



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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District of the Virgin Islands*

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**ACTING U.S. ATTORNEY ISSUES PRESS RELEASE ON UPCOMING ELECTIONS**

Acting United States Attorney Paul A. Murphy announced today that Alphonso Andrews, an Assistant United States Attorney in the District of the Virgin Islands, will lead the efforts of his Office in connection with the Justice Department's nationwide Election Day Program for the upcoming November 4, 2008 general elections. AUSA Andrews has been appointed to serve as the District Election Officer, and in that capacity is responsible for overseeing the District's handling of complaints of election fraud and voting rights abuses in consultation with Justice Department Headquarters.

"Election fraud and voting rights abuses dilute the worth of votes honestly cast," Acting U.S. Attorney Murphy said. "They also corrupt the essence of our representative form of government. As crimes against both the individual and the government, they will be dealt with promptly and aggressively."

On October 8, 2002, then Attorney General John Ashcroft established a Department-wide Ballot Access and Voting Integrity Initiative. The goals of the Initiative are to increase the Department's ability to deter voter intimidation, suppression, discrimination and election fraud, and to prosecute these offenses whenever and wherever they occur. The Department's long-standing

Election Day Program furthers the goals of the Initiative. The Program is intended to ensure public confidence in the integrity of the election process by providing local points of contact within the Department where the public can report possible election fraud and voting rights violations while the polls are open on election day.

“The franchise is the cornerstone of American democracy,” Acting U.S. Attorney Murphy said. “ We all must ensure that those who are entitled to the franchise exercise it, while those who seek to corrupt it are brought to justice.”

In order to respond to complaints of election fraud or voting rights abuses on November 4, 2008, and to ensure that such complaints are directed to the appropriate authorities, Acting U.S. Attorney Murphy stated that Assistant United States Attorneys Alphonso Andrews and Nelson Jones will be on duty while the polls are open. AUSA Andrews can be reached by the public at 773-3920 on St. Croix, and AUSA Jones can be reached at 774-5757 on St. Thomas.

The FBI will also have Special Agents available in the Virgin Islands to receive allegations of election fraud, intimidation, suppression and other election abuses. The FBI can be reached by the public at 777-3363.

Complaints about ballot access problems or discrimination can be made directly to the Civil Rights Division’s Voting Section in Washington, D.C. at 800-253-3931 or 202-307-2767. Where voter intimidation or suppression tactics target voters on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin, please contact the Civil Rights Division’s Criminal Section at 202-514-3204.