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Boston College Law School

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Professor Cassidy Named to Prison Reform Panel

10/27/03--Boston College Law School Professor Michael Cassidy has been named to the Governor’s 15-member panel to study the state correction system, launched in response to the murder of defrocked priest John J. Geoghan. The 15-member panel was recommended by a smaller three-member panel established on August 25 to investigate lapses in the system that might have led to the murder of Geoghan. That panel found serious problems within the state prison system that were beyond its own limited scope to investigate.

Governor Mitt Romney named Scott Harshbarger, former state attorney general, to head the 15-member panel. It is charged with investigating a number of state correction issues, including internal prison investigations, prisoner discipline, guard conduct, and classification of inmates by level of security threat.

"The important work of this commission dovetails nicely with my research and teaching interests," Professor Cassidy said. "I hope that my service will help improve the criminal justice system in Massachusetts. But regardless of what systemic reforms are ultimately implemented, I am certain that this study will provide me with an invaluable perspective to bring back to the classroom."

Other members of the panel include Elyse Clawson, Michael Fiar, Frank Cousins, Robert Griffin, Andre John, Robert Lewis, Jr., Joyce Murphy, Michael Pomarole, Marty Rosenthal, Robert Rufo, and Doug Wilkins. Other members to be appointed include a state representative named by House Speaker Thomas Finneran, a state senator named by Senate President Robert Travaglini, and one additional member pending confirmation.

Michael Cassidy served as Chief of the Criminal Bureau in the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office prior to joining the Boston College Law School community in 1996. During his extensive career as a government lawyer, he prosecuted hundreds of serious felony cases at both the trial and appellate levels, including briefing and arguing several high-profile criminal matters before the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court.

Among his many professional and community activities, Professor Cassidy has served as a member of the Massachusetts State Ethics Commission, as Editor-in-Chief of the Massachusetts Law Review, and as a member of the Boston Bar Association Criminal Justice Council.

Professor Cassidy received his B.A. degree, magna cum laude, from the University of Notre Dame, and his J.D. degree, magna cum laude, from Harvard Law School. He served as law clerk to the Honorable Edward F. Hennessey, Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court.

Professor Cassidy’s webpage