

Justice Pledges Election Monitors

Civil rights groups fear intimidation

(AP) -- The Justice Department pledged Monday to send election monitors around the country to help ensure access to the polls in November, even while acknowledging its limited power to enforce election laws.

Civil rights groups fear that an unprecedented minority voter turnout due to Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama might be countered by efforts to intimidate or otherwise block people who seek to cast their ballots.

Attorney General Michael Mukasey and other Justice officials met about 35 representatives from voter access watchdogs, hoping to assure them that having a smooth Nov. 4 election is a priority.

"The Justice Department has a limited but extremely important role to play in ensuring elections are fair and just," acting Assistant Attorney General Grace Chung Becker told reporters after the closed-door meeting.

Although federal prosecutors have in past elections focused on preventing voter fraud



Kristen Clarke

— in other words, making sure voters are eligible to vote — Becker said her goal was to broaden ballot access for as many people as possible.

She said the Justice Department will deploy hundreds of federal monitors around the country to make sure voters aren't unfairly kept from the polls.

In 2004, long lines at minority-dominated voting precincts in Ohio led to widespread complaints and a Democratic Party

lawsuit that the election process unfairly helped President Bush win the state.

NAACP political participation director Kristen Clarke said the monitors themselves are part of the problem. Although most of the monitors will be election lawyers and other government employees, prosecutors may also be deployed to watch over the polls.

"Historically, minority voters have experienced intimidation in their encounters with law enforcement at the polls," said Clarke, who attended Monday's meeting. "And deploying criminal prosecutors who lie at the hearts of law enforcement efforts could discourage them from turning out and participating in November."

Campaign Legal Center associate counsel Paul S. Ryan said Justice officials would not rule out prosecuting voter fraud cases within a month before the election. Generally, doing so is discouraged for fear it could curb voter turnout and make the case appear politically motivated.

Fair Housing Complaints Investigated

Improved process outlined

For the first time in 15 years the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries is again investigating federal fair housing complaints in the state.

Since 1992, complaints based on federal fair housing laws have been routed to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's regional office in Seattle.

"Investigations conducted closer to home tend to provide for a smoother process for both the tenant and the landlord, who need to be close to their investigator and case proceedings," said Moloy Good with the Fair Housing Council of Oregon.

Good also expects investigations will be processed in a timelier manner. He said some

Oregonians have waited upwards of 2 to 3 years to have their claims heard in Seattle.

Legislation passed in 2007, and further amended in 2008, enabled BOLI to investigate these cases under contract with HUD.

The federal agency contracts with state governments, and provides funding to them, to enforce their housing discrimination laws if their programs are substantially equivalent to federal law.

"BOLI is proud to again take a leading role in protecting Oregonians from housing discrimination," said Commissioner Brad Avakian. "Our investigators take this responsibility seriously and we will ensure that appropriate action is

taken when tenants are victims of housing discrimination."

The Civil Rights Division of the Bureau of Labor and Industries enforces laws granting job seekers and employees equal access to jobs, career schools

Robbery Suspect Wanted

The Port of Portland Police Department and the United States Marshals Service, in cooperation with Crime Stoppers, is asking for your help in finding a wanted armed robbery suspect.

Brian Tamar Baker, 29, is charged on multiple counts of robbery and unlawful possession of a weapon in connection with a carjacking last April. Bail is set at \$1.02 million.

In the early morning hours of Sunday, April 6, an employee patrolling the economy parking lot of the Portland International Airport stopped to assist Baker who was sitting on the curb bleeding at the mouth. Baker is accused of pulling a gun and taking the employee's vehicle.

Baker is described as a black male, 5 foot-6, 170 pounds, short black hair and brown eyes. He has tattoos on his shoulders and right arm. Police said he is an admitted gang member who uses PCP and cocaine. He is suicidal and is con-



Brian Tamar Baker

sidered armed and dangerous.

Anyone with immediate information on Baker's whereabouts should call 9-1-1.

Crime Stoppers is offering a cash reward of up to \$1,000 for information, reported to Crime Stoppers, that leads to an arrest in this case, or any unsolved felony, and you remain anonymous. Call Crime Stoppers at 503-823-HELP (4357) or leave a tip online at crimestoppersoforegon.com.

Charged with Bilking Mom

(AP)—A Multnomah County grand jury indicted a Portland woman accused of charging more than \$40,000 to credit cards fraudulently obtained in her elderly mother's name.

Elizabeth M. Patterson, 59, pleaded not guilty at her arraignment Monday to charges of forgery, theft, mail theft, identity theft and criminal mistreatment. She remains in jail and a trial date has been scheduled for Oct. 21.

Police said Patterson moved

in with her ailing mother in 2005 to provide care. The alleged scam was uncovered when Patterson went on vacation and a daughter-in-law stayed with the 77-year-old woman.

"My new house payment is less than I paid for rent!"



When Laneshea's rent increased, she decided it was time to buy a home.

Laneshea and her family are now enjoying life in a beautiful new home built by HOST Development and purchased through a grant from Portland Community Land Trust in partnership with the African American Alliance for Homeownership.

"As a single mom with three kids on a limited income, a lot of people told me I'd never own my own home. But they were wrong!" Laneshea did her homework and explored all her options — and PCLT was a perfect fit.

Laneshea's advice to renters hoping to own a home? "Never give up!"

As a nonprofit, PCLT has been helping families buy homes in Portland neighborhoods since 1999. Currently, we help families of all sizes with incomes between \$32,000-\$45,000 buy homes for around \$145,000*.

Join us for a free one hour orientation class to learn more. Visit www.pclt.org or call Renee Watson-Taylor at 503-493-0293x10 to sign up.

* These numbers are averages

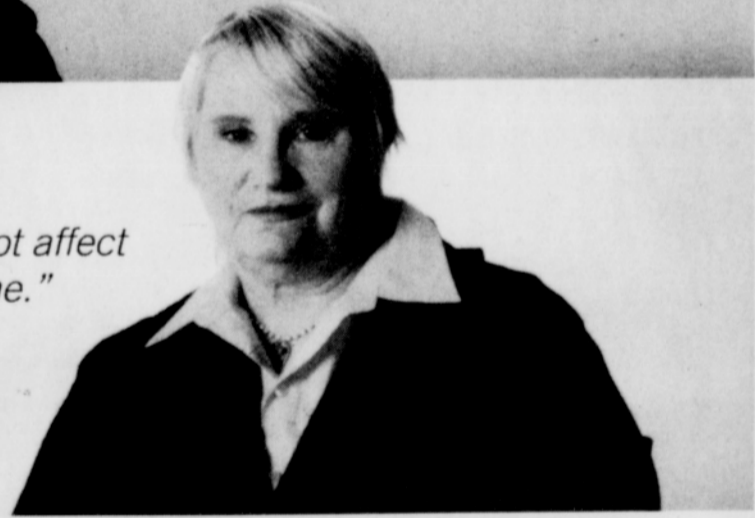
"The desperation came from not being able to stop gambling."



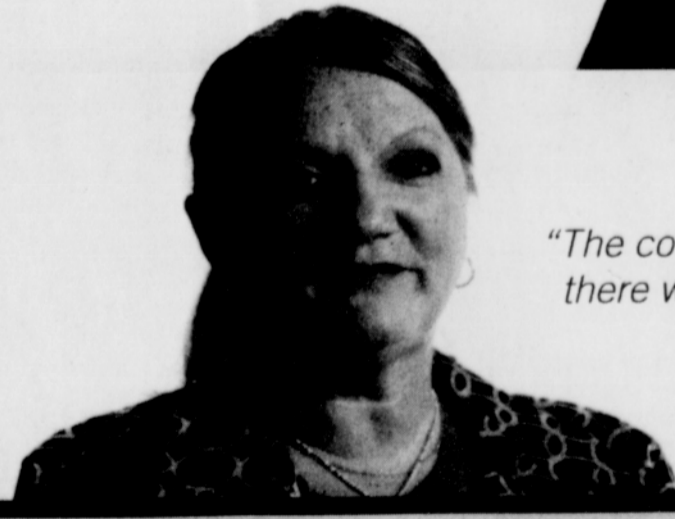
"I made the call to get some help. I found people that really understood me..."

"I was mesmerized."

"I didn't know that gambling did not affect everyone the way it affected me."



"The counselor made me understand that there was hope and I have not placed a bet in 6 years."



Problem Gambling Helpline **1 877 MY LIMIT**

Treatment is free, confidential and it works.

Professional counselors are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Log on to 1877MYLIMIT.org for more information or to chat with a counselor on line.

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