

Stokely Named Special Assistant District Attorney

Today, by appointment of Coweta Judicial Circuit District Attorney, Peter J. Skandalakis, Superior Court Judge Jack Kirby swore in Robert Stokely, Solicitor General of Coweta County as a Special Assistant District Attorney for the Circuit.

L-R: Peter J. Skandalakis, District Attorney for the Coweta Judicial Circuit, Solicitor of Coweta County Robert Stokely, Superior Court Judge Jack Kirby.

Today, by appointment of Coweta Judicial Circuit District Attorney, Peter J. Skandalakis, Superior Court Judge Jack Kirby swore in Robert Stokely, Solicitor General of Coweta County as a Special Assistant District Attorney for the Circuit. This action is taken as a cooperative effort between the two offices to combine and maximize resources in the important area of Driving under the Influence cases. This action was taken in light of House Bill 336, enacted in the Georgia Legislature in the 2008 session and signed by Governor Perdue on May 12, 2008, effective July 1, 2008. This bold new legislation brings much needed enhancement to the level of punishment for repeat DUI offenders. Such enhanced punishment includes adding a new class of felony DUI. Under current law, a person can have four or more DUI charges in ten years and the case is still a misdemeanor with a maximum jail sentence of 12 months and generally speaking a maximum fine of \$1,000.00. HB 336 makes such cases a felony and increases the jail time to five years in jail and raises the maximum fine to \$5,000. This law takes effect and applies to DUI cases made on or after July 1, 2008.

Defendants who commit DUI are a direct and immediate threat to the law abiding citizens of our community, and even more so those who get four or more in a ten year period. Getting such drivers off the road and protecting our citizens is a priority of the District Attorney and the Solicitor. Prosecution of DUI cases is a highly specialized area involving constant monitoring of appellate case law as well as balancing the opinions and views of local citizens who sit on juries. Given that most cases are misdemeanor and currently handled by the Solicitor, this appointment will allow the on-going experience and prosecution resources of the Solicitor to be readily available as needed to cooperate with and assist the Coweta Judicial Circuit District Attorney and his staff. Such cooperation allows the District Attorney and his staff to devote more of their expertise and resources to focus on the vast array of other felony crimes such as murder, rape, child molestation, robbery, drug dealing, and other similarly serious crimes.

Peter J. Skandalakis

District Attorney Coweta

Judicial Circuit

*Important side note: For a DUI under the attached legislation to become a felony, it must be a fourth felony in ten years and all four said felony convictions must have occurred on or after July 1,2008