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Lucas controversy prompts DA to hire attorney

WACO (AP) — McLennan County District Attorney Vic Feazell, who announced he will seek re-election next year, says he has hired Austin defense attorney Roy Minton because he fears he is a target of a federal grand jury.

Feazell has said he feared he might be murdered or wrongly indicted because he criticized law enforcement agencies' handling of

cases involving convicted killer Henry Lee Lucas.

"One reason I made this announcement today is so that everybody would know that I would not be run from office," Feazell told the *Waco Tribune-Herald* at his courthouse office on Wednesday. "If I leave this office, it will be because the people of McLennan County make that decision."

A federal grand jury was convened in Austin Monday to investigate allegations of corruption in the district attorney's office, said Feazell.

"This thing has gotten serious

enough with the allegations being made, and I felt it was necessary to retain" a lawyer, said Feazell. "I'm a country lawyer. I don't know about that high-level stuff."

Feazell said a federal investigation was a retaliatory "witch hunt" prompted by the Texas Department of Public Safety and its director, Col. Jim Adams.

He said the investigation was retaliation for his criticism of a Department of Public Safety task force's handling of Lucas.

A McLennan County grand jury, at Feazell's prompting, earlier this year investigated Lucas' confessions

and declined to indict Lucas in any of three Waco-area slayings to which he had confessed. Lucas has recanted many of his statements to authorities.

"I am the subject of a (federal) grand jury investigation because I said that task force members may have acted unethically or inappropriately" in investigating Lucas, said Feazell. "As a result of that small intrusion into the pride of the Texas Rangers, I may be indicted."

Feazell said he has been warned to "leave this Lucas thing alone or I would be ruined." He said he has been followed and his phone has

been tapped in recent months.

"You're talking to a potential political prisoner," he said.

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.

"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 said in statement in response to Feazell's charges.