

NEWS RELEASE

Luther Strange

Alabama Attorney General



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AG STRANGE ANNOUNCES GUILTY PLEA, SENTENCING OF FORMER MARSHALL COUNTY REVENUE COMMISSIONER

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Luther Strange announced the conviction and sentencing today of former Marshall County Revenue Commissioner Joey Masters on a charge of violating the state ethics law. Masters was sentenced this morning in Marshall County District Court to 12 months in the Marshall County Jail, which was suspended for a term of two years of supervised probation. In addition, he was ordered to pay a \$1,000 fine, a \$100 fee to the Alabama Crime Victims Compensation Commission, and to perform 200 hours of community service.

Masters was arrested on November 6, 2013, pursuant to a warrant brought by the Attorney General's Special Prosecutions Division. Later that day, he submitted his resignation as Revenue Commissioner.

In a plea agreement filed today, Masters pleaded guilty to violating the ethics law by using his official position for personal gain. In the hearing, the prosecutor stated that the plea involved Masters' taking money from a cashbox in the Revenue Commissioner's Office for his personal use. Specifically, three dates in September and November of 2012 where \$740 was used were referenced as examples of this. Evidence indicated that Masters returned the money afterward. Masters admitted that he had done this on several occasions. The plea agreement states that there is no restitution due and that it "resolves all matters now currently under investigation by the Attorney General's Office based on information known at this time."

Attorney General Strange commended Assistant Attorney General Bill Lisenby and Special Agents of his Special Prosecutions Division for their work in this case. "This matter was thoroughly investigated by my Special Prosecutions Division, resulting in charges against the defendant for the crime that he committed," said Attorney General Strange. "This defendant did not have the right to use public funds for his personal use, regardless of whether he paid it back. This was an abuse of the public trust and it is appropriate that he no longer is in office and that he is being held to account for his crime."

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