

Sign of support goes up for district attorney

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Controversy surrounding Vic Feazell moved beyond news reports and bumper stickers Monday when a billboard was erected voicing support for the McLennan County district attorney who is currently the focus of a federal grand jury investigation.

The black and white billboard located at Fifteenth and Austin

reads, "Vic, 'We Care!' — The People. Wacoans for Vic Feazell."

The billboard was paid for by E.F. (Fritz) Kriegel of Waco, who said Monday he paid around \$1,000 to have the billboard erected.

"Vic and Bernie (Feazell's wife) are good friends of mine and I'm tired of all this crap they seem to be trying to stuff down their throats," said Kriegel, a retired beer distributor.

"If you don't take care of your friends, who are you going to take care of? In general, I think (Feazell's) getting a pretty raw deal. He's one of the best DA's we've ever had," Kriegel said.

"I appreciate the kindness, and support I've seen in the past couple of months has been unbelievable," Feazell said. "I've been getting an average of two letters a day at my office and one at home

from people saying, 'We're with you, Vic,' and 'Hang in their, Vic.'"

Feazell currently is the subject of a federal grand jury probe headed by U.S. Attorney Jan Patterson, who splits time between Waco and Austin courts. Feazell also has said that he thinks the Texas Department of Public Safety and Waco Police Department have conducted investigations of his office.

Although it is known that the federal grand jury investigating Feazell met in Austin two weeks ago, Ms. Patterson has declined to say when the grand jury will meet again or when the probe will be completed.

Feazell also has been the subject of a series of reports on Dallas television station Channel 8 (WFAA) in which reporter Charles Duncan has raised questions about Feazell's handling of certain driving while intoxicated and drug cases.

Recently bumper stickers stating, "Go get 'em Vic," and "Honk if you hate Channel 8" have been seen around Waco.

Duncan also raised allegations that Feazell and members of his staff have shown favoritism in handling cases involving friends and political associates.

"I've never had any business dealings whatsoever with Vic, and I've never had any DWI's or anything like that, either," Kriegel said Monday.

Ms. Patterson told the *Tribune-Herald* on July 17 that the grand jury probe of Feazell has been "on-going for several months."

On July 19, Feazell announced his intention to run for re-election, and told reporters that he had hired Austin attorney Roy Minton to handle his defense should he be indicted by the federal grand jury.

Although Patterson has indicated that she is pursuing the probe of Feazell because of a "serious crime problem" in McLennan County, Feazell has said he believes the federal investigation is in retaliation for his investigation of murder confessions made by Henry Lee Lucas.

During a three-month McLennan County grand jury probe of Lucas' confessions, Feazell said that he believed the "vast majority" of the 189 murders cleared by the Texas Rangers Task Force were in error and that actions of the task force may have "unethical or improper."