

Department of Justice

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Central District of Illinois

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ELECTION OFFICERS DESIGNATED IN CENTRAL DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

Springfield, Ill. – U.S. Attorney Jim Lewis announced today the appointment of District Election Officers in the Central District of Illinois in connection with the Justice Department’s nationwide Election Day Program for the upcoming Nov. 6, 2012 general elections. Assistant U.S. Attorneys appointed to serve as election officers include: Gregory M. Gilmore in the Springfield headquarters office; David H. Hoff in the Urbana branch office; Darilynn J. Knauss in Peoria; and, John K. Mehochko in Rock Island. District election officers are responsible for overseeing the District’s handling of complaints of election fraud and voting rights abuses in consultation with Justice Department Headquarters.

The Department of Justice has an important role in deterring election fraud and discrimination at the polls, and combating these violations whenever and wherever they occur. The Department’s long-standing Election Day Program furthers these goals, and also seeks to ensure public confidence in the integrity of the election process by providing local points of contact within the Department for the public to report possible election fraud and voting rights violations while the polls are open on election day.

Federal law protects against such crimes as intimidating or bribing voters, buying and selling votes, altering vote tallies, stuffing ballot boxes, and marking ballots for voters against their wishes or without their input. It also contains special protections for the rights of voters and provides that they can vote free from acts that intimidate or harass them. For example, actions of persons designed to interrupt or intimidate voters at polling places by questioning or challenging them, or by photographing or videotaping them, under the pretext that these are actions to uncover illegal voting may violate federal voting rights law. Further, federal law protects the right of voters to mark their own ballot or to be assisted by a person of their choice.

To respond to complaints of election fraud or voting rights abuses on Nov. 6, 2012, and to ensure that such complaints are directed to the appropriate authorities, designated election officers will be available in each of the district’s four offices on Nov. 6, while the polls are open. Election officers may be reached by the public at the following telephone numbers:

Springfield: Assistant U.S. Attorney Gregory M. Gilmore, 217- 492-4450;
Urbana: Assistant U.S. Attorney David H. Hoff, 217-373-5875;
Peoria: Assistant U.S. Attorney Darilynn J. Knauss, 309-671-7050; and,
Rock Island: Assistant U.S. Attorney John K. Mehochko, 309-793-5884.

(More)

In addition, the FBI will have Special Agents available in each Field Office and Resident Agency throughout the country to receive allegations of election fraud and other election abuses on Election Day. The local FBI office can be reached by the public at 217-522-9675.

Complaints about ballot access problems or discrimination can be made directly to the Civil Rights Division's Voting Section in Washington at 1-800-253-3931 or (202) 307-2767.

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