



## **AG Announces that Court of Criminal Appeals Upholds Murder Conviction in Mobile County**

(MONTGOMERY) –Attorney General Luther Strange announced that the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals on Friday upheld the murder conviction of Brandon Phillip Estle. Estle, 27, of Mobile, was convicted in Mobile County Circuit Court in June 2013 for the murder of Justin Hasty, also of Mobile. Estle and Hasty both were 2005 graduates of Murphy High School.

Justin Hasty's family had become concerned on October 29, 2012, when he did not arrive at work. When Hasty's mother went to her son's Caroline Avenue home looking for him, she found blood splatter in the bedroom. A police investigation was commenced.

The following day, Estle directed his father, Doug Estle, the former principal of Murphy High School and now principal of Bryant High School in Irvington, to a large tool box he had dumped in a field near Doug Estle's Grand Bay home. Doug Estle subsequently summoned law enforcement to the location. Justin Hasty's body was found stuffed in the box, bludgeoned and shot.

Evidence presented at trial showed that Estle was a heavy drug user who owed Hasty several hundred dollars, and that he had attacked Hasty with a baseball bat when Hasty would not loan him money for drugs. Brandon Estle claimed that he struck Hasty with the bat in self defense when Hasty pulled a gun on him.

The case was prosecuted at trial by Mobile County District Attorney Ashley Rich. Following his conviction, Estle was sentenced to life in prison.

Estle subsequently sought to have his conviction reversed on appeal. The Attorney General's Appeals Division handled the case during the appeals process, arguing for the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals to affirm the conviction. The Court did so in a decision issued on Friday, July 11.

Attorney General Strange commended Assistant Attorney General Stephen Dodd of the Attorney General's Appeals Division for his successful work in this case.

