

*Remarks for the
Office of Capital Defense Counsel Press Conference
André de Gruy
July 6, 2001*

Good afternoon. Last year, the Legislature created the Office of Capital Defense Counsel.

This office is charged with representing indigent parties indicted for death penalty eligible offenses. This is important on a variety of reasons – the accused parties deserve a fair trial, but the appeals process often places a huge burden on the counties.

This office will help ensure those fair trials while helping to relieve that financial burden.

The search for a director for this office was not an easy one. The representation of defendants charged with capital murder is highly specialized. It requires an unusual degree of commitment to this nation's ideal that every one is entitled to a fair trial.

There are only a handful of lawyers in the state with the experience and dedication to do this job well.

We talked to these attorneys following the creation of this office. For a variety of reasons, including family responsibilities or satisfaction with their current jobs, none was willing to take on the heavy demands of managing this office.

After months of hard work and support from the small community of death penalty lawyers, we were able to persuade one of these attorneys to take the position.

In fact, he was one of the original attorneys we spoke with about this job.

I am proud to announce today that André de Gruy has accepted the position of Director of the Office of Capital Defense Counsel.

André's qualifications are self-evident. He has extensive experience in death penalty cases, and has established himself as an author and lecturer on the issue.

I have every confidence in his ability to do this job and fulfill the role of this office as originally envisioned.

I have pledged my support to André to ensure that the office is up and running as soon as possible.

I am pleased to introduce André de Gruy.
André?

