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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Attorney General Agrees to Serve Through September at Court's Request**

Tennessee Attorney General Paul Summers has agreed to remain as the state's chief legal officer through September rather than leaving the position Aug. 31 as he had previously announced, Chief Justice William M. Barker said Wednesday.

The chief justice also announced that a Sept. 12 public hearing and Supreme Court interviews with the 14 attorney general applicants will be rescheduled. Under the Tennessee Constitution, the attorney general is appointed by the Supreme Court for an eight-year term.

"The court is grateful to General Summers for agreeing to stay an additional month," Barker said. "We take very seriously our responsibility to select an attorney general and believe that a complete five-member court should participate. "

Justices E. Riley Anderson and Adolpho A. Birch, Jr., are retiring effective Aug. 31. Gov. Phil Bredesen appointed Court of Criminal Appeals Judge Gary R. Wade to fill one of the two seats, leaving the court with four members.

Applications for the fifth seat are being accepted by the Judicial Selection Commission through Aug. 29. Details on the application process are available on the court system website at [www.tncourts.gov](http://www.tncourts.gov). The commission will review the applications, conduct a public hearing on Sept. 5 and recommend three names to the governor, who will make an appointment.

"We are optimistic that we will have a new Supreme Court justice by the end of September when General Summers is leaving," Barker said.

The attorney general serves as the state's attorney in civil litigation and prosecutes criminal cases in appellate courts. The attorney general also provides legal advice to the Tennessee General Assembly and state agencies.