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Attorney General Griffin Promotes Kelly Summerside to Deputy Attorney General of Opinions & FOIA

Griffin: 'Kelly's strength as a legal writer has been an invaluable asset for this office, and I have watched her grow in her leadership capacity'

LITTLE ROCK – Attorney General Tim Griffin issued the following statement announcing the promotion of Kelly Summerside:

“Kelly Summerside has been a key part of my office’s Opinions & FOIA Division since 2019, and I am pleased to announce her promotion to Deputy Attorney General of Opinions & FOIA. Kelly’s strength as a legal writer has been an invaluable asset for this office, and I have watched her grow in her leadership capacity as her responsibilities within the Opinions & FOIA Division have increased.”

Summerside succeeds Noah Watson, who was recently promoted within the Office of the Attorney General to Deputy Solicitor General.

A graduate of Georgetown University Law Center and the University of Arkansas, Summerside has served in the Opinions & FOIA Division of the Office of the Attorney General since 2019—first as Assistant Attorney General and then as Senior Assistant Attorney General. In these roles, she has drafted official legal opinions, provided training and guidance on the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), reviewed constitutional challenges, and overseen the office’s responses to public records requests. Before joining the Attorney General’s Office, Summerside spent several years advocating for vulnerable populations, including victims of domestic

violence, human trafficking, and elder abuse. As Senior Staff Attorney at Peace at Home Family Shelter, she oversaw legal services for survivors of domestic violence and provided training to attorneys, judges, and law enforcement. She also served on an elder-abuse taskforce led by the Department of Human Services and an anti-trafficking taskforce focused on prevention and prosecution.

About Attorney General Tim Griffin

Tim Griffin was sworn in as the 57th Attorney General of Arkansas on January 10, 2023, having previously served as the state's 20th Lieutenant Governor from 2015-2023. From 2011-2015, Griffin served as the 24th representative of Arkansas's Second Congressional District, where he served on the House Committee on Ways and Means, House Armed Services Committee, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, House Committee on Ethics and House Committee on the Judiciary while also serving as a Deputy Whip for the Majority.

Griffin is currently an officer in the Arkansas Army National Guard and holds the rank of colonel. Griffin served as an officer in the U.S. Army Reserve Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Corps for more than 28 years. In 2005, Griffin was mobilized to active duty as an Army prosecutor at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and served with the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) in Mosul, Iraq.

His previous assignments include serving as the Commander of the 2d Legal Operations Detachment in New Orleans, Louisiana; the Commander of the 134th Legal Operations Detachment at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; and as a Senior Legislative Advisor to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness at the Pentagon. Griffin earned a master's degree in strategic studies as a Distinguished Honor Graduate from the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

Griffin also served as U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas, and Special Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of Political Affairs for President George W. Bush; Special Assistant to Assistant Attorney General Michael Chertoff, Criminal Division, U.S. Department of Justice; Special Assistant U.S. Attorney, U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Arkansas; Senior Investigative Counsel, Government Reform and Oversight Committee, U.S. House of Representatives; and Associate Independent Counsel, Office of Independent Counsel David M. Barrett, In re: HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros.

Griffin is a graduate of Magnolia High School, Hendrix College in Conway, and Tulane Law School in New Orleans. He attended graduate school at Oxford University. He is admitted to

practice law in Arkansas (active) and Louisiana (inactive). Griffin lives in Little Rock with his wife, Elizabeth, a Camden native, and their three children.

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