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Jury to be picked in Fezell trial

Jury selection was scheduled to begin today in Austin in the federal racketeering trial of McLennan County District Attorney Vic Fezell.

Fezell was indicted last year by a grand jury that alleged he accepted money in exchange for his influence on pending criminal cases.

Fezell denies the charges and alleges that the 12-count indictment is an effort by the Texas Department of Public Safety to retaliate against him for his investigation into murder confessions made by Henry Lee Lucas.

Lucas once claimed responsibility for more than 300 slayings nationwide, but he recanted and said the claims were a hoax to discredit law enforcement officers.

Last week U.S. Judge James Nowlin denied a motion to dismiss the charges against Fezell.

The judge also rejected defense requests that the trial be moved from Austin to Waco and that evidence found in searches of Fezell's home and office be suppressed.