

High-powered attorney to represent Arizona shooting suspect

By Michael Kiefer, Arizona Republic

When Jared Loughner faces a judge in federal court in Phoenix this afternoon, he will be accompanied by the same high-powered defense attorney who represented the “Unabomber,” the Atlanta Olympics bomber and Susan Smith, the South Carolina woman who drowned her two children by driving her car into a lake.

The Federal Public Defender’s Office in Phoenix has recommended that San Diego attorney Judy Clarke take Loughner’s case.

She will appear with him at his initial court appearance and ask to be appointed as Loughner’s attorney.

Loughner, 22, has been charged with five federal felonies: the attempted murders of U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords and two of her staffers, and the murders of U.S. District Judge John Roll and Giffords aide Gabriel Zimmerman.

Loughner could face the death penalty, although that decision has not yet been reached.

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