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For Immediate Release

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PRESS STATEMENT:

Retired Judge Robert J. Burns Reappointed for Second Term as LPDB Member

BATON ROUGE – On January 1, 2011, Judge Robert J. Burns (retired) will begin his second term as a member of the Louisiana Public Defender Board (LPDB). Judge Burns is one of two appointed representatives of Louisiana Supreme Court Chief Justice Catherine Kimball. LPDB is the state agency responsible for overseeing the delivery of public defense services, and is part of the Office of the Governor. Judge Burns' renewed term will run from January 1, 2011 until January 1, 2015.

Judge Burns represents the perspective of a retired judge with significant criminal law experience who has demonstrated a strong commitment to quality representation in indigent defense matters. His acumen has aided LPDB's efforts to improve the constitutional right to counsel for eligible defendants in Louisiana, and simultaneously collaborate with criminal justice agency-partners for increased efficiency and effectiveness in the administration of justice.

Frank X. Neuner, LPDB Chairman and an appointee of the Governor, said, "Judge Burns brings invaluable insight and experience to improve public defense services and the criminal justice system in Louisiana. His professional reputation and pragmatic advice have allowed LPDB to effectively improve statewide infrastructure for public defense services, promulgate standards to ensure fair, accurate verdicts and adopt agency policies that advance accountability in public defense expenditures. We are fortunate to have his contributions over the next four years."

Judge Burns was elected District Judge in 1978 for the 24th Judicial District Court (Jefferson Parish). He was re-elected parish wide without opposition in 1984 and 1990. Judge Burns served many years on the Board of Governors of the Louisiana Judicial College by appointment of the Louisiana Supreme Court. He is a 1969 graduate of the Loyola Law School in New Orleans, Louisiana and practiced civil law before being elected to the judiciary.

Since retiring in 1996, Judge Burns has accepted assignments from the Louisiana Supreme Court in numerous high profile cases, both criminal and civil. Judge Burns was named to the Constitution Project's (Washington, D.C.) death penalty initiative in 2001. The committee published the report, *Mandatory Justice, Eighteen Reforms to the Death Penalty*. This influential, bipartisan report was written by representatives from all facets of the criminal justice system.

Judge Burns is currently a panel member of Perry Dampf Dispute Solutions, a Louisiana mediation and arbitration company. In addition to his volunteer service to the Louisiana Public Defender Board, Judge Burns is currently chairman of the Board of Directors at Brother Martin High School in New Orleans, Louisiana, and is past Kiwanis club President.

More information about LPDB, including its mission, strategic plan, and biographies of all of its board members, is online at: www.lpdb.la.gov