



**R. Booth Goodwin II, United States Attorney
Southern District of West Virginia**

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PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO VOTE AND PROSECUTING BALLOT FRAUD

U.S. Attorney Designates Official to Receive Complaints in West Virginia

CHARLESTON, W. Va. – United States Attorney R. Booth Goodwin II announced today that his Office will join the Justice Department's nationwide Election Day Program to protect citizens' right to vote and to combat ballot fraud.

In anticipation of the upcoming election, United States Attorney Goodwin has appointed Assistant United States Attorney Larry R. Ellis to serve as the Designated Election Officials ("DEO") on the upcoming general election, November 2, 2010. In this capacity, AUSA Ellis will lead the efforts of the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of West Virginia by overseeing their District's handling of complaints of election fraud and voting rights abuses.

United States Attorney Goodwin said, "This office has a history of prosecuting election fraud and we will not hesitate to prosecute election fraud in the future. However, our ability to effectively protect the integrity of the ballot depends in large part on the watchfulness and cooperation of the American electorate. It is imperative that those who have specific information about discrimination or election fraud make that information available immediately to the U.S. Attorney's Office, the FBI or the Civil Rights Division."

AUSA Ellis and special agents serving as Election Crime Coordinators in the FBI's West Virginia field offices will be on duty while polls are open to receive complaints from the public and take appropriate action. AUSA Ellis can be reached at (304) 345-2200 or 800-659-8726. The FBI can be reached by the public at (304) 346-3232.

Complaints about ballot access problems or discrimination can also be made directly to the Civil Rights Division's Voting Section in Washington at 1-800-253-3931 or 202-307-2767. Additionally, voter fraud complaints may be directed to the Department's Public Integrity Section at 202-514-1412.

Both protecting the right to vote and combating voter fraud are essential to maintaining the confidence of all Americans in our system of government.

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