This FOIA response indicates that Defendants are not complying with the
43 documentation and posting requirements of the judgment in *Nicacio*, especially as to
44 individuals initially stopped but ultimately not apprehended as removable (for which an I-213
45 form is used) or where no property was seized (and documented on an I-44 form).
46
47
48
49
50
51

1 43. Starting in 2007, Defendants established periodic immigration checkpoints
2 along roadways on the Olympic Peninsula in order to try to intercept non-citizens without
3 documented permission to be in the United States.
4

5
6 44. The Olympic Peninsula checkpoints were set up without advance notice and at
7 locations where they could not be avoided by travelers who come upon them along the roads on
8 which they are placed.
9

10
11 45. Many residents of the area and others who traveled on those roads found these
12 checkpoints objectionable. *See, e.g.,* Manuel Valdes, *Border Patrol roadblock irks Forks*,
13 *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, Sept. 8, 2008.
14
15

16
17 46. Public outcry over the Border Patrol's interior checkpoints was severe. In
18 response to constituent concerns, both United States Senator Maria Cantwell and United States
19 Representative Norm Dicks wrote to Defendant Napolitano.
20
21

22
23 47. In his February 9, 2009 letter, Representative Dicks questioned the value of the
24 Olympic Peninsula checkpoint strategy and reported constituent complaints that "some degree
25 of ethnic profiling has been occurring."
26
27

28
29 48. Senator Maria Cantwell wrote to Defendant Napolitano on March 27, 2009,
30 expressing concern about the Border Patrol's overly aggressive police tactics. Specifically, she
31 reported that constituents have complained about Border Patrol agents targeting "Muslim,
32 Hispanic, and tribal communities . . . solely on their race, ethnicity, or religion."
33
34

35
36 49. In response to the public outcry and threat of legal action, the Border Patrol
37 ceased operating checkpoints on the Olympic Peninsula.
38

39
40 50. Instead, however, the Border Patrol began a practice of stopping individual
41 vehicles for questioning without appropriate reasonable suspicion. Like the checkpoints, this
42 current practice of "roving patrol" stops as implemented by the Border Patrol is not focused on
43 persons that the Border Patrol believes to have recently crossed the border from Canada. The
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51

1 Border Patrol's practice of roving patrol stops has become increasingly prevalent in recent
2 years.
3

4
5 51. It is this policy and practice, which echoes the days of *Nicacio* thirty years ago,
6 that is the subject of this lawsuit.
7

8
9 52. It has long been established that a Border Patrol agent violates the Fourth
10 Amendment of the United States Constitution when the agent stops a vehicle without
11 reasonable suspicion of wrongdoing. *See, e.g., United States v. Brignoni-Ponce*, 422 U.S. 873,
12 883 (1975) (“[A] requirement of reasonable suspicion for stops allows the Government
13 adequate means of guarding the public interest and also protects residents of the border areas
14 from indiscriminate official interference. Under the circumstances, and even though the
15 intrusion incident to a stop is modest, we conclude that it is not ‘reasonable’ under the Fourth
16 Amendment to make such stops on a random basis.”); *see also United States v. Mallides*, 473
17 F.2d 859, 862 (9th Cir. 1973) (“Neither the Supreme Court nor this court has ever upheld the
18 legality of a detention based upon an officer’s unsupported intuition, and we refuse to do so
19 now.”).
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29

30
31 53. The requirement of reasonable suspicion necessitates “specific articulable
32 facts, together with rational inferences from those facts, that reasonably warrant suspicion
33 that the vehicle[] contain[s] aliens who may be illegally in the country.” *Brignoni-Ponce*,
34 422 U.S. at 884.
35
36
37

38
39 54. Reasonable suspicion cannot be based solely upon the ethnic and/or racial
40 appearance of a vehicle’s occupants. *Id.* at 886.
41

42
43 55. Moreover, Congress has limited the statutory authority of Border Patrol agents
44 to stop vehicles away from the border. According to 8 U.S.C. § 1357(a)(3), a Border Patrol
45 agent is only allowed, “within a reasonable distance from any external boundary of the United
46 States, to board and search for aliens any . . . vehicle . . . for the purpose of patrolling the
47 border to prevent the illegal entry of aliens into the United States[.]” (Emphasis added).
48
49
50
51

1 56. The accompanying regulations further limit a Border Patrol agent by requiring
2 that an agent must have a “reasonable suspicion, based upon specific articulable facts, that the
3 person being questioned is, or is attempting to be, engaged in an offense against the United
4 States or is an alien illegally in the United States” in order to stop a vehicle or participate in a
5 vehicle stop. 8 C.F.R. § 287.8(b)(2).
6
7

8
9
10
11 57. On information and belief, Defendants have implemented a practice of stopping
12 vehicles or participating in vehicle stops based on a hunch or intuition, including stops based
13 solely on the ethnic and/or racial appearance of the occupants of the vehicle, and thus without
14 sufficient suspicion on which to base the stop.
15
16

17
18
19 58. On information and belief, Defendants are aware that Border Patrol agents
20 are making stops on the Olympic Peninsula based on nothing more than a hunch or
21 intuition, and that they have no basis to assume that the cars that they have stopped have
22 entered from the border or are carrying persons coming in from the border.
23
24

25
26
27 59. On information and belief, Defendants are aware that the practice of stopping
28 vehicles or participating in vehicle stops based on a hunch or intuition results in stops based
29 only on the racial and/or ethnic appearance of vehicle occupants.
30
31

32
33 60. It is exactly this kind of discriminatory policing on the basis of ethnic and/or
34 racial appearance that the Department of Justice flatly condemned in its investigation of the
35 Maricopa County Arizona Sheriff’s Office. The Department of Justice found that the Maricopa
36 Sheriff’s Office had engaged in racial profiling of Latinos. The report charges that the
37 Maricopa County Sheriff’s Office, in the course of immigration-related activities, frequently
38 stopped or arrested Latinos without either probable cause or reasonable suspicion. As a result,
39 the Department of Homeland Security revoked the authority of the Maricopa County Sheriff’s
40 Office to enforce immigration laws pursuant to a prior written agreement under 8 U.S.C.
41 § 1357(g), and the Department of Justice threatened legal action against that Sheriff’s Office to
42 ensure that the discriminatory policing ends.
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51

1 61. On information and belief, Border Patrol agents working on the Olympic
2 Peninsula have not been given adequate training regarding the circumstances under which
3 vehicles may be stopped or vehicle occupants interrogated consistent with the United States
4 Constitution.
5
6

7
8 62. Additionally, Defendants have failed to establish policies and procedures that
9 ensure that Border Patrol agents working on the Olympic Peninsula understand and can
10 implement their training regarding the circumstances under which vehicles may be stopped or
11 vehicle occupants interrogated consistent with the United States Constitution. According to a
12 December 2011 Government Accountability Office report on Border Security, the Border
13 Patrol lacks a national policy assigning responsibility to ensure that Border Patrol agents are
14 sufficiently trained.
15
16

17 63. On information and belief, Defendants are aware that Border Patrol agents are
18 not completing paperwork that documents the bases for their reasonable suspicion for all stops,
19 specifically with respect to stops where Border Patrol agents discover that the person who is
20 stopped is lawfully present in the United States.
21
22

23 64. On information and belief, the Border Patrol does not have in place a practice
24 and procedure requiring the completion of paperwork that sets forth the bases of reasonable
25 suspicion for all stops. The lack of an established policy and procedure encourages or at least
26 allows for the Border Patrol's stopping of vehicles or participating in vehicle stops that are
27 based on nothing other than the ethnic and/or racial appearance of a vehicle's occupants.
28
29

30 65. On information and belief, one factor that has resulted in the ever-increasing
31 frequency and number of unlawful vehicle stops is the fact that there has been a dramatic
32 increase in the number of Border Patrol agents situated on the Olympic Peninsula—and the
33 number of agents continues to increase. Indeed, in the last decade the Port Angeles Office has
34 grown from less than five agents to over forty agents.
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51

1 66. On information and belief, Border Patrol agents working on the Olympic
2 Peninsula do not have enough work preventing the “illegal entry of aliens into the United
3 States,” 8 U.S.C. § 1357(a)(3), across the Canada-United States border and have instead been
4 directed or given permission to engage or participate in the detention of vehicles and
5 interrogation of vehicle occupants who have not recently crossed the Canada-United States
6 border.
7
8
9
10
11

12 67. On July 29, 2011, Christian Sanchez provided testimony before the Advisory
13 Committee on Transparency. Mr. Sanchez testified that he was employed as a Border Patrol
14 agent, and that he had been stationed at Port Angeles on the Olympic Peninsula since
15 September 2009. He testified that the number of Border Patrol officers in the Port Angeles
16 office recently increased from four to forty and is still growing. As a stark example of this
17 growth, a new Border Patrol office is being constructed in Port Angeles at a taxpayer-funded
18 cost of around \$6 million. *See, e.g., New Border Patrol Agent in Charge at Port Angeles,*
19 *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, February 6, 2012.
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27

28 68. Mr. Sanchez also testified that the Port Angeles office was “in a remote area,
29 with no border activity.” He testified that this situation has resulted in “high-energy men”
30 being “bored,” a situation that he characterized as a “bad combination.” He further stated that
31 the result was “bad morale and a dangerously unhealthy work environment.”
32
33
34
35
36

37 69. Mr. Sanchez’s testimony has brought added public attention to the practice and
38 policy of vehicle stops on the Olympic Peninsula, and in response Border Patrol representatives
39 have spoken publicly about their “mission” on the Olympic Peninsula.
40
41

42 70. Public statements by Border Patrol representatives demonstrates that Border
43 Patrol’s current policy and practice goes well beyond stopping individuals based upon
44 reasonable suspicion. Indeed, on August 16, 2011, the *Peninsula Daily News* reported on a
45 presentation that Station Supervisor Jose Romero made to the Port Angeles Regional Chamber
46 of Commerce. This story quotes Mr. Romero as saying that agents from his office are in areas
47
48
49
50
51

1 throughout the Olympic Peninsula “pretty much every day,” and that “We are the only law
2 enforcement agency charged with protecting the whole country by patrolling the streets every
3 day.”
4
5

6
7 71. This same news article quotes Romero as stating, “Questioning someone’s
8 immigration status comes partly from a ‘gut feeling’ the agent might have about the person.”
9

10
11 **CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS**
12

13 72. Plaintiffs bring this class action on behalf of themselves and all others similarly
14 situated. The proposed Class is defined as follows:
15

16
17 All persons operating or occupying a vehicle on the Olympic
18 Peninsula who have been or will be in the future stopped,
19 detained and/or interrogated by Border Patrol, excluding those
20 vehicle operators or occupants disembarking from the
21 international ferry in Port Angeles.
22

23 73. Plaintiffs and members of the Class seek class-wide equitable, declaratory and
24 injunctive relief pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(b)(2).
25

26
27 74. Membership in the Class is so numerous that individual joinder of all of their
28 members would be impracticable. Such joinder is also impracticable as membership in the
29 Class will change over time because many members of the Class are unaware of their rights,
30 and because many members of the Class have limited access to legal services and
31 representation.
32
33

34
35 75. There are many facts and questions of law common to the representative
36 Plaintiffs and the members of the Class, including the following:
37
38

- 39
40
41 a. The legality of stopping, detaining, and interrogating Plaintiffs and
42 members of the Class.
43
44 b. Border Patrol’s policy, procedure, or practice of stopping vehicles or
45 participating in vehicle stops and interrogating vehicle occupants on the
46 Olympic Peninsula without appropriate reasonable suspicion.
47
48
49
50
51

- 1 c. Border Patrol's policy, procedure, or practice of stopping vehicles or
2 participating in vehicle stops and interrogating vehicle occupants on the
3 Olympic Peninsula based on hunch or intuition.
4
5
6
7 d. Border Patrol's failure to maintain records of all stops, including those
8 stops where the agents determine that the persons stopped have lawful
9 status to reside in the United States.
10
11

12
13 76. The claims of the individual Plaintiffs are typical of the claims of the members
14 of the Class.
15

16
17 77. The individual Plaintiffs will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the
18 members of the Class. There is no conflict between the interests of the individual Plaintiffs and
19 members of the Class with respect to the issues in this action.
20
21

22
23 78. Plaintiffs have retained legal counsel who are experienced in civil rights and
24 class action litigation, and who will adequately represent the interests of the members of the
25 Class as well as those of the individual Plaintiffs.
26
27

28
29 79. Defendants have acted on grounds generally applicable to both the individual
30 Plaintiffs and the members of the Class, making declaratory and injunctive relief appropriate as
31 to the Class as well as the individual Plaintiffs.
32
33

34
35 **FIRST CLAIM FOR RELIEF**
36

37 **Violation of the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution**
38

39 80. Plaintiffs repeat and reallege each of the allegations set forth above.
40

41 81. Defendants' unlawful practice of stopping vehicles without reasonable
42 suspicion, as set forth above, in violation of Plaintiffs' and Class Members' Fourth Amendment
43 rights, has adversely affected or aggrieved Plaintiffs and Class Members and caused them to
44 suffer harm. Moreover, Defendants' unlawful practice is subject to repetition and is likely to
45 continue, placing Plaintiffs and Class Members at an imminent risk of suffering a legal wrong.
46
47
48
49
50
51

1 1. Certify the class according to the definition provided above and appoint the
2
3 undersigned as class counsel;

4 2. Declare that Defendants have violated Plaintiffs' and Class Members' rights
5
6 under the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution;

7 3. Declare that Defendants' actions are in excess of Defendants' statutory
8
9 jurisdiction or authority under 8 U.S.C. § 1357, and its implementing regulations at 8 C.F.R.
10
11 § 287;

12 4. Declare that it is unlawful for Border Patrol agents to stop or participate in the
13
14 stop of a vehicle without a valid search or arrest warrant unless the Border Patrol agent has a
15
16 particularized reasonable suspicion based upon specific and articulable facts and rational
17
18 inferences therefrom that the occupant of the vehicle is a person unlawfully in the United
19
20 States;

21 5. Declare that it is a violation of the Fourth Amendment to the United States
22
23 Constitution to stop or participate in a stop of a vehicle based solely on the occupants' ethnic
24
25 and/or racial appearance;

26 6. Enjoin Defendants or their personnel from stopping vehicles or participating in
27
28 stops:

29 a. without reasonable suspicion that the occupants are not legally
30
31 present in the United States; and

32 b. until each Border Patrol agent has received training as to what
33
34 constitutes reasonable suspicion for a Border Patrol vehicle stop or
35
36 for Border Patrol to participate in a vehicle stop; and

37 c. until each Border Patrol agent has demonstrated, through testing, that
38
39 he or she understands what constitutes reasonable suspicion to
40
41 support a Border Patrol vehicle stop or for Border Patrol to
42
43 participate in a vehicle stop.
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51

- 1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
7. Enjoin Defendants' unlawful conduct and require:
 - a. Defendants to maintain complete and accurate records that document that each agent has received training as to what constitutes reasonable suspicion to support a Border Patrol vehicle stop or for Border Patrol to participate in a vehicle stop;
 - b. Defendants to maintain complete and accurate records that document that each agent has been tested, and understands what constitutes reasonable suspicion to support a Border Patrol vehicle stop or for Border Patrol to participate in a vehicle stop; and
 - c. Defendants to prepare documentation for all vehicle stops made by Border Patrol agents or in which Border Patrol agents participate, that sets forth in detail the basis for the reasonable suspicion used to justify the vehicle stop or interrogation of its occupants, and to maintain this documentation in such a manner that it is easily accessible for examination by a special master to ensure compliance, regardless of whether the Border Patrol ultimately determines that the occupant(s) stopped are undocumented citizens;

35 8. Appoint a special master, pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 53, to oversee and ensure
36 implementation of the above injunctive measures, and to additionally audit and inspect
37 Defendants' documentation to assure future compliance;

40 9. Award Plaintiffs and Class Members the attorneys' fees and costs they incur
41 herein, pursuant to the Equal Access to Justice Act, 28 U.S.C. § 2412(d)(1)(A); and
42
43

44 10. Grant any other relief that the Court may determine to be just and equitable.
45
46
47
48
49
50
51

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51

DATED: April 26, 2012

s/ Nicholas P. Gellert
Nicholas P. Gellert, WSBA No. 18041

s/ Brendan J. Peters
Brendan J. Peters, WSBA No. 34490

s/ Javier F. Garcia
Javier F. Garcia, WSBA No. 38259

s/ Steven D. Merriman
Steven D. Merriman, WSBA 44035
Perkins Coie LLP
1201 Third Avenue, Suite 4800
Seattle, WA 98101-3099
Telephone: 206.359.8000
Facsimile: 206.359.9000

Attorneys for Plaintiffs
Cooperating Attorney for the ACLU and NWIRP

s/ Sarah Dunne
Sarah Dunne, WSBA No. 34869

s/ La Rond Baker
La Rond Baker, WSBA No. 43610
ACLU of Washington Foundation
901 5th Ave, Suite 630
Seattle, WA 98164
Telephone: 206.624.2184

s/ Matt Adams
Matt Adams, WSBA No. 28287
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project
615 Second Ave., Ste. 400
Seattle, WA 98104
Telephone: 206.957.8611
Facsimile: 206.587.4009
Attorneys for Plaintiffs