



PRESS RELEASE

Justice Department Notifies Fairfax County, Virginia Commonwealth's Attorney of Investigation into His Plea Bargaining, Charging Decisions, and Sentencing Policy

Wednesday, May 6, 2026

For Immediate Release

Office of Public Affairs

Today, the Justice Department [notified](#) the Fairfax County, Virginia Commonwealth's Attorney Steve Descano of the initiation of a federal investigation into the Commonwealth's Attorney *Plea Bargaining, Charging Decisions, and Sentencing Policy*. The Justice Department's Civil Rights Division will investigate whether the Office of the Fairfax Commonwealth's Attorney discriminated against United States citizens by offering preferential treatment only to illegal alien criminal defendants.

"Under my leadership, the Civil Rights Division will not allow local prosecutors to pick and choose winners based on their immigration status," said Assistant Attorney General Harmeet K. Dhillon of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division. "This investigation will uncover whether this prosecutor is putting the community at risk in offering sweetheart deals to illegal immigrants charged with serious crimes."

The Department has not reached any conclusions regarding allegations in these matters. The Department will investigate under various statutes, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Safe Streets Act, and law enforcement misconduct statute 34 U.S.C. § 12601. The Department has conducted similar investigations where violations have been found, and the resulting settlement agreements have led to important reforms.

Individuals with relevant information are encouraged to contact the Department via civilrights.justice.gov/report/. Additional information about the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department is available on its website at www.justice.gov/crt.

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Topic

CIVIL RIGHTS

Component

[Civil Rights Division](#)

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April 30, 2026



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