



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Oct. 7, 2020

**MEDIA CONTACT**

Miriam Krinsky

[krinskym@krinsky.la](mailto:krinskym@krinsky.la)

818-416-5218

## **Statement in Response to Weakening of Department of Justice Election Interference Policy**

[Fair and Just Prosecution](#) Executive Director Miriam Krinsky issued the following statement today in response to [reports](#) that the US Department of Justice has weakened its long-standing prohibition against interfering in elections. Historically, avoiding election interference has been a fundamental [overarching principle](#) that guided DOJ policy on the timing of announcements in regard to voting-related crimes. In particular, DOJ policy has generally barred prosecutors not only from making any announcement about ongoing investigations, but also from taking public steps before a vote is finalized because the publicity could tip the balance of a race. The recently announced change to the policy creates a gaping exception for any instances involving “misconduct by federal officials or employees administering an aspect of the voting process through the United States Postal Service, the Department of Defense or any other federal department or agency.”

“This recent change in policy is deeply concerning and a retreat from past DOJ policies predicated on the longstanding recognition that public announcements of federal investigations have the potential to impact and influence the voting process. There is simply no reason to depart from that sensible starting point that has guided federal prosecutors for years. Interference with a fair and free election threatens our democracy and imperils the legitimacy of our entire government. That’s why last month 79 elected prosecutors and law enforcement leaders from across the nation, including 11 Attorneys General, issued a [joint statement](#) condemning attempts to undermine and cast doubt on the legitimacy of voting by mail. The role of the prosecutor is to seek justice – and justice does not include potentially manipulating the election process by fueling unsubstantiated narratives of voter fraud or by publicly announcing pending investigations.

The well-settled reality is that voter fraud is [exceedingly rare](#). At a time when trust in police is at a historic low, it is critical that all law enforcement officials do whatever they can to build faith in the legitimacy of our democratic institutions. This change in policy has the potential to be a profoundly damaging step in the wrong direction.”

###

*Fair and Just Prosecution is a national network of elected prosecutors working towards common-sense, compassionate criminal justice reforms. To learn more about FJP’s work, visit our [website](#) and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).*