

# DOJ PIN HEAD STEPS INTO MORE MALFEASANCE POO

Central to the prosecutorial misconduct directly resulting in the criminal charges against former Alaska Senator Ted Stevens being dismissed was Brenda Morris, the Principal Deputy Chief of the DOJ Public Integrity Section (PIN). The misconduct was so egregious, and the Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) so infirm, the trial judge, Emmet Sullivan, appointed a special court investigator to handle a criminal contempt probe.

Has the DOJ itself taken any action in light of the heinous conduct? No, of course not, they never do at the Roach Motel that is the OPR. Instead, the DOJ banished Morris to the Atlanta USA office apparently still as some kind of functioning authority in the Public Integrity (PIN) section. The DOJ is nothing if not consistent, whether under Bush or Obama.

Morris has promptly inserted herself into another high charged political mess, and done so with questionable ethics and curious basis for involvement. From Joe Palazzolo at Main Justice:

Brenda Morris, a veteran trial lawyer in the Criminal Division's Public Integrity Section, was among a group of federal law enforcement officials who met with Alabama legislators on April 1 to inform them of the probe, which is related to a proposed amendment to the state constitution that would legalize electronic bingo.

The investigation has inflamed tensions between state Democrats and Republican-appointed U.S. Attorney Leura Canary, who prosecuted former Gov. Don Siegelman (D) and whose husband has close ties to Republican Gov. Bob Riley, who strongly opposes the amendment. Canary's office

and the Public Integrity Section are jointly investigating bingo proponents' quest for votes in support of the amendment, which the Senate passed on March 30.

The state House of Representatives has yet to vote. Alabama Democrats sent a letter to the Lanny Breuer, the head of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, charging that the "unprecedented" disclosure of the investigation was meant to have a "chilling effect" on state legislators who otherwise might have voted for the amendment.

Here, from the Alabama Press Register, are a few quotes from local Alabama legal experts familiar with the facts and history:

Doug Jones, a former U.S. attorney now in private practice in Birmingham, called the private meeting a "virtually unprecedented" break from standard FBI procedures.

"I can't think of a legitimate law enforcement purpose to do something like this," said Jones, who represents members of the Alabama Democratic Caucus.

"I have never, in all my years of practicing law, heard of an event like what happened (on Thursday)" said Mobile County District Attorney John Tyson Jr. "It was stunning to me."

Former U.S. Attorney William Kimbrough of Mobile said he'd seen nothing like it in a legal career that spans nearly five decades.

So what in the world was Brenda Morris doing smack dab in the middle of such a contentious

political mess and how could the Obama/Holder DOJ think it appropriate? The answer is hard to fathom. Morris was supposed to have been tasked to the Atlanta US Attorney's office as a litigation attorney while she is being investigated by the court for criminal contempt from her last case. You really have to wonder who is running the asylum at DOJ Main to think that there could ever be positive optics from Morris being involved in anything politically contentious.

You also have to wonder how exactly it is the Obama Administration has seen fit to leave Leura Canary, the Karl Rove acolyte who persecuted Don Siegelman, in office as the US Attorney for the Middle District of Alabama. Local blogs are not amused; from Legal Schnauzer:

According to press reports, representatives from the Office of the U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Alabama played a key role in Thursday's meeting. Bush appointee Leura Canary, who oversaw the prosecution of former Democratic governor and Bob Riley opponent Don Siegelman, remains in the charge of that office. Alabama's two Republican U.S. Senators, Richard Shelby and Jeff Sessions, have scuttled various Obama nominees for the position, and the White House, so far, has chosen not to fight for the two candidates (Michel Nicrosi and Joseph Van Heest) favored by Democrats.

Canary's lingering presence in office almost certainly is driving the bingo investigation. Angela Tobon, an FBI special agent in Mobile, Alabama, told The Birmingham News that the Public Integrity Section (PIN) of the Justice Department is leading the inquiry. Tobon refused to elaborate when contacted by a reporter from the Montgomery Advertiser.

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Does that mean Leura Canary was able to

take advantage of a leaderless organization, contacting "loyal Bushies" still embedded in the Justice Department to help get PIN involved in a bogus Alabama operation?

It sure looks that way.

I honestly do not know enough to make the call on the underlying electronic bingo investigation, but the locals sure look to be raising a lot of *very* good questions about how it is being used to manipulate the local political landscape. Irrespective of the merits of the underlying investigation, leaving tainted authorities, of questionable ethics, like Leura Canary and Brenda Morris to be the face of this unusual and politically charged matter is simply inexcusable.