

FRIDAY BRIEF

Volume No. 42 Issue No. 2 Washington, D.C. October 11, 2002

Islamic Institute Meets with the Civil Rights Division at the Department of Justice

On Monday morning, the Islamic Institute met with Mr. Eric Treene, Special Counsel for Religious Discrimination, at the office of Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, where he introduced the Civil Rights Division's mission and manual, Protecting the Religious Freedom of All Americans: Federal Laws Against Religious Discrimination, that presents the laws against religious discrimination and provides information on how to report claims to the various sections of the Civil Rights Division. Mr. Treene has strongly expressed the Civil Right Division's commitment to:

- 1) Enforce all laws that protects all people against discrimination based on religion in education, employment, housing, public accommodations, and access to federal facilities.
- 2) Act against bias crimes and acts of vandalism against individuals and houses of worship.
- 3) Protect individuals and houses of worship from discriminatory and hindering zoning regulations.
- 4) Secure the right of prisoners to their religious exercises.

To know more about the laws that protect our Civil Rights against religious discrimination or to know how to report a case of discrimination based on religious background, go to www.usdoj.gov/crt or call (202) 514-2151.

Race Heat Continues in the Senatorial Race in New Jersey

After the Supreme Court had allowed the replacement of Senator Robert Torricilli with the new Democratic Candidate Frank Lautenberg, candidates focused more on the race. While Lautenberg describes Doug Forrester, the Republican candidate, to be "too conservative for New Jersey" on issues related to abortion, gun control and the environment, Forrester declared that Lautenberg, the former Senator, has the "worse possible" record on national security and that Lautenberg voted against using force in the Persian Gulf in 1991 and against the death penalty for terrorist.

According to the Newark Star Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers polling group, Frank Lautenberg leads Doug Forrester 46 % to 40 % among potential voters.

Senatorial Efforts to Pass Homeland Security before the November Election

In order to get the Senatorial vote on the Homeland Security Bill before the Congress adjourns for the November elections, supporters of the new Department of Homeland Security in the U.S. Senate are determined to include it in any temporary spending bill that keeps the government open. Since only three of 13 appropriations bills were voted on this fall, talks are underway about a temporary spending bill to keep funding the government at current levels until after the election.

While Senator Phil Gramm (R-TX) and Senator Zell Miller (D-GA) are pushing to vote on homeland security before elections, Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD)has stated that work on the bill could be completed in a lame-duck session.