

NEWS RELEASE

Luther Strange

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AG WARNS OF POSSIBLE SCAMS REGARDING BLACK FARMERS DISCRIMINATION SETTLEMENT

(MONTGOMERY) –Attorney General Luther Strange is warning consumers to be wary of people or organizations offering help in filing claims in the Black Farmers Discrimination Litigation involving the United States Department of Agriculture, for which the deadline has already passed and it is no longer possible to file claims.

“I am concerned by reports that there may be meetings in Alabama where black farmers are told that, for a fee, someone can help them file claims and participate in a federal discrimination lawsuit,” said Attorney General Strange. “This is simply untrue, and farmers should not pay any money or provide personal information.”

The federal courts gave final approval to the settlement on October 27, 2011, providing over \$1 billion to settle claims by African American farmers that the USDA discriminated against them between 1981 and 1996 based on race, wrongfully denying them farm loans, loan servicing, and other benefits, or giving them loans with unfair terms. The deadline to file a claim for the settlement was May 11, 2012, more than one year ago.

Information about the settlement is available through the toll-free number of its claims administrator, 1-877-810-8110. Among the information offered in a recorded message is that “There are no further opportunities to file a claim in this settlement regardless of what you may have heard elsewhere.”

“It is unfortunate that scammers prey upon the hopes of those in need,” said Attorney General Strange. “We urge consumers to be cautious with anyone who is asking for a fee or for personal information, and to contact my Consumer Protection Section if they have concerns.”

The Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Section may be contacted by visiting www.ago.alabama.gov or by calling its toll-free hotline at 1-800-392-5658.

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