

This is a printer friendly version of an article from the **Daily Record**
To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

[Back](#)

02/22/08 - Posted from the Daily Record newsroom

Cresitello to confront county over immigration enforcement

BY MINHAJ HASSAN
DAILY RECORD

MORRISTOWN — Morris County's refusal to sign off on Mayor Donald Cresitello's controversial immigration enforcement plan makes it unlikely the plan will move forward but the mayor is vowing to fight on.

"I don't think it's dead yet," Cresitello said in a brief phone interview Friday. "Maybe I can embarrass the president, the attorney general and the freeholders."

Cresitello wants to deputize local police officers to enforce federal immigration laws under a program known as 287 G. The plan would give approximately 10 local police officers the same enforcement powers as agents of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The town had to apply to the federal government to move forward but approval was contingent on the town being allowed to use the county jail to house any detainees who are suspected of crimes and are living in town without legal documents.

The county made its decision not to participate in the plan after receiving an analytical report from Sheriff Edward Rochford. The county had asked Rochford to study the possible impact on the county jail if the town were to implement 287G.

Among other things the report concluded the program would require start-up costs of \$1.5 million, which would include hiring additional staff, training, renovations, among other costs. The county jail currently has a budget of approximately \$16.3 million.

"In light of the foregoing and detailed information contained in (the report), the county of Morris and Morris County Sheriff's Office have chosen not to participate in the 287(G) program at this time," a statement from the county on Friday said.

Cresitello said he will write a letter to Freeholder Director Margaret Nordstrom seeking a reversal of the decision and he will publicly present his request to the freeholders at a future meeting.

"If they want to officially deny my request, let them do it in public," he said.

In a prior published report, Cresitello had said his plan was effectively killed by the county's refusal to participate.

Cresitello applied for the 287G program last March. At the time, it wasn't a requirement for the town to show ICE they would have enough jail space for detainees. So, when the requirement went into effect last summer, town officials told the county they would be unable to enter into the program unless the Morris County Correctional Facility was willing to provide jail space for detainees.

The mayor said he will also contact ICE to tell them "how ill-conceived that requirement was."

He added that it was not right for ICE to change its requirements mid-stream, saying he would not have applied for 287G, since he doubted that the county would go along with the program.

"It was wrong for them (ICE) to change the game plan," he said.

Minhaj Hassan can be reached at (973) 267-9038 or at mhassan@gannett.com.
