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Austin lawyer to represent embattled Waco prosecutor

By Darrell Dunn
Cox News Service

WACO — At a press conference announcing his intention to seek re-election, Vic Feazell, McLennan County district attorney, said Wednesday he has hired Austin lawyer Roy Minton to represent him in an investigation being conducted by a federal grand jury.

Feazell said that because of the investigation he was referring all questions about the grand jury inquiry to Minton.

"This thing has gotten serious enough with the allegations being made, and I felt it was necessary to retain (a lawyer)," the prosecutor said. "I'm a country lawyer. I don't know about that high-level stuff."

He said the grand jury inquiry was initiated by Col. Jim Adams, director of the Texas Department of Public Safety, in retaliation for Feazell's criticism of Texas Ranger handling of the Henry Lee Lucas case.

Feazell said he fears he may be killed because of the Lucas investigation. He said he has been followed and his telephone has been tapped. He said persons have dug through his trash looking for information about him.

At the press conference, Feazell said: "I want to put to rest any rumors that, No. 1, I am resigning, or No. 2, that I'm not intending to run for re-election, or that I'm intending to run for any higher office at this time."

Accompanied by Milton Wilson, his campaign treasurer, and Gene Evans, Democratic Party chairman for McLennan County, Feazell said the timing of his announcement was tied to the announcement that a federal grand jury in Austin is investigating him.

Feazell won election to the district attorney post in 1982, after defeating former District Attorney Felipe Renya in the Democratic prima-



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ry and Republican Paul Gartner Jr. in the general election.

In the past three months, reports have surfaced that Feazell is under investigation by the FBI, the Department of Public Safety, and the Waco Police Department.

Responding to Feazell's charges, Adams said: "Any allegation that the Department of Public Safety conducts 'witch hunts' has no basis in fact. The department does not conduct an investigation unless there is a sound basis for one."

Adams declined to confirm or deny that the DPS is working with the FBI in investigating Feazell. Feazell has claimed the DPS is working closely with federal agents.

U.S. Attorney Jan Patterson confirmed Monday that she has initiated a federal grand jury investigation of Feazell.

Feazell said he would not be surprised if the federal grand jury in Austin eventually indicts him. He added that he does not believe the surrounding controversy will harm the Democratic Party's chance of retaining the district attorney's office.

"An indictment doesn't mean anything but a bunch of finger-pointing," he said.

Craig Reid, GOP chairman in McLennan County, said Republicans feel compelled to oppose Feazell's re-election bid in 1986.