

The battle for witness protection

By Leonard Sparks
Special to Sentinel-Voice
BALTIMORE (NNPA) -

Just hours before a jury convicted a Baltimore man of attempting to kill a witness in his brother's murder trial, U.S. Rep. Elijah E. Cummings and Baltimore City State's Attorney Patricia C. Jessamy stood outside the Clarence M. Mitchell Jr. Courthouse on last week to call for more federal assistance in protecting witnesses.

Surrounded by other prosecutors from her office, Jessamy and Cummings also urged support for federal legislation he introduced that would provide millions in grants to local prosecutors for protecting witnesses.

Cummings said that without witnesses who cooperate with police and prosecutors, the criminal justice system "erodes."

"People are tired. They're tired of seeing their loved ones harmed. And then when it comes time to gather the evidence, nobody saw it because everybody's scared," Cummings said.

"I don't care how you look at it. Many of our cases are affected by witness intimidation — people coming to other's doors and threatening them, telling them that if they 'snitch' they're going to be hurt or they're going to be killed."

Cummings' legislation would create a state witness protection program within the U.S. Marshalls Service and authorize \$90 million in competitive grants for each of the next three years.

The grants would be available to state and local prosecutors to protect witnesses in cases involving homicides or serious violent felonies or drug cases.

Currently, non-federal witnesses can participate in the federal witness protection program under certain circumstances, but states are required to reimburse the federal government for the cost unless a waiver is granted.

Under the federal witness protection program, the U.S. Marshalls Services provides families with long-term protection, relocation, new iden-

ties, housing, employment, medical treatment and funds to cover their most essential needs.

Last year, Baltimore spent more than \$300,000 on its witness assistance program and is expected to spend \$500,000 this year, mostly in the form of relocation assistance, Jessamy said.

The program assisted 106 families through June 20 of this year, according to the state attorney's office, compared to 92 families at the same point last year. Through June, 19 families have been relocated.

The day of the press conference, a city jury convicted Myron Gladney, 21, of attempted first-degree murder, witness intimidation and a handgun charge in the April 2005 shooting of Stephen Arrington.

Arrington was chased and shot in the back the day before he was to appear as a state's witness in the murder trial of Anthony Gladney, Myron Gladney's brother. Ultimately, Anthony Gladney was acquitted of the murder charge.

And on July 2, Carl Stanley Lackl, was shot and killed while standing outside his home with his 10-year-old daughter. Lackl was killed eight days before he was to testify for the state in the murder trial of Patrick Byers.

Byers, 22, is accused of killing 30-year-old Larry Haynes in the 2400 block of E. Jefferson St. in March 2006.

Jessamy, who argued in favor of state laws passed in 2005 that upped the penalty for retaliating against witnesses and allowed prosecu-

tors to use the taped statements of witnesses afraid to appear in court, called witness intimidation a "deadly

scourge" and a national problem.

Leonard Sparks writes for Afro-American Newspapers.

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ADA/EO/AA Employer

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LEGAL NOTICES

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION INVITATION FOR BIDS NO. 002-08

ANNUAL REQUIREMENTS CONTRACT TO SUPPLY REMANUFACTURED DETROIT DIESEL SERIES 50 ENGINE ASSEMBLIES AND ALLISON TRANSMISSIONS

This Invitation for Bids (IFB) is being issued to award an annual requirements contract to supply and deliver remanufactured Detroit Diesel Series 50 engine assemblies and Allison transmissions to the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC) as required to specific locations.

Invitation for Bids (IFB) No. 002-08 will be available beginning Tuesday, July 24, 2007 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday at the Regional Transportation Commission's Administrative Building, first floor reception desk. Requests for IFB packages may be submitted via facsimile at (702) 676-1588 or via e-mail at www.colemand@rtcnsnv.com, and should be directed to the attention of Debra Coleman, Purchasing Analyst.

Bids must be received on or before, August 23, 2007. Bids must be time stamped no later than 3:00 p.m., Pacific Standard Time (PST), on the due date. Bids time stamped at 3:01 p.m. or after on the due date will be returned unopened. A public opening will be held at 3:05, immediately following the bid closing. Bids must be sent to:

Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada
Attention: Debra Coleman, C.P.M., Purchasing Analyst
600 S. Grand Central Parkway
Las Vegas, NV 89106

The successful proposer shall cooperate with the RTC in meeting its commitments and objectives with regard to ensuring non-discrimination in the award and administration of U.S. DOT assisted contracts and shall use its best efforts to ensure that barriers to participation of DBEs do not exist.

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REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION OF SOUTHERN NEVADA

INVITATION FOR BIDS NO. 003-08 ANNUAL REQUIREMENTS CONTRACT TO PRINT AND DELIVER TRANSIT 30 DAY PASSES

The Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC) is soliciting qualified firms interested in providing the highest level of quality, on time delivery and service for an annual requirements contract to print and deliver transit 30-day passes as specified in this invitation for bids (IFB).

IFB documents will be available beginning July 31, 2007 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday at the Regional Transportation Commission's Administrative Building, First Floor Reception Desk, 600 S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89106, via facsimile at 702-676-1588 or via e-mail at colemand@rtcnsnv.com. Requests for bid documents should be directed to the attention of Debra Coleman, C.P.M., RTC Purchasing Analyst.

Bids will be received on, or before, August 24, 2007. Bids must be time stamped no later than 3:00 p.m., PST, on the due date. Bids time stamped at 3:01 p.m. or after on the due date will be returned unopened. A public bid opening will be held at 3:05, immediately following the bid closing. Bids must be sent to:

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The successful bidder shall cooperate with the RTC in meeting its commitments and objectives with regard to ensuring non-discrimination in the award and administration of U.S. DOT assisted contracts and shall use its best efforts to ensure that barriers to participation of DBEs do not exist.

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