



## **AG ANNOUNCES SENTENCING OF FORMER VFD ASSISTANT CHIEF FOR FELONY ETHICS VIOLATION IN AUTAUGA COUNTY**

(MONTGOMERY) –Attorney General Luther Strange announced the sentencing this morning of a former assistant chief of the Autaugaville Volunteer Fire Department for a felony ethics violation. Mack Cell Harmon was sentenced to 31 months, which was split for him to serve 30 days in the Autauga County Jail followed by 18 months of probation. Additionally, he was ordered to serve 150 hours community service and to pay court costs, \$50 to the Alabama Crime Victims Compensation Fund, a \$750 bail bond fee, a \$500 fine, and \$500 in restitution to the Autaugaville Volunteer Fire Department.

Harmon was found guilty on July 10 by a jury in Autauga County Circuit Court following a two-day trial. The Attorney General’s Special Prosecutions Division presented evidence to an Autauga County grand jury resulting in Harmon’s indictment in November of 2013. Also indicted were Danny Chavers, former chief of the Autaugaville VFD and a former chairman of the Autauga County Commission, and Ernest Terry Stoudemire, also a former chief of the Autaugaville VFD. Chavers pleaded guilty in March to five felony charges, two for violating the ethics law and three for first-degree theft. An ethics charge and a second-degree theft charge are pending against Stoudemire.

The evidence presented by the Attorney General’s Special Prosecutions Division showed that Harmon was the assistant chief of the Autaugaville Volunteer Fire Department in 2012. Using his official position, Harmon illegally obtained and kept \$500 of a donation made by a private citizen that was intended for the Fire Department. This occurred at a time when the Fire Department was recovering from the theft of its money by Danny Chavers and the donation was intended to help with expenses.

“This is a serious crime involving a betrayal of the public trust regarding money that belonged to a volunteer fire department,” said Attorney General Strange. “I am pleased that this defendant has been called to account and will serve time in jail for his wrongdoing.”

Attorney General Strange commended those involved in bringing this case to a successful conclusion, noting in particular Assistant Attorneys General Bill Lisenby and Pete Smyczek of the Special Prosecutions Division, investigators of the Special Prosecutions Division and members of the Autaugaville Volunteer Fire Department.

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