



**Attorney General Steve Marshall Successfully Defends Lawrence County Conviction
Imposing Stiffer Sentence in Alabama for Stalking**

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Steve Marshall announced that the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals affirmed the conviction of William Earl Latham, 71, for first-degree aggravated stalking on October 7, 2022. Latham was convicted in Lawrence County Circuit Court on February 3, 2022, for first-degree aggravated stalking of his former wife. Latham’s subsequent 20-year sentence is one of the most severe imposed for aggravated stalking in the state.

The evidence at trial showed that Latham and his victim were married for many years and during the marriage Latham began physically abusing his wife. In 2020, Latham’s wife sought a protection from abuse order which Latham repeatedly violated. Eventually, Latham’s threatening and abusive behavior led to a dangerous altercation which resulted in an automobile accident. Latham was convicted of aggravated stalking and received a 20-year prison sentence.

Lawrence County District Attorney Errek Jett’s office successfully prosecuted this case and obtained a guilty verdict. Latham subsequently sought to have his conviction reversed on appeal.

The Attorney General's Criminal Appeals Division handled the case during the appeals process, arguing for the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals to affirm Latham’s conviction. The Court did so in a decision issued October 7, 2022.

Commenting on the impact of this case, Attorney General Steve Marshall said, “William Earl Latham received a 20-year prison sentence for his repeated stalking and abusive behavior toward his former wife. In the past, stalking offenders like Latham would have received minimal, if any, prison time for this kind of terrorizing behavior. As underscored by this sentence, Alabama now imposes severe penalties for aggravated stalkers.”

Attorney General Marshall commended Assistant Attorney General John J. Davis and law clerk Jeremiah Johansen for their successful work on this case, and thanked Lawrence County District Attorney Errek Jett and his staff for their valuable assistance in defending the first-degree aggravated stalking conviction.

