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Defense begins in DA's trial

AUSTIN — A former top aide to McLennan County District Attorney Vic Feazell testified Thursday the Waco office sometimes used "desk drawer

probation" just as other prosecutors' offices do.

Murphy, now a businessman in Charlotte, N.C., was the first defense witness. He testified after U.S. District Judge James Nowlin refused to dismiss bribery and mail fraud charges against Feazell when the government completed its case.

Previous government witnesses said Feazell had put some DWI files in his desk drawer and dismissed them later in return for a share of the legal fees charged by some Waco attorneys.

Murphy said that from time to time Feazell's office would tell the defendant in misdemeanor cases that they would hold the file for maybe six months and then dismiss it if the defendant had not caused any more trouble.