



NEWS FROM:
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Statement from Public Defender Matt Shirk on the Passing of Ed Austin

Jacksonville, FL (April 25, 2011): “In 1963 when the present system of Public Defense was formed in Florida, The Honorable Ed Austin was asked to serve as the first Public Defender for Jacksonville. Today, Florida provides arguably the best system of mandated criminal indigent defense in the country and that in large part is a tribute to Mr. Austin and the early architects of this Constitutional function. It is humbling to me to serve in the PD system that would not exist without its early visionaries and now to serve in an office first held by Mr. Austin. I feel very fortunate to have known him, to have consulted with him and to simply have shared a laugh together. My thoughts are with the family and those closest to Mr. Austin in this time of remembrance. He was indeed a giant in the local legal system and the greater Jacksonville community; his footprint will last for generations.”