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Attorney General Ken Paxton Announces New Senior Staff Appointments

AUSTIN - Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton announced the following key staff appointments to the Office of the Attorney General (OAG): Angela Colmenero, chief of the General Litigation Division; Amanda Crawford, associate deputy for general and legal counsel; Lesli Ginn, chief of the Financial Litigation and Charitable Trusts Division; Pricilla Hubenack, chief of the Environmental Protection Division; Austin R. Nimocks, associate deputy attorney general for Special Litigation; Al Ochoa, deputy director for policy, legal and program operations; and Robert O'Keefe, division chief of the Tax Division; Patrick K. Sweeten, senior counsel for civil litigation.

"I am proud to announce these leadership roles in the Attorney General's Office. Their previous experience in the agency and distinguished public service careers complements the strong team we have assembled to defend the laws and the constitution of the State of Texas," said Attorney General Paxton. "Today's announcement recognizes tremendous experience and leadership strength of our team and their pivotal role in guiding our state forward."

Angela Colmenero has been appointed chief of the General Litigation Division. Colmenero previously served as an assistant attorney general in the General Litigation Division and as deputy chief of the Special Litigation Division. Before joining OAG, she was a judicial law clerk for then-Chief Judge A. Joe Fish of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas and practiced law in the litigation sections of Jones Day and Lynn Tillotson Pinker & Cox in Dallas. Colmenero received her undergraduate degree in government from the University of Texas at Austin and her law degree from the University of Notre Dame School of Law.

Amanda Crawford has been appointed associate deputy for general and legal counsel. Crawford was appointed general counsel by Attorney General Paxton in January and previously served as the chief of the OAG Open Records Division for almost seven years. Since joining OAG in 1999, she has served as deputy division chief of the Open Records Division, drafting attorney in the Open Records Division, and public information coordinator. Crawford received her bachelor's degree from the University of Texas at Austin and her law degree from the University of Houston Law Center.

Lesli Ginn has been appointed chief of the Financial Litigation and Charitable Trusts Division. Prior to her appointment, Ginn served as deputy chief. Previously, she was an assistant attorney general in the Financial Litigation Division, handling a wide variety of trial and appellate litigation concerning financial regulatory matters such as insurance, banking, securities, and benefits. Ginn originally joined OAG as a law clerk in 2004 to work on the HIPAA Preemption Analysis Task Force. She is also the chair of the State Bar of Texas Administrative and Public Law Section, and a council member since 2010.

Ginn received a Bachelor of Science in criminal justice from Texas State University and a law degree from the University of Houston Law Center.

Priscilla M. Hubenak has been appointed chief of the Environmental Protection Division. Hubenak has practiced law in the OAG since 1988. She recently served as the managing attorney for the natural resources section of the Environmental Protection Division. Hubenak is board certified in administrative law and appears in both state and federal courts in administrative appeals and cases related to Texas environmental issues, public lands, oil and gas issues, water rights, and regulatory matters. Prior to serving as an assistant attorney general, Hubenak was in private practice and also worked five years as a staff attorney and hearings examiner for the Railroad Commission of Texas. Hubenak received her law degree from the University of Houston and graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Science from St. Edward's University in Austin.

Austin R. Nimocks has been appointed associate deputy attorney general for Special Litigation. Previously, he served as senior counsel for Alliance Defending Freedom in Washington, D.C., conducting federal and state litigation regarding marriage, religious liberty, parental rights, and voters' rights, as well as providing legal counsel to several federal and state legislators across the country. Prior to that, Nimocks was in private practice in Biloxi, Mississippi, after serving as a law clerk to Presiding Judge Roger H. McMillin, Jr. of the Mississippi Court of Appeals. Nimocks received his bachelor's and law degrees from Baylor University.

Al Ochoa has been appointed deputy director for policy, legal and program operations. Prior to Ochoa's appointment, he served as senior regional attorney for Region Six in the Child Support Division. During Ochoa's tenure at the OAG, he has also served as special litigator, Region Six, managing assistant attorney general, and an assistant attorney general for the Child Support Division. Ochoa also owned and operated a private law practice in Galveston, where he primarily practiced family law, criminal law, consumer bankruptcy law and personal injury law. He received his Bachelor of Arts in political science and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Houston.

Robert O'Keefe has been appointed chief of the Tax Division. Previously he served as chief of the Financial Litigation, Tax and Charitable Trusts division for three years. Before that, he served as the chief and deputy chief of the General Litigation Division. In addition, O'Keefe served as an assistant attorney general in the OAG General Litigation Division handling constitutional and civil rights litigation. Before joining the OAG in 1994, O'Keefe was in private practice in East Texas handling a wide variety of civil and criminal litigation. He received a Bachelor of Arts in political science from the University of Texas at Austin and a Juris Doctorate from the South Texas College of Law.

Patrick K. Sweeten has been appointed Senior Counsel for Civil Litigation. Patrick returns to the Office of Attorney General where he served as Chief of the Special Litigation Division from 2012 to 2014. While Chief of the Special Litigation Division, Patrick led multiple litigation teams in cases involving securities fraud, voting rights, environmental pollution, consumer fraud, and redistricting. Prior to his service as Chief of the Special Litigation Division, Patrick spent four years in the Civil Medicaid Fraud Division and served as lead trial counsel for the State of Texas in *State of Texas Ex rel. Allen Jones v. Janssen Pharmaceuticals and Johnson & Johnson*. Prior to his service with the Office of the Texas Attorney General, Patrick was an associate and partner at Delano Law Offices in Springfield, Illinois from 1998 to 2007.

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