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PRIVACY ACT PROTECTED

Carol Lam (SDCA): Appointed Nov. 18, 2002; term expired Nov. 18, 2006
*Executive AUSA Karen Hewitt is interim USA; 6 years as career federal
prosecutor/manager; 8 years as government litigator; 3 years in private practice*

- This is one of our largest offices in the country. In addition to all of the complex legal issues that occur in these extra-large districts, San Diego also faces a tremendous responsibility to effectively manage a border.
- She continually failed to perform in relation to significant leadership priorities – these were priorities that were well-known within the Department. They were discussed at our annual mandatory USA conferences, in speeches by Department leaders, in memos, in conference calls, and in a host of other ways.
- First, the President and Attorney General have made clear that border enforcement is a top priority. It's important to our national security and to our domestic security. Regardless of what was done by the office in this area, she failed to tackle this responsibility as aggressively and as vigorously as we expected and needed her to do. At the end of the day, we expected more.
- Ex: The President has made clear that he expects strong immigration enforcement efforts, but SDCA has only brought a fraction of the cases that other significant border districts are doing. While some good numbers on alien smuggling:
 - Only 422 illegal re-entry cases in 2005 where AZ did 1,491 and NM did 1,607;
 - Only 470 illegal entry cases in 2005 where AZ did 3,409 and NM did 1,194;
 - In June 2006, Sen. Feinstein wrote a letter to the AG complaining about the high prosecution guidelines which kept these numbers low.
- Writing about her concern for Ms. Lam's "restrictive prosecutorial guidelines," Sen. Feinstein stressed "the importance of vigorously prosecuting these type of cases so that California isn't viewed as an easy entry point for alien smugglers because there is no fear of prosecution if caught."
- More than 18 other members of Congress complained about her "catch and release" policies and her failure to let alien smugglers back out onto the street by raising prosecution guidelines too high.
- Second, the President and both Attorneys General in this Administration made clear that, after terrorism, gun crime is the top priority and an important tactic to fighting violent crime.
- SDCA has only brought a fraction of the cases of other extra-large districts. Despite its size and population, it ranks 91 out of 93 districts in terms of average numbers of firearms cases since FY 2000 (doing only an average of 18 cases).

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- Third, rather than focusing on the management of her office, this USA spent a significant amount of her time trying cases – this is discouraged in extra-large districts, because these are offices that require full-time managers.

John McKay (WDWA): Appointed Oct. 30, 2001; term expired Oct. 30, 2005
Criminal Chief Jeff Sullivan was appointed interim USA – 5 years as a career federal prosecutor after 27 years as the county prosecutor and 3 years in private practice.

- Demonstrated a pattern of poor judgment in relation to the tactics he used to push for policy changes that were not in the best interest of the Department and without regard to the Department's appropriate channels and methods of evaluating policy.
- Placed extensive focus, and engaged in a significant amount of travel outside of the district to advocate policy changes, rather than focusing on running the office.
- The Department was aware that his district had a bad record with downward departures, failure to appeal downward departures, and that his policy focus was distracting him from the work of the office.

Paul Charlton (AZ): Appointed Nov. 14, 2001; term expired Nov. 14, 2005
Chief AUSA Daniel Knauss was appointed interim USA; 32 ½ years as a career federal prosecutor, including 2 months as interim USA in that office in the past

- Repeatedly took actions contrary to DOJ policy and procedure.
- Failed to implement the AG's instruction on a death penalty case, when federal law places the decision with the AG.
- Like McKay, Charlton demonstrated a pattern of poor judgment in relation to the tactics he used to push for policy changes without regard to the Department's appropriate channels and methods of evaluating policy. He tried to mandate the FBI to institute a new policy to videotape all interviews with suspects without regard to the national policy taken by the FBI or all of the many reasons why this raises significant concerns that require substantial discussion.
- Despite the national focus the Attorney General requested for offices to focus on the federal crime of obscenity, which coarsens society, McKay failed to support the Department's prosecution of a case that was developed within his district.
- Worked outside of proper channels in seeking resources, without regard to the process or the impact his action would have on our other USAOs.

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- [Contrary to guidance from Main Justice that it was poor judgment, he put an employee on "leave without pay" status so she could become a paid press secretary for a Republican running in the 2002 gubernatorial campaign against Governor Napolitano, the former U.S. Attorney. (Shortly thereafter, the employee left the USAO permanently.)]

David Iglesias (NM): Appointed Oct. 17, 2001; term expired Oct. 17, 2005
First AUSA Larry Gomez is Acting USA; 27 years as career federal prosecutor/manager plus 2 years as local prosecutor

- One of our large offices, New Mexico is a critically-important border district.
- Again, the President and Attorney General have made clear that border enforcement is a top priority. It's important to our national security and to our domestic security. Regardless of what was done by the office in this area, he failed to tackle this responsibility as aggressively and as vigorously as we expected and needed her to do.
- There was a perception that he traveled a lot, but that even when he was in the office he still delegated a vast majority of the management to his First Assistant. We expect our U.S. Attorneys, particularly those in critical districts, to be hands-on managers working hard to advance the work of the Department.
- Quite simply, now that Mr. Iglesias finished his four-year term (and then some) this was an area where we thought we could make a change to bring more dynamic leadership to the office.

Dan Bogden (Nevada): Appointed Nov. 2, 2001; term expired Nov. 2, 2005
First AUSA Steve Myhré is Acting USA; 9 years as federal prosecutor/manager plus 5 years of private sector litigation and 8 years in the Marine Corps Judge Advocate

- Similarly, Nevada is what we consider to be a very important district that was underserved.
- Given the large tourist population that visits each year, it's well-known that Las Vegas could present a target for terrorism. It has also struggled with violent crime, drugs, and organized crime. This is an office where we have the right to expect excellence and aggressive prosecution in a number of priority areas.
- Despite the national focus the Attorney General requested for offices to place on the federal crime of obscenity, which coarsens society, the USA failed to support the Department's prosecution of a case that was developed within his district.

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- This is another district where, now that Mr. Bodgen has finished his four-year term (and then some), we thought we could make a change to bring more dynamic leadership to the office.

Margaret Chiara (WDMJ): Appointed Nov. 2, 2001; term expired Nov. 2005
Decision pending on who will lead the office until a new Senate-confirmed USA is identified.

TRY TO AVOID SINCE NO PUBLIC STATEMENTS FROM CHIARA:

- We have briefed privately the reasons for the change in this district; however, Ms. Chiara has not made any public statements at this time, and out of respect for her silence, we'd say only that this office presented some management issues.

IF PUSHED:

- Under the USA's tenure, the office has become fractured, morale has fallen, and the USA has lost the confidence of several members of the leadership team and some career prosecutors.
- The problems here have required an on-site visit by management experts from our EOUSA to visit and mediate with members of the leadership team, and in the end, it was decided that new leadership would be appropriate to unite the office.

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To do:

- call Kelley re meeting
- re president was briefed

Shumer Briefing Prep:

Ask:

- names + reasons
- Griffin → write-up
- FAUSA →
- DOJ dissent →
- EAPs reports →
- President told? →
- any outside calls →
- rec'd about Lam →

I. A. Background - various experiences

- made list of performance issues USAF
- WA said OK
- process

B. Who/why

- names/bullets

C. Conspiring theory

don't like

- interview/pres. letter

II. Karin Ryan: all report

Carl Lam: supports hearing; gun stats; immigration; CHIP; ~~to~~

Paul Chalton: death penalty, e.g.; insurrection; ^{top 7 FBI} interviews

David Iglesias: lackluster performance > important

Don Boyden: lackluster performance (obesity) & st. ut. - back + Vegas

John McKinny: judgment lacking; letter w/ other USAF orders

Murray Chavez:

facts to share info. insubordination;

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AG's hearing
1.18.2007

FEINSTEIN:

Thank you.

You and I talked on Tuesday about what's happening with U.S. attorneys. And it spurred me to do a little research. And let me begin. Title 28, Section 541 states: "Each United States attorney shall be appointed for a term of four years. On the expiration of his term, a United States attorney shall continue to perform the duties of his office until his successor is appointed and qualified."

Now, I understand that there is a pleasure aspect to it. But I also understand what practice has been in the past.

We have 13 vacancies. Yesterday, you sent up two nominees for the 13 existing vacancies.

GONZALES:

We've now nominated, I think -- there have been 11 vacancies created since the law was changed; 11 vacancies in U.S. Attorneys' Offices. The president has now nominated as to six of those. As to the remaining five, we're in discussions with home-state senators.

And so let me publicly sort of preempt perhaps a question you're going to ask me, and that is: I am fully committed, as the administration's fully committed, to ensure that, with respect to every United States attorney position in this country, we will have a presidentially appointed, Senate-confirmed United States attorney.

GONZALES:

I think a United States attorney who I view as the leader, law enforcement leader, my representative in the community -- I think he has greater imprimatur of authority, if in fact that person's been confirmed by the Senate.

FEINSTEIN:

Now, let me get at where I'm going. How many United States attorneys have been asked to resign in the past year?

GONZALES:

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Senator, you know, you're asking me to get into a public discussion about personnel...

FEINSTEIN:

No, I'm just asking you to give me a number. That's all. I'm asking you to give me a number. I'm asking...

GONZALES:

You know, I don't know the answer to that question. But we have been very forthcoming...

FEINSTEIN:

You didn't know it on Tuesday when I spoke with you. said you would find out and tell me.

GONZALES:

I'm not sure I said that, but...

FEINSTEIN:

Yes, you did, Mr. Attorney General.

GONZALES:

Well, if that's what I said, then that's what I will do. But we did provide to you a letter where we gave you a lot of information about...

FEINSTEIN:

I read the letter.

GONZALES:

OK.

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FEINSTEIN:

It doesn't answer the questions that I have.

I know of at least six that have been asked to resign. I know that we amended the law in the Patriot Act and we amended it because if there were a national security problem, the attorney general would have the ability to move into the gap.

We did not amend it to prevent the confirmation process from taking place. And I'm very concerned. I've had two of them asked to resign in my state from major jurisdictions with major cases ongoing, with substantially good records as prosecutors.

And I'm very concerned, because, technically, under the Patriot Act, you can appoint someone without confirmation for the remainder of the president's term. I don't believe you should do that. We are going to try to change the law back.

GONZALES:

Senator, may I just say that I don't think there was any evidence that is what I'm trying to do. In fact, to the contrary, the evidence is quite clear that what we're trying to do is ensure that for the people in each of these respective districts we have the very best possible representative for the Department of Justice and that we are working to nominate people and that we are working with home state senators to get U.S. attorneys nominated.

So the evidence is just quite contrary to what your possibly suggesting.

Let me just say...

FEINSTEIN:

Do you deny that you have asked -- your office has asked United States attorneys to resign in the past year?

GONZALES:

Senator, that...

FEINSTEIN:

Yes or no?

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GONZALES:

Yes.

No, I don't deny that. What I'm saying is -- but that happens during every administration during different periods for different reasons.

And so the fact that that's happened, quite frankly, some people should view that as a sign of good management. What we do is we make an evaluation about the performance of individuals, and I have a responsibility to the people in your district that we have the best possible people in these positions.

And that's the reason why changes sometimes have to be made, although there are a number of reasons why changes get made and why people leave on their own.

I think I would never, ever make a change in a United States attorney for political reasons or if it would in any way jeopardize an ongoing serious investigation. I just would not do it.

FEINSTEIN:

Well, let me just say one thing. I believe very strongly that these positions should come to this committee for confirmation.

GONZALES:

They are, Senator.

FEINSTEIN:

I believe very strongly we should have the opportunity...

GONZALES:

I agree with you.

FEINSTEIN:

... to answer (sic) questions about...

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GONZALES:

I agree with you.

FEINSTEIN:

And I have been asked by another senator to ask this question, and I will: Was there any other reason for asking Bud Cummings of Arkansas to resign other than the desire to put in Tim Griffin?

GONZALES:

Senator, again, I'm not going to get into a public discussion about the merits or not with respect to personnel decisions.

I will say that I've had two conversations -- one as recanted, I think, yesterday -- with a senator from Arkansas about this issue. He and I are in a dialogue. We are -- I am consulting with the home state senator so he understands what's going on and the reasons why, and working with him to try to get this thing resolved, to make sure for his benefit, for the benefit of the Department of Justice that we have the best possible person manning that position.

FEINSTEIN:

If I could move on quickly. In 2000, the last year that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Fire arms and Explosives issued a report with an analysis. It was revealed that 57 percent of all guns used in crimes in the United States had come from 1.2 percent of licensed gun dealers.

In other words, the majority of crimes were not coming from guns from the black market, but from a few licensed dealers.

Now, this information was really quite useful, but starting in 2004, the Congress added amendments on the CJS approps bill restricting BATFE's ability to share gun trace data with local jurisdictions.

In the 109th Congress, there was no CJS bill, so therefore, the gun trace data effort died in the Senate.

FEINSTEIN:

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FEINSTEIN:

All right. I think that's fair. And I think we need to check it out. But I know places where it has not gone for law enforcement purposes. So I'd be happy to talk with you about that further.

My time is up. Thank you.

LEAHY:

I'm just wondering, during the -- when we take our break for lunch, would it be possible to get the numbers that Senator Feinstein has asked for?

GONZALES:

I think it's possible. I will certainly...

FEINSTEIN:

U.S. attorneys asked to resign.

GONZALES:

Senator, that's a number that I would like to share with you. I don't want to have a public discussion about personnel decisions. It's not fair, quite frankly, to the people.

LEAHY:

I'm just curious as to the numbers. I don't care who they are. I want to know the numbers.

Thank you.

Senator Kyl?

KYL:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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DAG's Hearing

2.6.2007

SEN. SCHUMER: Right. But I think you would agree that that would not be a good idea.

MR. MCNULTY: I would agree.

SEN. SCHUMER: Okay. Now let me ask you this. You do agree that a United States attorney can't be removed for a discriminatory reason -- because that person is a woman or black or -- do you agree with that?

MR. MCNULTY: Sure. I --

SEN. SCHUMER: So there are some limits here?

MR. MCNULTY: Well, of course, and there would certainly be moral limits and -- I don't know the law in the area of removal and relates to those special categories, but I certainly know that as a -- an appropriate thing to do -- would be completely inappropriate.

SEN. SCHUMER: Okay. And you do believe, of course, that a U.S. attorney could be removed for a corrupt reason --

MR. MCNULTY: Right.

SEN. SCHUMER: -- in return for a bribe or a favor? Okay. Now let me ask you this. Do you think it is good for public confidence and respect of the Justice Department for the president to exercise his power to remove a U.S. attorney simply to give somebody else a chance at the job? Let's just assume for the sake of argument that that's the reason. Mr. X, you're doing a very, very fine job but we'd prefer -- and you're in the middle of your term -- no one objects to what you've done -- but we prefer that Mr. Y take over. Would that be a good idea? Would that practice be wise?

MR. MCNULTY: I think that if it was done on a large scale, it could raise substantial issues and concerns. But I don't have the same perhaps alarm that you might have about whether or not that is a bad practice. If at the end of the first four-year term -- and of course all of our confirmation certificates say that we serve for a four-year term -- at the end of that four-year term, if there was an effort to identify and nominate new individuals to step in -- to take on a second term, for example, I'm not so sure that would be contrary to the best interest of the Department of Justice. It's not something that's been done -- it's not something that's being contemplated to do. But the turnover has already been essentially like that. We've already switched out more than half of the U.S. attorneys that served in the first term, so change is not something that slows down or debilitates the work of the Department of Justice.

SEN. SCHUMER: Right. But -- and all of these, these seven that we are talking about, they had completed their four-year terms, every one of them, but then had been in some length of holdover period.

MR. MCNULTY: Right.

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SEN. SCHUMER: They weren't all told immediately at the end, or right before the end of their four-year term, to leave. Is that right?

MR. MCNULTY: That's correct.

SEN. SCHUMER: Okay. I still have a few minutes left, but I now have a whole new round of questioning and I don't want to break it in the middle, so I'm going to call on Senator Specter for his five minutes.

SEN. SPECTER: (Audio break) -- Chairman.

Mr. McNulty, were you ever an assistant U.S. attorney?

MR. MCNULTY: No, I wasn't.

SEN. SPECTER: Well, I was interested in your comment that the best job you had was U.S. attorney, and that's probably because you were never an assistant U.S. attorney -- (laughter) -- because I was an assistant district attorney, and that's a much better job than district attorney.

MR. MCNULTY: I've heard that from a lot of assistants. That's true.

SEN. SPECTER: The assistants just get to go into court and try cases and cross-examine witnesses and talk to juries and have a much higher level of sport than administrators who are U.S. attorneys or district attorneys.

Mr. McNulty, what about Carol Lam? I think we ought to get specific with the accusations that are made. Why was she terminated?

MR. MCNULTY: Senator, I came here today to be as forthcoming as I possibly can, and I will continue to work with the committee to provide information. But one thing that I do not want to do is, in a public setting, as the attorney general declined to do, to discuss specific issues regarding people. I think that it's -- it is unfair to individuals to have a discussion like that in this setting, in a public way, and I just have to respectfully decline going into specific reasons about any individual.

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SEN. SCHUMER: Especially those of us who've been assistant district attorneys.

SEN. SPECTER: That's the standard, Mr. McNulty. So your qualifications are being challenged here. You haven't been an assistant U.S. attorney. (Laughter.)

SEN. SCHUMER: The senator from Rhode Island.

SEN. SHELDON WHITEHOUSE (D-RI): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. McNulty, welcome. You're clearly a very wonderful and impressive man. But it strikes me that your suggestion that there is a clear factual record about what happened and that this was just turnover are both just plain wrong.

I start on the clear factual record part with the suggestion that has been made to The Washington Post, that the attorney general also made to us, and I'm quoting from the Post article on Sunday: "Each of the recently dismissed prosecutors had performance problems," which does not jibe with the statement of Mr. Cummins from Arkansas that he was told there was nothing wrong with his performance, but that officials in Washington wanted to give the job to another GOP loyalist. So right from the very get-go we start with something that is clearly not a clear factual record of what took place; in fact, there's -- on the very basic question of what the motivation was for these, we're getting two very distinct and irreconcilable stories.

MR. MCNULTY: Senator --

SEN. WHITEHOUSE: And I don't think that, if it's true, that as The Washington Post reported, six of the prosecutors received calls notifying them of their firings on a single day. The suggestion that this is just ordinary turnover doesn't seem to pass the last test, really. Could you respond to those two observations?

MR. MCNULTY: Yes, sir. Thank you.

Senator, first of all, with regard to Arkansas and what happened there and any other efforts to seek the resignation of U.S. attorneys, these have been lumped together, but they really ought not to be. And we'll talk about the Arkansas situation, as Senator Pryor has laid it out.

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And the fact is that there was a change made there that was not connected to, as was said, the performance of the incumbent, but more related to the opportunity to provide a fresh start with a new person in that position.

With regard to the other positions, however --

SEN. WHITEHOUSE: But why would you need a fresh start if the first person was doing a perfectly good job?

MR. MCNULTY: Well, again, in the discretion of the department, individuals in the position of U.S. attorneys serve at the pleasure of the president. And because turnover -- and that's the only way of going to your second question I was referring to turnover -- because turnover is a common thing in U.S. attorneys offices --

SEN. WHITEHOUSE: I know. I turned over myself as a U.S. attorney.

MR. MCNULTY: -- bringing in someone does not create a disruption that is going to be hazardous to the office. And it does, again, provide some benefits.

In the case of Arkansas, which this is really what we're talking about, the individual who was brought in had a significant prosecution experience -- he actually had more experience than Mr. Cummins did when he started the job -- and so there was every reason to believe that he could be a good interim until his nomination or someone else's nomination for that position went forward and there was a confirmed person in the job.

SEN. WHITEHOUSE: Mr. McNulty, what value does it bring to the U.S. attorneys office in Arkansas to have the incoming U.S. attorney have served as an aide to Karl Rove and to have served on the Republican National Committee?

MR. MCNULTY: With all --

SEN. WHITEHOUSE: Do you find anything useful there to be an U.S. attorney?

MR. MCNULTY: Well, I don't know. All I know is that a lot of U.S. attorneys have political backgrounds. Mr. Cummins ran for Congress as a Republican candidate. Mr. Cummins served in the Bush-Cheney campaign. I don't know if those experiences were useful for him to be a successful U.S. attorney, because he was.

I think a lot of U.S. attorneys bring political experience to the job. It might help them in some intangible way. But in the case of Mr. Griffin, he actually was in that district for a period of time serving as an assistant United States attorney, started their gun enforcement program, did many cases as a JAG prosecutor, went to Iraq, served his country there and came back. So there are a lot of things about him that make him a credible and well-qualified person to be a U.S. attorney.

SEN. WHITEHOUSE: Having run public corruption cases, and having firsthand experience of how difficult it is to get people to be willing to testify and come forward, it is not an easy thing to do. You put your career,

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SEN. HATCH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SEN. SCHUMER: Senator Feinstein.

SEN. DIANNE FEINSTEIN (D-CA): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for holding these hearings.

Mr. McNulty, I believe it was in the 2006 reauthorization of the Patriot Act when this amendment was slipped into the law, too. And it was slipped into the law in a way that I do not believe anyone on this committee knew that it was in the law. At least to my knowledge, no one has come forward and said, "Yes, we discussed this. I knew it was in the law." No Republican, no Democrat. I'd like to ask this question. Did you or any Justice staff make a series of phone calls in December to at least six United States attorneys telling them they were to resign in January?

MR. MCNULTY: I think I can say yes to that because I don't want to be -- talk about specific numbers. But phone calls were made in December asking U.S. attorneys to resign. That's correct.

SEN. FEINSTEIN: And how many U.S. attorneys were asked to resign?

MR. MCNULTY: Because of the privacy of individuals, I'll say less than
10.

SEN. FEINSTEIN: Okay, less than 10. And who were they?

MR. MCNULTY: Senator, I would, following the Attorney General's response to this question at his committee, in a public setting, I don't want to mention the names of individuals -- not all names have necessarily been stated, or if they have, they've not been confirmed by the department of Justice. And information like that can be provided to the committee in a private setting. But in the public setting, I wish to not mention specific names.

SEN. FEINSTEIN: And in a private session, you would be willing to give us the names of the people that were called in December?

MR. MCNULTY: Yes.

SEN. FEINSTEIN: Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, I think just by way of -- my own view is that the Patriot Act should not have been amended to change, and I know Senator Specter felt -- I know Senator Specter feels that we should simply return the language to the way it was prior to the reauthorization in 2006. And I am agreeable to this. So I think we have found a solution that, in essence, would give the United States attorney an opportunity to make a truly temporary appointment for a limited period of time, after which point if there -- no nominee has come up for confirmation or been confirmed, it would go to a judge. And I believe that -- we'll mark that up tomorrow and hopefully that would settle the matter.

In my heart of hearts, Mr. McNulty, I do believe -- I could not prove in a court of law -- but I do believe, based on what I was -- heard, is there was an effort made to essentially put in interim U.S. attorneys to give, as one person has said, bright young people of our party to put them in a position where they might be able to shine. That, in itself, I don't have an objection

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Diego stated that it is forced to limit prosecution to only the worst coyote offenders, leaving countless bad actors to go free," closed quote. Isn't that a letter you received that said that?

MR. MCNULTY: I'm familiar with the letter.

SEN. SESSIONS: On October 13th of 2005, Congressman Darryl Issa wrote to U.S. Attorney Lamb complaining about her, saying this: "Your office has established an appalling record of refusal to prosecute even the worst criminal alien offenders," closed quote. And then on October 20th, '05, 19 House members wrote, quote -- to the Attorney General Gonzalez, to express their frustration, saying, quote, "The U.S. attorney in San Diego has stated that the office will not prosecute a criminal alien unless they have previously been convicted of two felonies in the District -- two felonies in the District," closed quote, before they would even prosecute, and do you see a concern there? Is that something that the attorney general and the president has to consider when they decide who their U.S. attorneys are?

MR. MCNULTY: Well, anytime the members of Congress, senators, House members, write letters to us we take them seriously and would give them the consideration that's appropriate.

SEN. SCHUMER: Thank you, Mr. McNulty. We'll have a second round if you want to pursue with Senator Sessions. Okay. I'm going to go into my second round, and I want to go back to Bud Cummins. First, Bud Cummings has said that he was told he had done nothing wrong and he was simply being asked to resign to let someone else have the job. Does he have it right?

MR. MCNULTY: I accept that as being accurate as best I know the facts.

SEN. SCHUMER: Okay. So in other words, Bud Cummins was fired for no reason. There was no cause --

MR. MCNULTY: No cause provided in his case as I'm aware of.

SEN. SCHUMER: None at all. And was there anything materially negative in his evaluations? In his EARS reports or anything like that? From the reports that everyone has received, he had done an outstanding job -- had gotten good evaluations. Do you believe that to be true?

MR. MCNULTY: I don't know of anything that's negative, and I haven't seen his reports or one that -- probably only one that was done during his tenure but I haven't seen it. But I'm not aware of anything that --

SEN. SCHUMER: Would you be willing to submit those reports to us even if we wouldn't make them public?

MR. MCNULTY: Right. Well, other than -- I just want to fall short of making a firm promise right now, but we know that you're interested in them and we want to work with you to see how we can accommodate your needs.

SEN. SCHUMER: So your inclination is to do it but you don't want to give a commitment right here?

MR. MCNULTY: Correct.

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SEN. SCHUMER: Okay. I will -- as I said in my opening statement, if we can't get them I will certainly discuss with the chairman my view that we should subpoena them if we can't get them. This is serious matter. I don't think they should be subpoenaed. I think we should get them -- certainly a report like this which is a positive evaluation. Your reasoning there, at least as far as Cummings is concerned -- obviously you can make imputations if others are not released -- wouldn't hurt his reputation in any way.

MR. MCNULTY: I'd just say, Mr. Chairman, if you get a report, see a report, and it doesn't show something that you believe is cause, to me that's not an a-ha moment, because as I say right up front, those reports are written by peers --

SEN. SCHUMER: Understood. MR. MCNULTY: -- and they may or may not contain (cross talk) --

SEN. SCHUMER: But you did say earlier -- and this is the first we've heard of this -- that he was not fired for a particular reason -- that when he said he was being fired simply to let someone else have a shot at the job, that's accurate as best you can tell.

MR. MCNULTY: I'm not disputing that characterization.

SEN. SCHUMER: Okay. That's important to know. Now -- so then we go on to the replacement for Mr. Cummins. And again, as Senator Feinstein and others have said, there are all kinds of reasons people are chosen to be U.S. attorneys. But I first want to ask about this. Senator Pryor talked about allegations -- I think they were in the press he mentioned -- about his successor, Mr. Griffin, quote, "Being involved in caging black votes," unquote.

First, if there were such an involvement, if he did do that at some point in his job -- in one of his previous jobs -- do you think that could be -- that should be a disqualifier for him being U.S. attorney in a state like Arkansas, where there are obviously civil rights suits?

MR. MCNULTY: I think any allegation or issue that's raised against somebody has to be carefully examined, and it goes into the thinking as to whether or not that person is the best candidate for the job.

SEN. SCHUMER: Was Mr. Griffin given a thorough, thorough review before he was asked to do this job? And are you aware of anything that said he was involved in, quote, "caging black votes"?

MR. MCNULTY: First of all, in terms of the kind of review, there are different levels of review, depending upon what a person's going to be doing. If you're an interim, you're already, by definition, in the Department of Justice in one way or another, either in the office or in the criminal division or some other place. You already have a background check; you're already serving the American people at the Department of Justice. And so you may -- at that point, that has been sufficient, historically, to serve as an interim.

OAG00000393

MR. MCNULTY: Right, but -- SEN. SCHUMER: -- and she's saying she was told she was passed over because of maternity leave. I'd have to check with my legal eagles, but that might actually be prohibited under federal law.

MR. MCNULTY: I don't know, but --

SEN. SCHUMER: I think that's probably true.

MR. MCNULTY: It should not be a factor in consideration of whether or not she would serve as the interim. And so I don't -- but I don't know if that is accurate.

SEN. SCHUMER: Can you, again, if you choose to -- I don't see any reason to do this in private, because this doesn't -- the reason you gave of not wanting to mention the EARS reports or others is you don't want to do any harm to the people who were removed. But would you be willing to come back to us and give us an evaluation as to whether that remark was, that that comment was true and whether she was fired because of -- passed over because of maternity leave? Could you come back to the committee and report to that?

MR. MCNULTY: Yes, I mean -- at this point I can say, to the best of my knowledge, that is not the case. In fact, Mr. Griffin was identified as the person who would become the interim and possibly become the nominee before the knowledge of her circumstances was even known.

SEN. SCHUMER: Okay. Again, I would ask that you come back and give us a report in writing as to why what she is saying is not true or is a misinterpretation, okay?

MR. MCNULTY: Okay.

SEN. SCHUMER: All right, now let me ask you this. You admitted, and I'm glad you did, that Bud Cummins was fired for no reason. Were any of the other six U.S. attorneys who were asked to step down fired for no reason as well?

OAG000000394

MR. MCNULTY: As the attorney general said at the -- his oversight hearing last month, the phone calls that were made back in December were performance related.

SEN. SCHUMER: Mm-hm. All the others?

MR. MCNULTY: Yes.

SEN. SCHUMER: But Bud Cummins was not one of those calls, because he had been notified earlier.

MR. MCNULTY: Right. He was notified in June of -

SEN. SCHUMER: Okay, so there was a reason to remove all the other six? MR. MCNULTY: Correct.

SEN. SCHUMER: Okay. Let me ask you this. I want to go back to Bud Cummins here. So here we have the attorney general adamant; here's his quote, "We would never, ever make a change in the U.S. attorney position for political reasons." Then we have now -- for the first time, we learn that Bud Cummins was asked to leave for no reason and we're putting in someone who has all kinds of political connections -- not disqualifiers, obviously, certainly not legally -- and I'm sure it's been done by other administrations as well. But do you believe that firing a well-performing U.S. attorney to make way for a political operative is not a political reason?

MR. MCNULTY: Yes, I believe that's it's not a political reason.

SEN. SCHUMER: Okay, could you try to explain yourself there?

MR. MCNULTY: I'll do my best. I think that the fact that he had political activities in his background does not speak to the question of his qualifications for being the United States attorney in that district. I think an honest look at his resume shows that while it may not be the thickest when it comes to prosecution experience, it's not insignificant either. He had been assistant United States attorney in that district to set up their Project Safe Neighborhoods program --

OAG00000395

SEN. SCHUMER: For how long had he been there?

MR. MCNULTY: I think that was about a year or so.

SEN. SCHUMER: Yeah, I think it was less than that, a little less than that.

MR. MCNULTY: And he -- but he did a number of gun cases in that period of time. He's also done a lot of trials as a JAG attorney. He'd gone and served his country over in Iraq. He came back from Iraq and he was looking for a new opportunity. Again, he had qualifications that exceed what Mr. Cummins had when he started, what Ms. Casey had, who was the Clinton U.S. attorney in that district before she became U.S. attorney. So he started off with a strong enough resume, and the fact that he was given an opportunity to step in -- and there's one more piece of this that's a little tricky, because you don't want to get into this business of what did Mr. Cummins say here or there, because I think we should talk to him. But he may have already been thinking about leaving at some point anyway.

There are some press reports where he says that. Now, I don't know, and I don't want to put words in his mouth; I don't know what the facts are there completely. What I've been told, that there was some indication that he was thinking about this as a time for his leaving the office or in some window of time. And all those things came together to say in this case, this unique situation, we can make a change and this would still be good for the office.

SEN. SCHUMER: So you can say to me that you -- you put in your testimony you want somebody who's the best person possible.

MR. MCNULTY: Well, I didn't --

SEN. SCHUMER: Do you think Mr. Griffin is the best person possible? I can't even see how Mr. Griffin would be better qualified in any way than -- than Bud Cummins, who had done a good job, who was well respected, who had now had years of experience. There's somebody who served a limited number of months on a particular kind of case and had all kinds of other connections. It sure doesn't pass the smell test. I don't know what happened, and I can't -- you know, we'll try to get to the bottom of that. And I have more questions, but --

MR. MCNULTY: I didn't say "best person possible." If I used that as a standard, I would not become U.S. attorney.

OAG00000396

We can't always account for that. But as far as the -- a reasonable perception and the factual, that would be a very significant consideration. I mean, we wouldn't do it if we thought it would, in fact, interfere with a case.

SEN. SCHUMER: So you thought it would -- so there were discussions about this specific case, and people dismissed any --

MR. MCNULTY: Any time we ask for someone to resign --

SEN. SCHUMER: Chilling effect, or even as Senator Whitehouse mentioned, the break in the continuity of important ongoing prosecutions. Was that considered in this specific instance?

MR. MCNULTY: Any time we do this, we would consider that. And may I say one more thing about it? What happened in the prosecution of Congressman Cunningham was a very good thing for the American people, and for the department of Justice to accomplish. We are proud of that accomplishment, and any investigation that follows from that has to run its full course. Public corruption is a top priority for this department, and we would only want to encourage all public corruption investigations, and in no way want to discourage them. And our record, I think, speaks for itself on that.

SEN. SCHUMER: Were you involved in the dismissal -- in the decision to dismiss Carol Lamb?

MR. MCNULTY: I was involved in all of this, not just any one person. But I was consulted in the whole decision process.

SEN. SCHUMER: Okay. And did you satisfy yourself that -- I mean, it would be hard to satisfy yourself without an appearance problem --

MR. MCNULTY: Right.

SEN. SCHUMER: -- because there obviously was going to be an appearance problem. On the other hand, certain factors, at least in the Justice Department, must have outweighed that. It would be hard to believe that Carol Lamb was dismissed without cause in your mind. You must have had some cause.

MR. MCNULTY: All of the changes that we made were performance-related.

SEN. SCHUMER: Mm-hmm. Okay. And we'll discuss that privately towards the end of the week. So I'm not going to try to put you on the spot here.

But I do want to ask you this. Did anyone outside the Justice Department, aside from the letters we have seen that Senator Sessions mentioned, urge that Carol Lamb be dismissed?

MR. MCNULTY: I don't -- I don't know.

SEN. SCHUMER: Could you get an answer to that?

MR. MCNULTY: You mean anyone said -- because those letters --

SEN. SCHUMER: Those are public letters.

OAG000000397

From: H.E. Cummins [mailto:]
Sent: Tue 2/20/2007 5:06 PM
To: Dan Bogden; Paul K. Charlton; David Iglesias; Carol Lam; McKay, John (Law Adjunct)
Subject: on another note

Mike Elston from the DAG's office called me today. The call was amiable enough, but clearly spurred by the Sunday Post article. The essence of his message was that they feel like they are taking unnecessary flak to avoid trashing each of us specifically or further, but if they feel like any of us intend to continue to offer quotes to the press, or organize behind the scenes congressional pressure, then they would feel forced to somehow pull their gloves off and offer public criticisms to defend their actions more fully. I can't offer any specific quotes, but that was clearly the message. I was tempted to challenge him and say something movie-like such as "are you threatening ME???", but instead I kind of shrugged it off and said I didn't sense that anyone was intending to perpetuate this. He mentioned my quote on Sunday and I didn't apologize for it, told him it was true and that everyone involved should agree with the truth of my statement, and pointed out to him that I stopped short of calling them liars and merely said that IF they were doing as alleged they should retract. I also made it a point to tell him that all of us have turned down multiple invitations to testify. He reacted quite a bit to the idea of anyone voluntarily testifying and it seemed clear that they would see that as a major escalation of the conflict meriting some kind of unspecified form of retaliation.

I don't personally see this as any big deal and it sounded like the threat of retaliation amounts to a threat that they would make their recent behind doors senate presentation public. I didn't tell him that I had heard about the details in that presentation and found it to be a pretty weak threat since everyone that heard it apparently thought it was weak

I don't want to stir you up conflict or overstate the threatening undercurrent in the call, but the message was clearly there and you should be aware before you speak to the press again if you choose to do that. I don't feel like I am betraying him by reporting this to you because I think that is probably what he wanted me to do. Of course, I would appreciate maximum opsec regarding this email and ask that you not forward it or let others read it.

Bud

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↑ asks or encouraged
- less than 10
- "appropriate justification"
↓

QUESTIONS

Firings

I am deeply concerned about the recent firings of qualified and demonstrably capable U.S. Attorneys and their replacement with individuals who lack the traditional qualifications for the position [and instead have a deeply political, partisan background]. The perception of many is that this reveals a growing politicization of the work of federal prosecutors. How can you explain this action?

"no basis"

The Attorney General's actions are unlike anything that has occurred before. Never before [except in rare instances of misconduct or for other significant cause] have we seen the type of turnover now in progress, where the Attorney General, not the President, is asking mid-term that demonstrably capable U.S. Attorneys submit their resignations. Why did he do it? Why now?

not a concern

- Were they fired because you wanted U.S. Attorneys who are more politically and behaviorally aligned with your priorities?
- Were they fired because of public corruptions or other sensitive cases that were brought or are in process?
- Were they fired because of a Congressman's criticism?
- Were they fired just to give another person the chance to serve and have the high-profile platform of serving as a U.S. Attorney?

These firings leave the appearance that there is an ongoing effort by the Attorney General to consolidate power over USAOs and insulate their actions from the scrutiny of Congress. I don't know how else to explain why a U.S. Attorney like Bud Cummins would be terminated after receiving sterling evaluations and be replaced by a political adviser who doesn't have nearly the same qualifications. How do you explain it?

- ① ???
- ② reinstatement letter →
- ③ AG letter to Pugh
- ④ make issues
- ⑤ DeGruelle

Hasn't the purging of qualified U.S. Attorneys for political reasons had a devastating impact on the morale of Assistant U.S. Attorneys?

Hasn't the dismissal of competent U.S. Attorneys posed risks to ongoing law enforcement initiatives? Hasn't replacement with interim U.S. Attorneys unfamiliar with local law enforcement priorities posed risks to ongoing investigations and prosecutions?

Hasn't the unwarranted firing of strong, independent U.S. Attorneys created cynicism about the role of politics in all prosecutorial decisions?

Do you regret ... the firing of Lam resignation

reinstatement letter

Why was Carol Lam fired?

Because of her political views?

Because her office was in the middle of a high-profile public corruption investigation? ["We do not doubt that removing Ms. Lam from the U.S. Attorneys' office in San Diego now will disrupt this investigation."]

Because Rep. Issa and others have criticized the office's immigration enforcement?

Because you wanted to give a political insider the chance to serve?

Was Carol Lam a good prosecutor? What did her fellow U.S. Attorneys think of her?

Griffin appointment

Why was Tim Griffin appointed [over the objection of Sen. Pryor]?

In evaluating candidates for interim appointment, do you think the Department of Justice should use pregnancy and motherhood as conditions to deny appointment? Is it true that the FAUSA was not appointed because she was on maternity leave?

The amendment to the PATRIOT Act that permits the Attorney General to appoint U.S. Attorneys, but the Department did not articulate any national security or law enforcement need for appointing Griffin over the FAUSA. Why? Doesn't that violate the spirit of the law?

The Attorney General testified that the Administration is committed to having a Senate-confirmed U.S. Attorney in every district. What about Eastern Arkansas? What about Maine? What about S.D.W.V.?

Will the President nominate Griffin over Sen. Pryor's objection? Will the AG recommend that he do so?

What if Pryor is never nominated?

What if Pryor is nominated, but not confirmed?

Feinstein bill

Chief Judges of a district often have a much better sense of the operation of the USAO and federal agencies in the jurisdiction than those who are thousands of miles away in Washington, D.C. Aren't they in a better position to select an interim U.S. Attorney?

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Court appointments are less likely to be viewed as political favors, don't you agree?

District courts are more likely to have the best operations of the justice system in mind when he or she appoints an interim U.S. Attorney, don't you agree? [After all, district courts appoint counsel, federal defenders, magistrates, etc.]

What incentive does the Executive Branch have to nominate a successor in a timely fashion [and give the Senate the opportunity to fulfill its constitutional responsibility of evaluating and deciding whether to confirm the candidate]?

problem court spots?

↓

DoS support refer to old law?

OAG00000402



U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Legislative Affairs

Office of the Assistant Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

January 31, 2007

The Honorable Mark Pryor
United States Senate
257 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Pryor:

This is in response to your letter to the Attorney General dated January 11, 2007, regarding the Attorney General's appointment of J. Timothy Griffin to serve as interim United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas.

As the Attorney General informed you in his telephone conversations with you on December 13, 2006, and December 15, 2006, Mr. Griffin was chosen for appointment to serve as interim United States Attorney because of his excellent qualifications. To be clear, Mr. Griffin was not chosen because the First Assistant United States Attorney was on maternity leave and therefore was not able to serve as your letter states. As you know, Mr. Griffin has federal prosecution experience both in the Eastern District of Arkansas and in the Criminal Division in Washington, D.C. During his service in the Eastern District of Arkansas, Mr. Griffin established that district's successful Project Safe Neighborhoods initiative to reduce firearms-related violence. In addition, Mr. Griffin has served for more than a decade in the U.S. Army Reserve, Judge Advocate General's Corps, for whom he has prosecuted more than 40 criminal cases, including cases of national significance. Mr. Griffin's military experience includes recent service in Iraq, for which he was awarded the Combat Action Badge and the Army Commendation Medal. Importantly, Mr. Griffin is a "real Arkansan" with genuine ties to the community. Based on these qualifications, Mr. Griffin was selected to serve as interim United States Attorney.

As the Attorney General also has stated to you, the Administration is committed to having a Senate-confirmed United States Attorney for all 94 federal districts. At no time has the Administration sought to avoid the Senate confirmation process by appointing an interim United States Attorney and then refusing to move forward, in consultation with home-State Senators, on the selection, nomination and confirmation of a new United States Attorney. Not once.

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The Eastern District of Arkansas is not different. As the Attorney General stated to you again two weeks ago, in a telephone conversation on January 17, 2007, the Administration is committed to having a Senate-confirmed United States Attorney in that district too. That is why the Administration has consulted with you and Senator Lincoln for several months now regarding possible candidates for nomination, including Mr. Griffin. That is why the Attorney General has sought your views as to whether, if nominated, you would support Mr. Griffin's confirmation. The Administration awaits your decision.

If you decide that you would support Mr. Griffin's confirmation, then the President's senior advisors (after taking into account Senator Lincoln's views) likely would recommend that the President nominate him. With your support, Mr. Griffin almost certainly would be confirmed and appointed. We are convinced that, given his strong record as a federal prosecutor and as a military prosecutor, Mr. Griffin would serve ably as a Senate-confirmed United States Attorney. If, in contrast, you decide that for whatever reason you will not support Mr. Griffin's confirmation, then the Administration looks forward to considering any alternative candidates for nomination that you might put forward. In any event, your views (and the views of Senator Lincoln) will be given substantial weight in determining what recommendation to make to the President regarding who is nominated.

Last year's amendment to the Attorney General's appointment authority was necessary and appropriate. Prior to the amendment, the Attorney General could appoint an interim United States Attorney for only 120 days; thereafter, the district court was authorized to appoint an interim United States Attorney. In cases where a Senate-confirmed United States Attorney could not be appointed within 120 days, the limitation on the Attorney General's appointment authority resulted in numerous, recurring problems. For example, some district courts – recognizing the oddity of members of one branch of government appointing officers of another and the conflicts inherent in the appointment of an interim United States Attorney who would then have many matters before the court – refused to exercise the court appointment authority, thereby requiring the Attorney General to make successive, 120-day appointments. In contrast, other district courts – ignoring the oddity and the inherent conflicts – sought to appoint as interim United States Attorney wholly unacceptable candidates who did not have the appropriate experience or the necessary clearances. Contrary to your letter, nothing in the text or history of the statute even suggests that the Attorney General should articulate a national security or law enforcement need for making an interim appointment. Because the Administration is committed to having a Senate-confirmed United States Attorney for all 94 federal districts, changing the law to restore the limitations on the Attorney General's appointment authority is unnecessary.

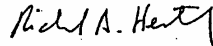
Enclosed is information regarding the exercise of the Attorney General's authority to appoint interim United States Attorneys. As you will see, the enclosed information establishes conclusively that the Administration is committed to having a Senate-confirmed United States Attorney in all 94 federal districts. Indeed, every single time

OAG000000404

Letter to the Honorable Mark Pryor
Page 3

that a United States Attorney vacancy has arisen, the President either has made a nomination or – as with the Eastern District of Arkansas – the Administration is working, in consultation with home-State Senators, to select a candidate for nomination. Such nominations are, of course, subject to Senate confirmation.

Sincerely,



Richard A. Hertling
Acting Assistant Attorney General

cc: The Honorable Blanche L. Lincoln

Enclosure

0AG000000405

FACT SHEET: UNITED STATES ATTORNEY APPOINTMENTS

NOMINATIONS AFTER AMENDMENT TO ATTORNEY GENERAL'S APPOINTMENT AUTHORITY

Since March 9, 2006, when the Congress amended the Attorney General's authority to appoint interim United States Attorneys, the President has nominated 15 individuals to serve as United States Attorney. The 15 nominations are:

- Erik Peterson – Western District of Wisconsin;
- Charles Rosenberg – Eastern District of Virginia;
- Thomas Anderson – District of Vermont;
- Martin Jackley – District of South Dakota;
- Alexander Acosta – Southern District of Florida;
- Troy Eid – District of Colorado;
- Phillip Green – Southern District of Illinois;
- George Holding – Eastern District of North Carolina;
- Sharon Potter – Northern District of West Virginia;
- Brett Tolman – District of Utah;
- Rodger Heaton – Central District of Illinois;
- Deborah Rhodes – Southern District of Alabama;
- Rachel Paulose – District of Minnesota;
- John Wood – Western District of Missouri; and
- Rosa Rodriguez-Velez – District of Puerto Rico.

All but Phillip Green, John Wood, and Rosa Rodriguez-Velez have been confirmed by the Senate.

VACANCIES AFTER AMENDMENT TO ATTORNEY GENERAL'S APPOINTMENT AUTHORITY

Since March 9, 2006, there have been 13 new U.S. Attorney vacancies that have arisen. They have been filled as noted below.

For 4 of the 13 vacancies, the First Assistant United States Attorney (FAUSA) in the district was selected to lead the office in an acting capacity under the Vacancies Reform Act, *see* 5 U.S.C. § 3345(a)(1) (first assistant may serve in acting capacity for 210 days unless a nomination is made) until a nomination could be or can be submitted to the Senate. Those districts are:

- **Central District of California** – FAUSA George Cardona is acting United States Attorney
- **Southern District of Illinois** – FAUSA Randy Massey is acting United States Attorney (a nomination was made last Congress for Phillip Green, but confirmation did not occur);

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- **Eastern District of North Carolina** – FAUSA George Holding served as acting United States Attorney (Holding was nominated and confirmed);
- **Northern District of West Virginia** – FAUSA Rita Valdrini served as acting United States Attorney (Sharon Potter was nominated and confirmed).

For 1 vacancy, the Department first selected the First Assistant United States Attorney to lead the office in an acting capacity under the Vacancies Reform Act, but the First Assistant retired a month later. At that point, the Department selected another employee to serve as interim United States Attorney until a nomination could be submitted to the Senate, *see* 28 U.S.C. § 546(a) (“Attorney General may appoint a United States attorney for the district in which the office of United States attorney is vacant”). This district is:

- **Northern District of Iowa** – FAUSA Judi Whetstone was acting United States Attorney until she retired and Matt Dummermuth was appointed interim United States Attorney.

For 8 of the 13 vacancies, the Department selected another Department employee to serve as interim United States Attorney until a nomination could be submitted to the Senate, *see* 28 U.S.C. § 546(a) (“Attorney General may appoint a United States attorney for the district in which the office of United States attorney is vacant”). Those districts are:

- **Eastern District of Virginia** – Pending nominee Chuck Rosenberg was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned to be appointed Deputy Attorney General (Rosenberg was confirmed shortly thereafter);
- **Eastern District of Arkansas** – Tim Griffin was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned;
- **District of Columbia** – Jeff Taylor was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned to be appointed Assistant Attorney General for the National Security Division;
- **District of Nebraska** – Joe Stecher was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned to be appointed Chief Justice of Nebraska Supreme Court;
- **Middle District of Tennessee** – Craig Morford was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned;
- **Western District of Missouri** – Brad Schlozman was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney and FAUSA resigned at the same time (John Wood was nominated);
- **Western District of Washington** – Jeff Sullivan was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned; and
- **District of Arizona** – Dan Knauss was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned.

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**ATTORNEY GENERAL APPOINTMENTS AFTER AMENDMENT TO
ATTORNEY GENERAL'S APPOINTMENT AUTHORITY**

The Attorney General has exercised the authority to appoint interim United States Attorneys a total of 12 times since the authority was amended in March 2006.

In 2 of the 12 cases, the FAUSA had been serving as acting United States Attorney under the Vacancies Reform Act (VRA), but the VRA's 210-day period expired before a nomination could be made. Thereafter, the Attorney General appointed that same FAUSA to serve as interim United States Attorney. These districts include:

- **District of Puerto Rico** – Rosa Rodriguez-Velez (Rodriguez-Velez has been nominated); and
- **Eastern District of Tennessee** – Russ Dedrick

In 1 case, the FAUSA had been serving as acting United States Attorney under the VRA, but the VRA's 210-day period expired before a nomination could be made. Thereafter, the Attorney General appointed another Department employee to serve as interim United States Attorney until a nomination could be submitted to the Senate. That district is:

- **District of Alaska** – Nelson Cohen

In 1 case, the Department originally selected the First Assistant to serve as acting United States Attorney; however, she retired from federal service a month later. At that point, the Department selected another Department employee to serve as interim United States Attorney until a nomination could be submitted to the Senate. That district is:

- **Northern District of Iowa** – Matt Dummermuth

In the 8 remaining cases, the Department selected another Department employee to serve as interim United States Attorney until a nomination could be submitted to the Senate. Those districts are:

- **Eastern District of Virginia** – Pending nominee Chuck Rosenberg was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned to be appointed Deputy Attorney General (Rosenberg was confirmed shortly thereafter);
- **Eastern District of Arkansas** – Tim Griffin was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned;
- **District of Columbia** – Jeff Taylor was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned to be appointed Assistant Attorney General for the National Security Division;
- **District of Nebraska** – Joe Stecher was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned to be appointed Chief Justice of Nebraska Supreme Court;

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- **Middle District of Tennessee** – Craig Morford was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned;
- **Western District of Missouri** – Brad Schlozman was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney and FAUSA resigned at the same time (John Wood was nominated);
- **Western District of Washington** – Jeff Sullivan was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned; and
- **District of Arizona** – Dan Knauss was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned.

OAG000000409

DIANNE FEINSTEIN
CALIFORNIA



COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0504

<http://feinstein.senate.gov>

June 15, 2006

Honorable Alberto Gonzales
Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Gonzales:

During our meeting last week you asked if I had any concerns regarding the U.S. Attorneys in California. I want to follow up on that point and raise the issue of immigration related prosecutions in Southern California.

It has come to my attention that despite high apprehensions rates by Border Patrol agents along California's border with Mexico, prosecutions by the U.S. Attorney's Office Southern District of California appear to lag behind. A concern voiced by Border Patrol agents is that low prosecution rates have a demoralizing effect on the men and women patrolling our Nation's borders.

It is my understanding that the U.S. Attorney's Office Southern District of California may have some of the most restrictive prosecutorial guidelines nationwide for immigration cases, such that many Border Patrol agents end up not referring their cases. While I appreciate the possibility that this office could be overwhelmed with immigration related cases, I also want to stress the importance of vigorously prosecuting these types of cases so that California isn't viewed as an easy entry point for alien smugglers because there is no fear of prosecution if caught. I am concerned that lax prosecution can endanger the lives of Border Patrol agents, particularly if highly organized and violent smugglers move their operations to the area.

Therefore, I would appreciate responses to the following issues:

- Please provide me with an update, over a 5 year period of time, on the numbers of immigration related cases accepted and prosecuted by the

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U.S. Attorney Southern District of California, particularly convictions under sections 1324 (alien smuggling), 1325 (improper entry by an alien), and 1326 (illegal re-entry after deportation) of the U.S. Code.

- What are your guidelines for the U.S. Attorney's Office Southern District of California? How do these guidelines differ from other border sectors nationwide?

By way of example, based on numbers provided to my office by the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection and the U.S. Sentencing Commission, in FY05 Border Patrol agents apprehended 182,908 aliens along the border between the U.S. and Mexico. Yet in 2005, the U.S. Attorney's office in Southern California convicted only 387 aliens for alien smuggling and 262 aliens for illegal re-entry after deportation. When looking at the rates of conviction from 2003 to 2005, the numbers of convictions fall by nearly half.

So I am concerned about these low numbers and I would like to know what steps can be taken to ensure that immigration violators are vigorously prosecuted. I appreciate your timely address of this issue and I look forward to working with you to ensure that our immigration laws are fully implemented and enforced.

Sincerely,



Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senator



U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Legislative Affairs

Office of the Assistant Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

August 23, 2006

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

This is in response to your letter dated June 15, 2006, to the Attorney General regarding the issue of immigration-related prosecutions in the Southern District of California. We apologize for any inconvenience our delay in responding may have caused you.

Attached please find the information you requested regarding the number of criminal immigration prosecutions in the Southern District of California. You also requested intake guidelines for the Southern District of California United States Attorney's Office. The details of any such prosecution or intake guidelines would not be appropriate for public release because the more criminals know of such guidelines, the more they will conform their conduct to avoid prosecution.

Please know that immigration enforcement is critically important to the Department and to the United States Attorney's Office in the Southern District of California. That office is presently committing fully half of its Assistant United States Attorneys to prosecute criminal immigration cases.

The immigration prosecution philosophy of the Southern District focuses on deterrence by directing its resources and efforts against the worst immigration offenders and by bringing felony cases against such defendants that will result in longer sentences. For example, although the number of immigration defendants who received prison sentences of between 1-12 months fell from 896 in 2004 to 338 in 2005, the number of immigration defendants who received sentences between 37-60 months rose from 116 to 246, and the number of immigration defendants who received sentences greater than 60 months rose from 21 to 77.

Prosecutions for alien smuggling in the Southern District under 8 U.S.C. sec. 1324 are rising sharply in Fiscal Year 2006. As of March 2006, the halfway point in the fiscal year, there were 342 alien smuggling cases filed in that jurisdiction. This compares favorably with the 484 alien smuggling prosecutions brought there during the entirety of Fiscal Year 2005.

OAG000000412

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Page Two

The effort to obtain higher sentences for the immigration violators who present the greatest threat to the community also results in more cases going to trial and, consequently, the expenditure of more attorney time. In FY 2004, the Southern District tried at least 37 criminal immigration cases; in FY 2005, the District more than doubled that number and tried over 80 criminal immigration cases.

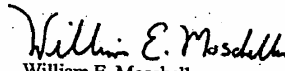
The Southern District has also devoted substantial resources to investigating and prosecuting border corruption cases which pose a serious threat to both national security and continuing immigration violations. For example, in the past 12 months, the district has investigated and prosecuted seven corrupt Border Patrol agents and Customs and Border Patrol officers who were working with alien smuggling organizations. These investigations and prosecutions typically have time-consuming financial and electronic surveillance components.

Finally, the United States Attorneys' Offices nationwide have been vigorously prosecuting alien smuggling. Data on alien smuggling prosecutions from the Executive Office for United States Attorneys' database shows that these cases have risen steadily during the last three years. In Fiscal Year 2003, there were 2,015 alien smuggling cases filed under 8 U.S.C. sec. 1324. In Fiscal Year 2004, there were 2,451 such cases, and in Fiscal Year 2005, there were 2,682.

Additionally, the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security recently announced additional resources to enhance the enforcement of immigration laws and border security along the Southwest Border. A copy of the press release is enclosed.

We appreciate your interest in this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact the Department of Justice if we can be of assistance in other matters.

Sincerely,


William E. Moschella
Assistant Attorney General

Attachment

OAG000000413

United States Attorney - Criminal Divisions
 Southern District of California
 Standard Sentencing Courts
 Investigation

Fiscal Year	Defendants in Cases Filed	Defendants in Cases Timed	Total Defendants Guilty	Number of Guilty Defendants Sentenced To Prison	Percent Change	Percent of Guilty Defendants Sentenced To Prison	
						Number of Guilty Defendants Sentenced To Prison	Percent Change
83	387	340	324	18	22.2%	305	94.4%
84	280	278	357	21	6.5%	335	93.8%
85	864	850	841	50	17.3%	791	94.1%
86	1,423	1,341	1,311	180	280.0%	1,131	85.6%
87	1,846	1,882	1,852	302	58.8%	1,550	83.7%
88	2,082	1,811	1,741	156	-46.3%	1,585	81.0%
89	1,778	1,877	1,727	87	-47.4%	1,635	81.0%
90	2,223	2,070	1,842	67	-24.4%	1,800	84.8%
91	1,888	2,112	1,977	80	20.0%	1,897	95.9%
92	2,059	2,877	1,759	71	-7.8%	1,685	80.9%
93	2,652	2,817	2,385	85	14.3%	2,301	93.8%
94	2,632	2,588	2,458	58	-30.3%	2,378	93.5%
95	1,614	1,728	1,531	40	-38.1%	1,502	98.8%
96	1,580	1,492	1,272	40	-18.4%	1,252	97.1%
Average	1,888	1,850	1,541	88	28.5%	1,451	93.5%

Fiscal Year	Number of Guilty Defendants Sentenced To Prison	Percent of Defendants Sentenced to Prison		Number of Defendants Sentenced To Prison	Percent Change	Percent of Defendants Sentenced To Prison		Number of Defendants Sentenced To Prison	Percent of Defendants Sentenced To Prison	Number of Defendants Sentenced To Prison	Percent of Defendants Sentenced To Prison	Number of Defendants Sentenced To Prison	Percent of Defendants Sentenced To Prison
		1-12 Months	13-24 Months			25-36 Months	37-60 Months						
83	306	63	20.8%	223	72.8%	10	3.1%	5	1.8%	8	2.8%	0	0.0%
84	335	41	12.2%	281	83.9%	4	1.2%	4	1.2%	6	1.8%	0	0.0%
85	781	54	6.9%	704	89.0%	6	0.8%	16	2.0%	11	1.4%	0	0.0%
86	1,128	146	12.9%	804	71.3%	10	1.4%	45	4.9%	17	1.9%	0	0.0%
87	1,550	457	29.5%	894	57.6%	28	3.1%	32	3.6%	38	4.3%	0	0.0%
88	1,652	404	24.4%	718	43.5%	340	21.5%	67	4.2%	56	3.5%	0	0.0%
89	1,658	374	22.6%	474	28.6%	829	38.0%	100	6.0%	78	4.7%	0	0.0%
90	1,890	755	40.2%	573	30.3%	486	25.7%	42	2.2%	14	0.7%	0	0.0%
91	1,887	931	49.3%	580	30.8%	323	17.0%	50	2.6%	13	0.7%	0	0.0%
92	1,885	747	39.7%	591	31.4%	328	17.4%	38	2.0%	13	0.7%	0	0.0%
93	2,203	608	27.6%	765	34.7%	418	19.0%	52	2.3%	13	0.6%	0	0.0%
94	2,270	538	23.7%	745	32.8%	392	17.2%	116	4.9%	31	1.4%	0	0.0%
95	1,502	338	22.5%	513	34.1%	320	21.3%	278	18.5%	22	1.5%	0	0.0%
96	1,332	384	28.8%	444	33.3%	168	14.0%	278	20.7%	42	3.2%	0	0.0%
Average	1,481	473	32.0%	607	41.0%	282	18.2%	76	5.4%	20	2.0%	0	0.0%

0AG00000414

1. Case load data extracted from the United States Attorney Case Management System.
 2. FY 2000 numbers are preliminary projections based on actual data through the end of March 2000.

United States Attorney - Criminal Case Management System
 Southern District of California
 Standard Master and Case Counts
 Investigation

Case & Delinquent - Paid, Pending, & Terminated															
Fiscal Year ¹	Case Filed	Percent Change	Delinquents Filed	Percent Change	Average # of Delinquents Per Case Filed	Case Pending	Percent Change	Delinquents Pending	Percent Change	Average # of Delinquents Per Case Pending	Case Terminated	Percent Change	Delinquents Terminated	Percent Change	Average # of Delinquents Per Case Terminated
B3	300		357		1.08	217		284		1.31	308		340		1.10
B4	272	-9.3%	280	+2.9%	1.07	137	-36.9%	181	+32.7%	1.30	345	+1.6%	378	+10.7%	1.09
B5	851	212.9%	884	204.1%	1.04	55	13.1%	221	15.7%	1.43	828	140.3%	850	102.1%	1.03
B6	1,287	80.9%	1,422	81.2%	1.04	227	48.5%	310	32.7%	1.32	1,281	55.7%	1,341	57.8%	1.04
B7	1,855	35.9%	1,940	28.0%	1.05	292	14.1%	322	17.3%	1.38	1,810	40.9%	1,892	41.1%	1.04
B8	1,918	3.5%	2,093	7.4%	1.09	479	64.9%	808	77.3%	1.57	1,885	-8.5%	1,811	-4.3%	1.07
B9	1,664	-13.2%	1,778	+6.9%	1.07	448	-6.9%	566	+26.0%	1.28	1,687	+1.4%	1,837	+8.9%	1.08
B0	2,116	27.2%	2,223	25.0%	1.05	517	24.2%	710	25.4%	1.18	1,881	-18.2%	2,070	12.7%	1.08
01	1,907	-8.9%	1,888	-1.0%	1.04	480	-17.2%	590	+18.3%	1.17	2,008	2.3%	2,112	2.9%	1.05
02	1,821	-4.7%	2,059	3.0%	1.07	84	27.2%	781	31.2%	1.20	1,782	-11.2%	1,877	-4.1%	1.05
03	2,483	28.2%	2,838	24.2%	1.04	719	18.2%	818	7.5%	1.11	2,351	-32.4%	2,487	30.0%	1.08
04	2,527	1.8%	2,651	2.8%	1.04	818	10.4%	918	12.3%	1.13	2,596	4.2%	2,388	-32.8%	1.03
05	1,441	-43.0%	1,514	+5.1%	1.05	645	-21.0%	714	+10.7%	1.11	1,628	-35.1%	1,732	-31.1%	1.07
06	1,492	+3.5%	1,880	+26.0%	1.10	872	4.3%	778	-8.7%	1.18	1,412	-13.2%	1,482	+4.9%	1.06
Average	1,578	22.1%	1,888	21.8%	1.08	488	13.1%	558	11.4%	1.20	1,545	18.0%	1,830	17.4%	1.05

¹ Calendar data extracted from the United States Attorney's Case Management System.
² FY 2006 numbers are straight-line projections based on actual data through the end of March 2006.

United States Attorney - Criminal Case Load Statistics
 Southern District of California
 Standard Disposition Counts
 Immigration

Fiscal Year	Cases Terminated	Cases Disposed of by Trial	Cases Disposed of by Other Means	Percent Change	Cases Terminated as Percent of Total	Cases Disposed of by Trial as Percent of Total	Cases Disposed of by Other Means as Percent of Total	Percent Change	Average Number of Defendants Per Case Filed
83	340	340	0	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	1.00	
84	345	318	27	-7.8%	92.2%	92.2%	0.0%	1.00	
85	629	600	29	-4.6%	95.4%	95.4%	0.0%	1.00	
86	1,211	1,211	0	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	1.00	
87	1,819	1,802	17	-0.9%	99.1%	99.1%	0.0%	1.00	
88	1,805	1,811	-6	0.3%	100.6%	100.6%	0.0%	1.00	
89	1,887	1,837	50	-2.7%	97.3%	97.3%	0.0%	1.00	
90	1,961	2,073	-112	5.7%	105.7%	105.7%	0.0%	1.00	
91	2,090	2,112	-22	-1.1%	101.1%	101.1%	0.0%	1.00	
92	1,782	1,877	-95	5.4%	105.4%	105.4%	0.0%	1.00	
93	2,358	2,407	-49	2.1%	102.1%	102.1%	0.0%	1.00	
94	2,506	2,548	-42	-1.7%	101.7%	101.7%	0.0%	1.00	
95	1,836	1,722	114	-6.2%	93.8%	93.8%	0.0%	1.00	
96	1,412	1,412	0	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	1.00	
Average	1,545	1,630	-85	-5.5%	106.2%	106.2%	0.0%	1.00	

Fiscal Year	Total Defendants Terminated	Total Defendants Found Guilty	Percent Change	Defendants Found Guilty as Percent of Total	Defendants Found Guilty as Percent of Total	Defendants Found Guilty as Percent of Total	Percent Change	Conviction Rate	Defendants Dismissed	Percent Change	Other Terminated Defendants	Percent Change
83	340	340	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
84	378	337	-10.3%	89.2%	89.2%	89.2%	0.0%	18	5.3%	0	0.0%	
85	610	641	10.5%	105.1%	105.1%	105.1%	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
86	1,341	1,218	-9.2%	90.8%	90.8%	90.8%	0.0%	123	9.2%	0	0.0%	
87	1,882	1,828	-2.9%	97.1%	97.1%	97.1%	0.0%	54	2.9%	0	0.0%	
88	1,811	1,741	-3.8%	96.2%	96.2%	96.2%	0.0%	70	3.8%	0	0.0%	
89	1,887	1,729	-8.4%	91.6%	91.6%	91.6%	0.0%	158	8.4%	0	0.0%	
90	2,070	1,842	-11.0%	89.0%	89.0%	89.0%	0.0%	228	11.0%	0	0.0%	
91	2,112	1,877	-11.1%	89.0%	89.0%	89.0%	0.0%	235	11.1%	0	0.0%	
92	1,877	1,729	-8.4%	92.1%	92.1%	92.1%	0.0%	148	8.4%	0	0.0%	
93	2,497	2,385	-4.5%	95.5%	95.5%	95.5%	0.0%	112	4.5%	0	0.0%	
94	2,588	2,408	-7.3%	93.0%	93.0%	93.0%	0.0%	180	7.3%	0	0.0%	
95	1,729	1,551	-10.3%	89.7%	89.7%	89.7%	0.0%	178	10.3%	0	0.0%	
96	1,482	1,321	-10.8%	89.2%	89.2%	89.2%	0.0%	161	10.8%	0	0.0%	
Average	1,630	1,541	-5.5%	94.5%	94.5%	94.5%	0.0%	99	6.1%	0	0.0%	

1 Case load data extracted from the United States Attorney Case Management System.
 2 FY 2008 numbers are straight-line projections based on actual data through the end of March 2008.



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MONDAY, JULY 31, 2006
WWW.USDOJ.GOV

AG
(202) 514-2007
TDD (202) 514-1888

Twenty-Five Federal Prosecutors to be Added to U.S./Mexico Border Districts

WASHINGTON – The United States Departments of Justice and Homeland Security announced today additional resources to enhance the enforcement of immigration laws and border security along the Southwest border.

The Department of Justice will add 20 Assistant United States Attorneys (AUSAs) to the five federal law enforcement districts along the border: the Southern District of Texas, the Western District of Texas, the District of Arizona, the District of New Mexico and the Southern District of California.

These 20 AUSAs will prosecute only immigration-related offenses, including alien smuggling, entering the United States without inspection, illegal re-entry, possession of firearms as an alien, illegal employment of undocumented aliens, human trafficking and document fraud. The additional resources will be funded by a \$2 million supplemental appropriation that was requested by the President and approved by Congress. The hiring process will begin immediately.

The Department of Justice's Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) Program will provide funding for five new AUSAs – one in each of the federal districts along the border – to prosecute drug trafficking organizations responsible for smuggling illegal narcotics across the Southwest border.

In addition to the 25 new prosecutors, in the coming months the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will also identify several attorneys who will be designated as Special Assistant U.S. Attorneys to prosecute immigration offenses along the Southwest border.

"As a nation of laws, it is important that those who cross our borders illegally or smuggle drugs are prosecuted swiftly and fairly," said Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales. "These new prosecutors will help ensure that our immigration and drug laws are aggressively enforced."

"We applaud the Attorney General for dedicating these additional resources to help prosecute those criminals and smugglers that create violence along our border and present risks to those living and working in our border communities," said Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff. "DHS will also dedicate additional lawyers to assist U.S. Attorneys and ensure that our nation's laws are enforced."

Including the additional prosecutors, the number of AUSAs in the Southwest border districts has increased 29 percent since 2000, to a total of 561. In the same time frame, the Department of Justice's immigration prosecutions have increased by approximately 40 percent. (About 30 percent of all new criminal cases are for immigration-related crimes, making immigration cases the largest category of cases filed by the United States Attorneys' Offices.) In 2005, over 95 percent of immigration prosecutions resulted in convictions, with approximately 85 percent of convicted defendants serving time in prison.

http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2006/July/06_ag_478.html

8/2/2006

OAG000000417

#06-478: 07-31-06 Twenty-Five Federal Prosecutors to be Added to U.S./Mexico Border ... Page 2 of 2

From fiscal year 2003 to fiscal year 2005, the United States Attorney's Offices in districts along the U.S./Mexico border have seen a 78 percent increase in the number of investigations initiated through OCDETF against sophisticated drug trafficking organizations.

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06-478

**Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515**

January 17, 2007

The Honorable Alberto Gonzales
U.S. Attorney General
Robert F. Kennedy Building
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Mr. Attorney General:

In the last week, we learned that the Administration has asked for the resignation of Carol Lam, United States Attorney for the Southern District of California. Ms. Lam announced yesterday that she has submitted her resignation effective February 15th.

Prior to her appointment as U.S. Attorney, Ms. Lam was a San Diego Superior Court Judge and a career prosecutor. Since her appointment as U.S. Attorney in 2002, we have heard no suggestion that she was either unqualified for the position or that she was guilty of misconduct in her office.


To the contrary, since word of the Administration's effort to remove Ms. Lam surfaced, reports in the San Diego Union-Tribune quote other prosecutors and defense lawyers as being "universally shocked" by her impending dismissal. San Diego's City Attorney called Lam, "the most outstanding U.S. Attorney we've ever had." The head of the FBI office in San Diego called Lam "crucial to the success of multiple ongoing investigations" adding that she "has an excellent reputation and has done an excellent job."


Given this praise and concern for the potential ramifications of her sudden departure, we are perplexed as to why you have chosen to remove Ms. Lam from the U.S. Attorneys' office in San Diego now. The one reason we've heard suggested for her dismissal was a decrease in immigration-related prosecutions, yet in the months of May, June and July of 2006, the U.S. Attorneys' Office in the Southern District of California was one of the top three USAOs in immigration prosecutions, hardly a record that would lead to removal.

At the moment, Ms. Lam is leading an office in the middle of a high-profile public corruption investigation. While the work on this investigation led to the conviction of former Rep. Cunningham, a number of other corruption probes have grown out of the case and are still pending. We do not doubt that removing Ms. Lam from the U.S. Attorneys' office in San Diego now will disrupt this investigation.

Forcing Ms. Lam's resignation now leaves the appearance that this growing public corruption probe may be part of the Administration's motivation in removing her. If this is untrue, it is vitally important that this perception be corrected, and we ask you to share with us the basis of your request for her resignation.

Sincerely,


John Conyers, Jr.
Chairman
House Committee on the Judiciary


Edward L. Berman
Member
House Committee on the Judiciary



U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Legislative Affairs

Office of the Assistant Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

January 16, 2007

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy and Senator Feinstein:

This is in response to your letter, dated January 9, 2007, regarding the Administration's appointment of United States Attorneys.

United States Attorneys are at the forefront of the Department of Justice's efforts. They are leading the charge to protect America from acts of terrorism; reduce violent crime, including gun crime and gang crime; enforce immigration laws; fight illegal drugs, especially methamphetamine; combat crimes that endanger children and families like child pornography, obscenity, and human trafficking; and ensure the integrity of the marketplace and of government by prosecuting corporate fraud and public corruption. The Attorney General and the Deputy Attorney General are responsible for evaluating the performance of the United States Attorneys and ensuring that United States Attorneys are leading their offices effectively.

United States Attorneys serve at the pleasure of the President. Thus, like other high-ranking Executive Branch officials, they may be removed for any reason or no reason. That on occasion in an organization as large as the Justice Department some United States Attorneys are removed, or are asked or encouraged to resign, should come as no surprise. Discussions with United States Attorneys regarding their continued service generally are non-public, out of respect for those United States Attorneys; indeed, a public debate about the United States Attorneys that may have been asked or encouraged to resign only disservices their interests. In any event, please be assured that United States Attorneys never are removed, or asked or encouraged to resign, in an effort to retaliate against them or interfere with or inappropriately influence a particular investigation, criminal prosecution or civil case. United States Attorneys are law

OAG000000420

Letter to Chairman Leahy and Senator Feinstein
January 16, 2007
Page 2

enforcement officials and officers of the court who must carry out their responsibilities with strict impartiality.

The Administration is committed to having a Senate-confirmed United States Attorney in all 94 federal districts. When a vacancy in the office of United States Attorney occurs (because of removal, resignation or for any other reason), the Administration first must determine who will serve temporarily as United States Attorney until a new Senate-confirmed United States Attorney is appointed. Because of the importance of continuity in the office, the Administration often looks to the First Assistant United States Attorney or another senior manager in the office to serve as acting or interim United States Attorney. Where neither the First Assistant United States Attorney nor another senior manager in the office is able or willing to serve as acting or interim United States Attorney, or where their service would not be appropriate in the circumstances, the Administration may look to other Department employees to serve as interim United States Attorney. At no time, however, has the Administration sought to avoid the Senate confirmation process by (1) appointing an interim United States Attorney and then (2) refusing to move forward, in consultation with home-State Senators, on the selection, nomination and (hopefully) confirmation of a new United States Attorney. The appointment of United States Attorneys by and with the advice and consent of the Senate unquestionably is the appointment method preferred by the Senate and the one that the Administration follows.

Last year's amendment to the Attorney General's appointment authority was necessary and appropriate. Prior to the amendment, the Attorney General could appoint an interim United States Attorney for only 120 days; thereafter, the district court was authorized to appoint an interim United States Attorney. In cases where a Senate-confirmed United States Attorney could not be appointed within 120 days, the limitation on the Attorney General's appointment authority resulted in numerous, recurring problems. For example, some district courts – recognizing the oddity of members of one branch of government appointing officers of another and the conflicts inherent in the appointment of an interim United States Attorney who would then have many matters before the court – refused to exercise the court appointment authority, thereby requiring the Attorney General to make successive, 120-day appointments. In contrast, other district courts – ignoring the oddity and the inherent conflicts – sought to appoint as interim United States Attorney wholly unacceptable candidates who did not have the appropriate experience or the necessary clearances. Because the Administration is committed to having a Senate-confirmed United States Attorney in all 94 federal districts, changing the law to restore the limitations on the Attorney General's appointment authority is unnecessary.

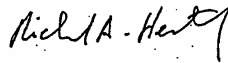
Enclosed per your request is information regarding the exercise of the Attorney General's authority to appoint interim United States Attorneys. As you will see, the enclosed information establishes conclusively that the Administration is committed to having a Senate-confirmed United States Attorney in all 94 federal districts. Indeed,

OAG000000421

Letter to Chairman Leahy and Senator Feinstein
January 16, 2007
Page 3

every single time that a United States Attorney vacancy has arisen, the President either has made a nomination or the Administration is working, in consultation with home-State Senators, to select candidates for nomination. Such nominations are, of course, subject to Senate confirmation.

Sincerely,



Richard A. Hertling
Acting Assistant Attorney General

Enclosure

OAG000000422

FACT SHEET: UNITED STATES ATTORNEY APPOINTMENTS

NOMINATIONS AFTER AMENDMENT TO ATTORNEY GENERAL'S APPOINTMENT AUTHORITY

Since March 9, 2006, when the Congress amended the Attorney General's authority to appoint interim United States Attorneys, the President has nominated 15 individuals to serve as United States Attorney. The 15 nominations are:

- Erik Peterson – Western District of Wisconsin;
- Charles Rosenberg – Eastern District of Virginia;
- Thomas Anderson – District of Vermont;
- Martin Jackley – District of South Dakota;
- Alexander Acosta – Southern District of Florida;
- Troy Eid – District of Colorado;
- Phillip Green – Southern District of Illinois;
- George Holding – Eastern District of North Carolina;
- Sharon Potter – Northern District of West Virginia;
- Brett Tolman – District of Utah;
- Rodger Heaton – Central District of Illinois;
- Deborah Rhodes – Southern District of Alabama;
- Rachel Paulose – District of Minnesota;
- John Wood – Western District of Missouri; and
- Rosa Rodriguez-Velez – District of Puerto Rico.

All but Phillip Green, John Wood, and Rosa Rodriguez-Velez have been confirmed by the Senate.

VACANCIES AFTER AMENDMENT TO ATTORNEY GENERAL'S APPOINTMENT AUTHORITY

Since March 9, 2006, there have been 11 new U.S. Attorney vacancies that have arisen. For five of the 11 vacancies, the First Assistant United States Attorney (FAUSA) in the district was selected to lead the office in an acting capacity under the Vacancies Reform Act, *see* 5 U.S.C. § 3345(a)(1) (first assistant may serve in acting capacity for 210 days unless a nomination is made). Those districts are:

- **Central District of California** – FAUSA George Cardona is acting United States Attorney (Cardona is not a candidate for presidential nomination; a nomination is not yet ready);
- **Southern District of Illinois** – FAUSA Randy Massey is acting United States Attorney (Massey is not a candidate for presidential nomination; a nomination was made last Congress, but confirmation did not occur);

OAG000000423

- **Northern District of Iowa** – FAUSA Judi Whetstine is acting United States Attorney (Whetstine is not a candidate for nomination and is retiring this month, necessitating an Attorney General appointment; nomination is not yet ready);
- **Eastern District of North Carolina** – FAUSA George Holding served as acting United States Attorney (Holding was nominated and confirmed);
- **Northern District of West Virginia** – FAUSA Rita Valdrini served as acting United States Attorney (Valdrini was not a candidate for presidential nomination; another individual was nominated and confirmed).

For six of the 11 vacancies, the Department selected another Department employee to serve as interim United States Attorney until a nomination could be submitted to the Senate, *see* 28 U.S.C. § 546(a) (“Attorney General may appoint a United States attorney for the district in which the office of United States attorney is vacant”). Those districts are:

- **Eastern District of Virginia** – Pending nominee Chuck Rosenberg was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned to be appointed Deputy Attorney General (Rosenberg was confirmed shortly thereafter);
- **Eastern District of Arkansas** – Tim Griffin was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned (Griffin has expressed interest in presidential nomination; nomination is not yet ready);
- **District of Columbia** – Jeff Taylor was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned to be appointed Assistant Attorney General for the National Security Division (Taylor has expressed interest in presidential nomination; nomination is not yet ready);
- **District of Nebraska** – Joe Stecher was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned to be appointed Chief Justice of Nebraska Supreme Court (Stecher has expressed interest in presidential nomination; nomination is not yet ready);
- **Middle District of Tennessee** – Craig Morford was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned (Morford has expressed interest in presidential nomination; nomination is not yet ready); and
- **Western District of Missouri** – Brad Schlozman was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney and FAUSA resigned (Schlozman expressed interest in presidential appointment; someone else was nominated).

ATTORNEY GENERAL APPOINTMENTS AFTER AMENDMENT TO ATTORNEY GENERAL’S APPOINTMENT AUTHORITY

The Attorney General has exercised the authority to appoint interim United States Attorneys a total of nine times since the authority was amended in March 2006. In two of the nine cases, the FAUSA had been serving as acting United States Attorney under the Vacancies Reform Act (VRA), but the VRA’s 210-day period expired before a nomination could be made. Thereafter, the Attorney General appointed that same

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FAUSA to serve as interim United States Attorney. These districts include:

- **District of Puerto Rico** – Rosa Rodriguez-Velez (Rodriguez-Velez has been nominated); and
- **Eastern District of Tennessee** – Russ Dedrick (Dedrick has expressed interest in presidential nomination; nomination is not yet ready).

In one case, the FAUSA had been serving as acting United States Attorney under the VRA, but the VRA's 210-day period expired before a nomination could be made. Thereafter, the Attorney General appointed another Department employee to serve as interim United States Attorney until a nomination could be submitted to the Senate. That district is:

- **District of Alaska** – Nelson Cohen (Cohen is not a candidate for presidential nomination; nomination is not yet ready).

In the five remaining cases, the Department selected another Department employee to serve as interim United States Attorney until a nomination could be submitted to the Senate. Those districts are:

- **Eastern District of Virginia** – Pending nominee Chuck Rosenberg was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned to be appointed Deputy Attorney General (Rosenberg was confirmed shortly thereafter);
- **Eastern District of Arkansas** – Tim Griffin was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned (Griffin has expressed interest in presidential nomination; nomination is not yet ready);
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- **Middle District of Tennessee** – Craig Morford was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned (Morford has expressed interest in presidential nomination; nomination is not yet ready); and
- **Western District of Missouri** – Brad Schlozman was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney and FAUSA resigned (Schlozman expressed interest in presidential appointment; someone else was nominated).

OAG000000425



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
Eastern District of Arkansas*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 15, 2006

CONTACT: Office of Public Affairs,
202-514-2007

**JUSTICE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT
OF J. TIMOTHY GRIFFIN AS INTERIM UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS**

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — The Justice Department today announced the appointment of J. Timothy Griffin to serve as the interim U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas. Mr. Griffin will serve under an Attorney General appointment. He will succeed Bud Cummins, who will resign on December 20, 2006, to pursue opportunities in the private sector.

Mr. Griffin currently serves as a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Eastern District of Arkansas. He recently completed a year of active duty in the U.S. Army, and is in his tenth year as an officer in the U.S. Army Reserve, Judge Advocate General's Corps (JAG), holding the rank of Major. In September 2005, Mr. Griffin was mobilized to active duty to serve as an Army prosecutor at Fort Campbell, Ky. At Fort Campbell, he prosecuted 40 criminal cases, including *U.S. v. Mikel*, which drew national interest after Pvt. Mikel attempted to murder his platoon sergeant and fired upon his unit's early morning formation. Pvt. Mikel pleaded guilty to attempted murder and was sentenced to 25 years in prison.

In May 2006, Tim was assigned to the 501st Special Troops Battalion, 101st Airborne Division and sent to serve in Iraq. From May through August 2006, he served as an Army JAG with the 101st Airborne Division in Mosul, Iraq, as a member of the 172d Stryker Brigade Combat Team Brigade Operational Law Team, for which he was awarded the Combat Action Badge and the Army Commendation Medal.

Prior to being called to active duty, Mr. Griffin served as Special Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of the Office of Political Affairs at the White House, following a stint at the Republican National Committee.

News Release
U.S. Attorney's Office
12/15/2006

Page 1 of 2

OAG000000426

From 2001 to 2002, Mr. Griffin served at the Department of Justice as Special Assistant to the Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division and as a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Eastern District of Arkansas in Little Rock. In this capacity, Mr. Griffin prosecuted a variety of federal cases with an emphasis on firearm and drug cases. He also organized the Eastern District's Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) initiative, the Bush Administration's effort to reduce firearm-related violence by promoting close cooperation between State and federal law enforcement, and served as the PSN coordinator.

Mr. Griffin has also served as Senior Counsel to the House Government Reform Committee, as an Associate Independent Counsel for *In Re: Housing and Urban Development Secretary Henry Cisneros*, and as an associate attorney with a New Orleans law firm.

Mr. Griffin graduated *cum laude* from Hendrix College in Conway, Ark., and received his law degree, *cum laude*, from Tulane Law School. He also attended graduate school at Pembroke College at Oxford University. Mr. Griffin was raised in Magnolia, Ark., and resides in Little Rock with his wife, Elizabeth.

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MARK PRYOR
ARKANSAS
COMMITTEES
COMMERCE, SCIENCE AND
TRANSPORTATION
HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS
SMALL BUSINESS AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

United States Senate

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January 11, 2007

The Honorable Alberto Gonzales
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Gonzales:

I am writing this letter to express my displeasure regarding your appointment of Tim Griffin as Interim U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas. As you will recall, we discussed this matter in two telephone calls (Wednesday December 13, 2006, and December 15, 2006) in which I informed you of my reservations.

First, it is clear (from events that occurred in July and August 2006), that there was an attempt to force then U.S. Attorney Cummins to resign. At that time, my office expressed my concern to the White House Counsel regarding this matter, and Mr. Cummins was able to remain in his position until the end of December. While I am pleased that his service was extended, I am left with the conclusion that the purpose for the dismissal of Mr. Cummins was to appoint Mr. Griffin.

Second, I am astonished that the reason given by your office for the interim appointment is that the First Assistant U.S. Attorney is on maternity leave and therefore would not be able to perform the responsibilities of the appointment. This reason was given to my Chief of Staff, to the news media, and to me by your liaison in a meeting this week. This concerns me on several levels, but most importantly it uses pregnancy and motherhood as conditions that deny an appointment. While this may not be actionable in a public employment setting, it clearly would be in a private employment setting. The U.S. Department of Justice should never discriminate against women in this manner.

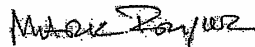
Finally, and most importantly, the appointment undermines the Senate confirmation process. The authority granted to the Attorney General to make an interim appointment for an indefinite time was given pursuant to the Patriot Act. I believe that in using this provision, the Attorney General should articulate a national security or law enforcement need that necessitates such an appointment. You have failed to do so in this case. In fact as cited above, the reason articulated is at worst grossly deficient, and at best, a poor pretense.

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For me personally this last point is most troublesome. When the Patriot Act was up for reauthorization, you called me and discussed the importance of its passage. I told you that while there were items in the Act that concerned me, I trusted that the spirit of the law would be upheld. It has also come to my attention that there may have been other similar appointments made under this provision of the Patriot Act. Therefore, I believe that the spirit of the law regarding this interim appointment (and perhaps others) has been violated. As such, I am pushing for a legislative change. I have signed on to a Bill that would strike the previous amended language and restore appointment authority to the original 120 days.

I am quite sure that you may not agree with some or all of my conclusions, therefore, I await your response and I appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,



Mark Pryor

Sent via facsimile



U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Legislative Affairs

Office of the Assistant Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

January 16, 2007

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy and Senator Feinstein:

This is in response to your letter, dated January 9, 2007, regarding the Administration's appointment of United States Attorneys.

United States Attorneys are at the forefront of the Department of Justice's efforts. They are leading the charge to protect America from acts of terrorism; reduce violent crime, including gun crime and gang crime; enforce immigration laws; fight illegal drugs, especially methamphetamine; combat crimes that endanger children and families like child pornography, obscenity, and human trafficking; and ensure the integrity of the marketplace and of government by prosecuting corporate fraud and public corruption. The Attorney General and the Deputy Attorney General are responsible for evaluating the performance the United States Attorneys and ensuring that United States Attorneys are leading their offices effectively.

United States Attorneys serve at the pleasure of the President. Thus, like other high-ranking Executive Branch officials, they may be removed for any reason or no reason. That on occasion in an organization as large as the Justice Department some United States Attorneys are removed, or are asked or encouraged to resign, should come as no surprise. Discussions with United States Attorneys regarding their continued service generally are non-public, out of respect for those United States Attorneys; indeed, a public debate about the United States Attorneys that may have been asked or encouraged to resign only disservices their interests. In any event, please be assured that United States Attorneys never are removed, or asked or encouraged to resign, in an effort to retaliate against them or interfere with or inappropriately influence a particular investigation, criminal prosecution or civil case. United States Attorneys are law

OAG000000430

Letter to Chairman Leahy and Senator Feinstein
January 16, 2007
Page 2

enforcement officials and officers of the court who must carry out their responsibilities with strict impartiality.

The Administration is committed to having a Senate-confirmed United States Attorney in all 94 federal districts. When a vacancy in the office of United States Attorney occurs (because of removal, resignation or for any other reason), the Administration first must determine who will serve temporarily as United States Attorney until a new Senate-confirmed United States Attorney is appointed. Because of the importance of continuity in the office, the Administration often looks to the First Assistant United States Attorney or another senior manager in the office to serve as acting or interim United States Attorney. Where neither the First Assistant United States Attorney nor another senior manager in the office is able or willing to serve as acting or interim United States Attorney, or where their service would not be appropriate in the circumstances, the Administration may look to other Department employees to serve as interim United States Attorney. At no time, however, has the Administration sought to avoid the Senate confirmation process by (1) appointing an interim United States Attorney and then (2) refusing to move forward, in consultation with home-State Senators, on the selection, nomination and (hopefully) confirmation of a new United States Attorney. The appointment of United States Attorneys by and with the advice and consent of the Senate unquestionably is the appointment method preferred by the Senate and the one that the Administration follows.

Last year's amendment to the Attorney General's appointment authority was necessary and appropriate. Prior to the amendment, the Attorney General could appoint an interim United States Attorney for only 120 days; thereafter, the district court was authorized to appoint an interim United States Attorney. In cases where a Senate-confirmed United States Attorney could not be appointed within 120 days, the limitation on the Attorney General's appointment authority resulted in numerous, recurring problems. For example, some district courts – recognizing the oddity of members of one branch of government appointing officers of another and the conflicts inherent in the appointment of an interim United States Attorney who would then have many matters before the court – refused to exercise the court appointment authority, thereby requiring the Attorney General to make successive, 120-day appointments. In contrast, other district courts – ignoring the oddity and the inherent conflicts – sought to appoint as interim United States Attorney wholly unacceptable candidates who did not have the appropriate experience or the necessary clearances. Because the Administration is committed to having a Senate-confirmed United States Attorney in all 94 federal districts, changing the law to restore the limitations on the Attorney General's appointment authority is unnecessary.

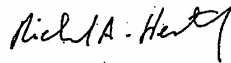
Enclosed per your request is information regarding the exercise of the Attorney General's authority to appoint interim United States Attorneys. As you will see, the enclosed information establishes conclusively that the Administration is committed to having a Senate-confirmed United States Attorney in all 94 federal districts. Indeed,

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Letter to Chairman Leahy and Senator Feinstein
January 16, 2007
Page 3

every single time that a United States Attorney vacancy has arisen, the President either has made a nomination or the Administration is working, in consultation with home-State Senators, to select candidates for nomination. Such nominations are, of course, subject to Senate confirmation.

Sincerely,



Richard A. Hertling
Acting Assistant Attorney General

Enclosure

0AG000000432

FACT SHEET: UNITED STATES ATTORNEY APPOINTMENTS

NOMINATIONS AFTER AMENDMENT TO ATTORNEY GENERAL'S APPOINTMENT AUTHORITY

Since March 9, 2006, when the Congress amended the Attorney General's authority to appoint interim United States Attorneys, the President has nominated 15 individuals to serve as United States Attorney. The 15 nominations are:

- Erik Peterson – Western District of Wisconsin;
- Charles Rosenberg – Eastern District of Virginia;
- Thomas Anderson – District of Vermont;
- Martin Jackley – District of South Dakota;
- Alexander Acosta – Southern District of Florida;
- Troy Eid – District of Colorado;
- Phillip Green – Southern District of Illinois;
- George Holding – Eastern District of North Carolina;
- Sharon Potter – Northern District of West Virginia;
- Brett Tolman – District of Utah;
- Rodger Heaton – Central District of Illinois;
- Deborah Rhodes – Southern District of Alabama;
- Rachel Paulose – District of Minnesota;
- John Wood – Western District of Missouri; and
- Rosa Rodriguez-Velez – District of Puerto Rico.

All but Phillip Green, John Wood, and Rosa Rodriguez-Velez have been confirmed by the Senate.

VACANCIES AFTER AMENDMENT TO ATTORNEY GENERAL'S APPOINTMENT AUTHORITY

Since March 9, 2006, there have been 11 new U.S. Attorney vacancies that have arisen. For five of the 11 vacancies, the First Assistant United States Attorney (FAUSA) in the district was selected to lead the office in an acting capacity under the Vacancies Reform Act, *see* 5 U.S.C. § 3345(a)(1) (first assistant may serve in acting capacity for 210 days unless a nomination is made). Those districts are:

- Central District of California – FAUSA George Cardona is acting United States Attorney (Cardona is not a candidate for presidential nomination; a nomination is not yet ready);
- Southern District of Illinois – FAUSA Randy Massey is acting United States Attorney (Massey is not a candidate for presidential nomination; a nomination was made last Congress, but confirmation did not occur);

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- **Northern District of Iowa** – FAUSA Judi Whetstine is acting United States Attorney (Whetstine is not a candidate for nomination and is retiring this month, necessitating an Attorney General appointment; nomination is not yet ready);
- **Eastern District of North Carolina** – FAUSA George Holding served as acting United States Attorney (Holding was nominated and confirmed);
- **Northern District of West Virginia** – FAUSA Rita Valdrini served as acting United States Attorney (Valdrini was not a candidate for presidential nomination; another individual was nominated and confirmed).

For six of the 11 vacancies, the Department selected another Department employee to serve as interim United States Attorney until a nomination could be submitted to the Senate, *see* 28 U.S.C. § 546(a) (“Attorney General may appoint a United States attorney for the district in which the office of United States attorney is vacant”). Those districts are:

- **Eastern District of Virginia** – Pending nominee Chuck Rosenberg was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned to be appointed Deputy Attorney General (Rosenberg was confirmed shortly thereafter);
- **Eastern District of Arkansas** – Tim Griffin was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned (Griffin has expressed interest in presidential nomination; nomination is not yet ready);
- **District of Columbia** – Jeff Taylor was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned to be appointed Assistant Attorney General for the National Security Division (Taylor has expressed interest in presidential nomination; nomination is not yet ready);
- **District of Nebraska** – Joe Stecher was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned to be appointed Chief Justice of Nebraska Supreme Court (Stecher has expressed interest in presidential nomination; nomination is not yet ready);
- **Middle District of Tennessee** – Craig Morford was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned (Morford has expressed interest in presidential nomination; nomination is not yet ready); and
- **Western District of Missouri** – Brad Schlozman was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney and FAUSA resigned (Schlozman expressed interest in presidential appointment; someone else was nominated).

ATTORNEY GENERAL APPOINTMENTS AFTER AMENDMENT TO ATTORNEY GENERAL’S APPOINTMENT AUTHORITY

The Attorney General has exercised the authority to appoint interim United States Attorneys a total of nine times since the authority was amended in March 2006. In two of the nine cases, the FAUSA had been serving as acting United States Attorney under the Vacancies Reform Act (VRA), but the VRA’s 210-day period expired before a nomination could be made. Thereafter, the Attorney General appointed that same

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FAUSA to serve as interim United States Attorney. These districts include:

- **District of Puerto Rico** – Rosa Rodriguez-Velez (Rodriguez-Velez has been nominated); and
- **Eastern District of Tennessee** – Russ Dedrick (Dedrick has expressed interest in presidential nomination; nomination is not yet ready).

In one case, the FAUSA had been serving as acting United States Attorney under the VRA, but the VRA's 210-day period expired before a nomination could be made. Thereafter, the Attorney General appointed another Department employee to serve as interim United States Attorney until a nomination could be submitted to the Senate. That district is:

- **District of Alaska** – Nelson Cohen (Cohen is not a candidate for presidential nomination; nomination is not yet ready).

In the five remaining cases, the Department selected another Department employee to serve as interim United States Attorney until a nomination could be submitted to the Senate. Those districts are:

- **Eastern District of Virginia** – Pending nominee Chuck Rosenberg was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned to be appointed Deputy Attorney General (Rosenberg was confirmed shortly thereafter);
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- **Middle District of Tennessee** – Craig Morford was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney resigned (Morford has expressed interest in presidential nomination; nomination is not yet ready); and
- **Western District of Missouri** – Brad Schlozman was appointed interim United States Attorney when incumbent United States Attorney and FAUSA resigned (Schlozman expressed interest in presidential appointment; someone else was nominated).

OAG000000435



Department of Justice

STATEMENT

OF

**PAUL J. MCNULTY
DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
UNITED STATES SENATE**

CONCERNING

**"PRESERVING PROSECUTORIAL INDEPENDENCE:
IS THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
POLITICIZING THE HIRING AND FIRING
OF U.S. ATTORNEYS?"**

PRESENTED ON

FEBRUARY 6, 2007

0AG000000436

**Testimony
of**

**Paul J. McNulty
Deputy Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice**

**Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate**

“Is the Department of Justice Politicizing the Hiring and Firing of U.S. Attorneys?”

February 6, 2007

Chairman Leahy, Senator Specter, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the invitation to discuss the importance of the Justice Department’s United States Attorneys. As a former United States Attorney, I particularly appreciate this opportunity to address the critical role U.S. Attorneys play in enforcing our Nation’s laws and carrying out the priorities of the Department of Justice.

I have often said that being a United States Attorney is one of the greatest jobs you can ever have. It is a privilege and a challenge—one that carries a great responsibility. As former Attorney General Griffin Bell said, U.S. Attorneys are “the front-line troops charged with carrying out the Executive’s constitutional mandate to execute faithfully the laws in every federal judicial district.” As the chief federal law-enforcement officers in their districts, U.S. Attorneys represent the Attorney General before Americans who may not otherwise have contact with the Department of Justice. They lead our efforts to protect America from terrorist attacks and fight violent crime, combat illegal drug trafficking, ensure the integrity of government and the marketplace, enforce our immigration laws, and prosecute crimes that endanger children and families—including child pornography, obscenity, and human trafficking.

U.S. Attorneys are not only prosecutors; they are government officials charged with managing and implementing the policies and priorities of the Executive Branch. United States Attorneys serve at the pleasure of the President. Like any other high-ranking officials in the Executive Branch, they may be removed for any reason or no reason. The Department of Justice—including the office of United States Attorney—was created precisely so that the government's legal business could be effectively managed and carried out through a coherent program under the supervision of the Attorney General. And unlike judges, who are supposed to act independently of those who nominate them, U.S. Attorneys are accountable to the Attorney General, and through him, to the President—the head of the Executive Branch. For these reasons, the Department is committed to having the best person possible discharging the responsibilities of that office at all times and in every district.

The Attorney General and I are responsible for evaluating the performance of the United States Attorneys and ensuring that they are leading their offices effectively. It should come as no surprise to anyone that, in an organization as large as the Justice Department, U.S. Attorneys are removed or asked or encouraged to resign from time to time. However, in this Administration U.S. Attorneys are never—repeat, never—removed, or asked or encouraged to resign, in an effort to retaliate against them, or interfere with, or inappropriately influence a particular investigation, criminal prosecution, or civil case. Any suggestion to the contrary is unfounded, and it irresponsibly undermines the reputation for impartiality the Department has earned over many years and on which it depends.

Turnover in the position of U.S. Attorney is not uncommon. When a presidential election results in a change of administration, every U.S. Attorney leaves and the new President nominates a successor for

confirmation by the Senate. Moreover, U.S. Attorneys do not necessarily stay in place even during an administration. For example, approximately half of the U.S. Attorneys appointed at the beginning of the Bush Administration had left office by the end of 2006. Given this reality, career investigators and prosecutors exercise direct responsibility for nearly all investigations and cases handled by a U.S. Attorney's Office. While a new U.S. Attorney may articulate new priorities or emphasize different types of cases, the effect of a U.S. Attorney's departure on an existing investigation is, in fact, minimal, and that is as it should be. The career civil servants who prosecute federal criminal cases are dedicated professionals, and an effective U.S. Attorney relies on the professional judgment of those prosecutors.

The leadership of an office is more than the direction of individual cases. It involves managing limited resources, maintaining high morale in the office, and building relationships with federal, state and local law enforcement partners. When a U.S. Attorney submits his or her resignation, the Department must first determine who will serve temporarily as interim U.S. Attorney. The Department has an obligation to ensure that someone is able to carry out the important function of leading a U.S. Attorney's Office during the period when there is not a presidentially-appointed, Senate-confirmed United States Attorney. Often, the Department looks to the First Assistant U.S. Attorney or another senior manager in the office to serve as U.S. Attorney on an interim basis. When neither the First Assistant nor another senior manager in the office is able or willing to serve as interim U.S. Attorney, or when the appointment of either would not be appropriate in the circumstances, the Department has looked to other, qualified Department employees.

At no time, however, has the Administration sought to avoid the Senate confirmation process by appointing an interim U.S. Attorney and then refusing to move forward, in consultation with home-State Senators, on the selection, nomination, confirmation and appointment of a new U.S. Attorney. The appointment

of U.S. Attorneys by and with the advice and consent of the Senate is unquestionably the appointment method preferred by both the Senate and the Administration.

In every single case where a vacancy occurs, the Bush Administration is committed to having a United States Attorney who is confirmed by the Senate. And the Administration's actions bear this out. Every time a vacancy has arisen, the President has either made a nomination, or the Administration is working—in consultation with home-state Senators—to select candidates for nomination. Let me be perfectly clear—at no time has the Administration sought to avoid the Senate confirmation process by appointing an interim United States Attorney and then refusing to move forward, in consultation with home-State Senators, on the selection, nomination and confirmation of a new United States Attorney. Not once.

Since January 20, 2001, 125 new U.S. Attorneys have been nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate. On March 9, 2006, the Congress amended the Attorney General's authority to appoint interim U.S. Attorneys, and 13 vacancies have occurred since that date. This amendment has not changed our commitment to nominating candidates for Senate confirmation. In fact, the Administration has nominated a total of 15 individuals for Senate consideration since the appointment authority was amended, with 12 of those nominees having been confirmed to date. Of the 13 vacancies that have occurred since the time that the law was amended, the Administration has nominated candidates to fill five of these positions, has interviewed candidates for nomination for seven more positions, and is waiting to receive names to set up interviews for the final position—all in consultation with home-state Senators.

However, while that nomination process continues, the Department must have a leader in place to carry out the important work of these offices. To ensure an effective and smooth transition during U.S. Attorney

vacancies, the office of the U.S. Attorney must be filled on an interim basis. To do so, the Department relies on the Vacancy Reform Act ("VRA"), 5 U.S.C. § 3345(a)(1), when the First Assistant is selected to lead the office, or the Attorney General's appointment authority in 28 U.S.C. § 546 when another Department employee is chosen. Under the VRA, the First Assistant may serve in an acting capacity for only 210 days, unless a nomination is made during that period. Under an Attorney General appointment, the interim U.S. Attorney serves until a nominee is confirmed the Senate. There is no other statutory authority for filling such a vacancy, and thus the use of the Attorney General's appointment authority, as amended last year, signals nothing other than a decision to have an interim U.S. Attorney who is not the First Assistant. It does not indicate an intention to avoid the confirmation process, as some have suggested.

No change in these statutory appointment authorities is necessary, and thus the Department of Justice strongly opposes S. 214, which would radically change the way in which U.S. Attorney vacancies are temporarily filled. S. 214 would deprive the Attorney General of the authority to appoint his chief law enforcement officials in the field when a vacancy occurs, assigning it instead to another branch of government.

As you know, before last year's amendment of 28 U.S.C. § 546, the Attorney General could appoint an interim U.S. Attorney for the first 120 days after a vacancy arose; thereafter, the district court was authorized to appoint an interim U.S. Attorney. In cases where a Senate-confirmed U.S. Attorney could not be appointed within 120 days, the limitation on the Attorney General's appointment authority resulted in recurring problems. Some district courts recognized the conflicts inherent in the appointment of an interim U.S. Attorney who would then have matters before the court—not to mention the oddity of one branch of government appointing officers of another—and simply refused to exercise the appointment authority. In those cases, the Attorney General was consequently required to make multiple successive 120-day interim appointments. Other district

courts ignored the inherent conflicts and sought to appoint as interim U.S. Attorneys wholly unacceptable candidates who lacked the required clearances or appropriate qualifications.

In most cases, of course, the district court simply appointed the Attorney General's choice as interim U.S. Attorney, revealing the fact that most judges recognized the importance of appointing an interim U.S. Attorney who enjoys the confidence of the Attorney General. In other words, the most important factor in the selection of past court-appointed interim U.S. Attorneys was the Attorney General's recommendation. By foreclosing the possibility of judicial appointment of interim U.S. Attorneys unacceptable to the Administration, last year's amendment to Section 546 appropriately eliminated a procedure that created unnecessary problems without any apparent benefit.

S. 214 would not merely reverse the 2006 amendment; it would exacerbate the problems experienced under the prior version of the statute by making judicial appointment the only means of temporarily filling a vacancy—a step inconsistent with sound separation-of-powers principles. We are aware of no other agency where federal judges—members of a separate branch of government—appoint the interim staff of an agency. Such a judicial appointee would have authority for litigating the entire federal criminal and civil docket before the very district court to whom he or she was beholden for the appointment. This arrangement, at a minimum, gives rise to an appearance of potential conflict that undermines the performance or perceived performance of both the Executive and Judicial Branches. A judge may be inclined to select a U.S. Attorney who shares the judge's ideological or prosecutorial philosophy. Or a judge may select a prosecutor apt to settle cases and enter plea bargains, so as to preserve judicial resources. *See Wiener, Inter-Branch Appointments After the Independent Counsel: Court Appointment of United States Attorneys*, 86 Minn. L. Rev. 363, 428 (2001) (concluding that court appointment of interim U.S. Attorneys is unconstitutional).

Prosecutorial authority should be exercised by the Executive Branch in a unified manner, consistent with the application of criminal enforcement policy under the Attorney General. S. 214 would undermine the effort to achieve a unified and consistent approach to prosecutions and federal law enforcement. Court-appointed U.S. Attorneys would be at least as accountable to the chief judge of the district court as to the Attorney General, which could, in some circumstances become untenable. In no context is accountability more important to our society than on the front lines of law enforcement and the exercise of prosecutorial discretion, and the Department contends that the chief prosecutor should be accountable to the Attorney General, the President, and ultimately the people.

Finally, S. 214 seems to be aimed at solving a problem that does not exist. As noted, when a vacancy in the office of U.S. Attorney occurs, the Department typically looks first to the First Assistant or another senior manager in the office to serve as an Acting or interim U.S. Attorney. Where neither the First Assistant nor another senior manager is able or willing to serve as an Acting or interim U.S. Attorney, or where their service would not be appropriate under the circumstances, the Administration has looked to other Department employees to serve temporarily. No matter which way a U.S. Attorney is temporarily appointed, the Administration has consistently sought, and will continue to seek, to fill the vacancy—in consultation with home-State Senators—with a presidentially-nominated and Senate-confirmed nominee.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify, and I look forward to answering the Committee's questions.

Statement of Mary Jo White

Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Hearing: "Preserving Prosecutorial Independence:
Is the Department of Justice Politicizing the Hiring and Firing of U.S. Attorneys?"
February 6, 2007

My name is Mary Jo White. I am providing this written statement and testifying at this hearing at the invitation of Senator Patrick Leahy, the Chairman of the United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary.

By way of background, I spent over fifteen years in the Department of Justice (the "Department"), both as an Assistant United States Attorney and as United States Attorney. I served during the tenures of seven Attorneys General: Griffin B. Bell, Benjamin R. Civiletti, William French Smith, Richard L. Thornburgh, William P. Barr, Janet Reno and John Ashcroft. I was twice appointed as an Interim United States Attorney, first in the Eastern District of New York in 1992 by Attorney General Barr and then in 1993 by Attorney General Reno in the Southern District of New York. Most recently, I served for nearly nine years as the Presidentially-appointed United States Attorney in the Southern District of New York from September 1993 until January 2002. I was the Chair of the Attorney General's Advisory Committee from 1993-1994. Since April 2002, I have served as the Chair of the Litigation Group of Debevoise & Plimpton LLP, the law firm at which I started my legal career.

Maintaining the prosecutorial independence of the United States Attorneys, which is the subject of this hearing, is vital to ensuring the fair and impartial administration of

justice in our federal system. Concerns have recently been raised as to whether that independence is being compromised by the reported installation by the Department of Justice of Interim United States Attorneys in replacement of a number of sitting Presidentially-appointed United States Attorneys who have allegedly been asked to resign in the absence of misconduct or other compelling cause. It has been variously suggested that at least some of these resignations have been sought from qualified United States Attorneys in favor of appointees who may be more politically and behaviorally aligned with the Department's priorities; to replace a United States Attorney because of public corruption or other kinds of sensitive cases and investigations brought or in process; as a result of a Congressman's criticism; or just to give another person the opportunity to serve and have the high-profile platform of serving as a United States Attorney. These allegations, in my view, raise legitimate concerns for this Committee about the fair and impartial administration of justice, both in fact and in appearance. If the allegations were true, the actions being taken by the Department would appear to pose a threat to the independence of the United States Attorneys and to diminish the importance of the jobs they are entrusted to do. There would be, at a minimum, a significant appearance issue.

A related concern has been raised about a recent change in the statutory framework for the appointment of Interim United States Attorneys embodied in the re-authorized USA Patriot Act.¹ Under the new provision, the Attorney General is accorded unilateral power to make appointments of Interim United States Attorneys for an indefinite period of time, without the necessity of obtaining the advice and consent of the