Defenders dwindling

Death-penalty cases face delays

BY JOE GYAN JR.
Advocate staff writer

Longtime criminal defense lawyer John Di Giulio uses the phrase "looming crisis" to describe the shortage of Louisiana lawyers certified to handle costly and time-consuming death-penalty cases.

Di Giulio, who serves on the Louisiana Public Defender Board, says local public defender offices and the regional offices that help them out already are overworked and underfunded. "It's going to hit the wall," he said.

The shortage of death penalty-certified attorneys and the lack of adequate defense funding means even more delays for death-penalty cases, which already take years to come to trial, says Mike Mitchell, chief public defender with the East Baton Rouge Parish Public Defenders Office.

While Mitchell and Di Giulio argue the issue is adequate representation and fairness, some prosecutors offer another reason for the constant funding and resource complaints from the defense bar.

Pete Adams, executive director of the Louisiana District Attorneys Association, said he knows why the state public defender board, local public defender offices and regional capital conflict panels are making such a fuss.

"Beneath the advocacy there is a strong disdain for the death penalty," he said, noting that the American Bar Association — whose rules for capital case representation are followed by local public defenders and regional capital conflict offices — is opposed to capital punishment. "There is a collaboration to end the death penalty as an option here. That's the M.O."

Louisiana, which currently has 88 convicts awaiting execution, has put to death only two death-row inmates in the past 10 years. The most recent, Gerald Bordelon, was executed in 2010 after he opted not to appeal his death sentence.
Romney says best action on Israel is 'opposite' of Obama

BY KASIE HUNT
Associated Press
QUAKERTOWN, Pa. — Standing in front of his campaign tour bus, Mitt Romney on Saturday told a religious conservative group he would do "the opposite" of what President Barack Obama is doing on Israel.

Romney spent most of the day appealing to voters in Pennsylvania, a battleground state he said he would win in the fall, although Democrats succeeded in pushing his bus tour off the state's original itinerary.

"I am going to win Pennsylvania," Romney told a cheering crowd in Cornwall, a small town in the center of the state, as his campaign bus rolled through on the second day of a five-state bus tour.

Romney took some time out of his tour to address religious conservatives at the Faith and Freedom Coalition in Washington via video uplink, telling the crowd he believes the president is more concerned about Israeli attacks on Iran than he is about Iran obtaining a nuclear weapon.

Romney's speech was the first time he's discussed policy toward Israel at length since becoming the likely Republican presidential nominee.

"I think, by and large, you can just look at the things the president has done and do the opposite," Romney said when asked about Israel. He spoke to the gathering of religious conservatives from Weath-erly Pa., via video uplink with his campaign bus in the background.

Of Iran, Romney said: "He's frightened that Israel might attack Iran at the United Nations." After his address, Romney's bus continued on to Quakertown, where Democratic protestors forced him to take a detour.

Romney retraced his tour after former Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell and several other Democratic officials held a news conference outside the Wawa gas station where the former Massachu-setts governor had planned an early afternoon stop. Protesters gathered outside the store.

So Romney decided to visit a different Wawa store instead. Romney: "Why are we at this Wawa, instead of the other Wawa?"

Romney said he paid for a meatball hoagie. "I understand I had a surroguetomeeatball hoagie."

Romney's surrogates had set up a microphone, "I understand I had a surroguetomeatball hoagie."

Instead of making prepared remarks to the crowd gathered outside the first location — Romney's advance team had set up a microphone — the Republican's bus went instead to the second Quakertown Wawa and made a quick tour through the store.

The detour threw Romney off the jobs-and-economy message that had been pushing earlier in the day.

Obama, world want bold action at G20

Romney says best action on Israel is 'opposite' of Obama

BY BEN FELLER
AP White House correspondent
CHICAGO — With global anxiety rising, President Barack Obama is searching for bold, even risky, moves from Europe that will contain its financial mess and keep it from torpedoing the U.S. economy and his re-election chances along with it.

Yet he believes the G-20 summit beginning Monday in Chicago is a big chance for the continent to get its act together faster, before more damage is done.

"It is not likely to meet," Obama has told foreign leaders, "but it will be a good show of courage and leadership."

The White House is counting on G-20 action to support youthful attacks by the eurozone's leaders to get world markets some confidence, and fast.

"Obviously, this is important to us because Europe is our largest economic trading partner," Obama said. "If there's less demand for our products in places like Paris or Madrid, it could mean less business for manufacturers in places like Pittsburgh or Milwaukee."

The good news is there is a path out of this challenge. These decisions are fundamentally in the hands of the European leaders."

While economic challenge is not the only worry are clear at the White House. With Vladimir Putin, who has returned to the presidency in Russia. Their talks will be scrutinized, given tense U.S.- Russian political relations and deep divisions over Syria.

Obama is headed to Mexico on Sunday night after a weekend with his family in his hometown of Chicago. The summit runs Monday and Tuesday.

Europe's entangled financial crisis, from debt woes in Greece to banking troubles in Spain and high unemployment all around, has become the single biggest threat to the U.S. economic recovery. The signs of worry are clear at the White House and in the words of Obama, who can draw a direct line from the fate of Europe's economic strength to his chances of a second term.

Obama is prodding European leaders to give world markets some confidence, and fast.


Sunbath news shows

Guest lineups:


KEY VOTES AHEAD: In the week of June 18, the House will take up fiscal 2013 appropriations bills, while the Senate will debate a five-year farm bill and a reauthorization of National Food Insurance.

Sunday news shows

Lineups:


Source: Associated Press
In a Louisiana Parish case for annually assessing his 13-year-old
niece by strangling her.

Mitchell said the capital mur-
der case can cost his office a
vestigation for the defense.

It's unclear at this point who
would handle those cases, but
are funded entirely by the state.

"We're going to have a death
"You have to have a level play-
ing field."

But those costs can go much
more than is necessary?" Price pointed out that Con-
nection saved the state thousands.

"We've got a right to have a death
penalty," Price observed, adding that public defender
attorneys: "You've got qualified
defenders."