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Former U.S. Attorney General Griffin Bell to speak on Justice Department and U.S. attorney hiring practices

ATHENS, Ga. – Former U.S. Attorney General and 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeal Judge Griffin B. Bell will speak at the University of Georgia School of Law April 18 at 1:30 p.m. in classroom B. Serving as a Sanders Visiting Scholar, he will discuss U.S. Department of Justice activities and its hiring practices. While the presentation will be open to the public, preference will be given to law students desiring to attend.

Bell has had a long distinguished career in both the public and private sectors. In 1958, he was named Georgia Gov. S. Ernest Vandiver's chief of staff. President John F. Kennedy appointed him as a judge for the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in 1961, where he served for nearly 15 years. From 1977 to 1979, he served as the 72nd attorney general of the United States, a post he was nominated for by President Jimmy Carter. During his tenure as attorney general, it has been said that one of his primary achievements was rebuilding the Justice Department as a "neutral zone" in government.

Additionally, Bell served as the initial chairman of the Atlanta Commission on Crime and Juvenile Delinquency. During 1980, he headed the American delegation to the conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. From 1985 to 1987, Bell served on the Secretary of State's Advisory Committee on South Africa, and in 1989, he was appointed vice chair of President George H.W. Bush's Commission on Federal Ethics Law Reform. During the Iran Contra investigation, he was counsel to President Bush. He served as one of President George W. Bush's team's key advisers during the 2000 election controversy and was a member of his transition advisory team for the Department of Justice.

Over the years, Bell has practiced law with the Atlanta firm King & Spalding, where he has served as partner, managing partner, senior partner and senior counsel, a position he assumed in 2004. While his practice areas are multi-faceted, Bell's principal focus in recent years has been advice and counsel on matters relating to corporate crime. In 1984, Bell received the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation Award for Excellence in Law and was recently named one of the 100 Georgians of the century. He earned his law degree cum laude from Mercer University in 1948.

Named for Georgia's 74th Governor and Georgia Law alumnus Carl E. Sanders, Sanders Visiting Scholars are individuals who have distinguished themselves as leaders in public service and the legal profession and are brought to campus to enhance the learning experience of law students.

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Note to editors: Due to anticipated space limitations, if you are planning to cover this event, you will need to contact Heidi Murphy at 706/542-5172 to reserve your spot. This is essential to ensure you will be able to gain access to the event.