

NEWS RELEASE

Luther Strange

Alabama Attorney General



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 18, 2015

For More Information, contact:

Mike Lewis (334) 353-2199

Joy Patterson (334) 242-7491

Claire Haynes (334) 242-7351

AG ANNOUNCES CONVICTION OF GEORGIA MAN FOR FELONY VIOLATION OF THE ALABAMA DIGITAL CRIME ACT

(MONTGOMERY)--Attorney General Luther Strange announced the conviction of a Georgia man for a felony related to attempts to access confidential information systems maintained by the State of Alabama. On Monday, Thomas Jack Hixon, 20, of Chickamauga, Georgia pleaded guilty in Calhoun County Circuit Court to Attempted Computer Tampering, which is a class C felony. This is the first case prosecuted by this Office under the new "Alabama Digital Crime Act" which was passed by the Legislature in 2012.

Hixon was sentenced to five years and a \$1,000 fine, plus court costs and a \$50 fee to the Alabama Crime Victims Compensation Commission. He has applied for probation which will be determined at a later hearing.

Attorney General Strange's Special Prosecutions Division presented evidence to a Calhoun County grand jury, resulting in Hixon's indictment in 2013. The conviction arises from a call Hixon made to the Calhoun County Sheriff's Office in which he claimed to be an employee of the Weaver Police Department. Using spoofing software, Hixon further concealed his identity by manipulating the caller ID to show him as calling from the Weaver Police Department. Hixon attempted to obtain a user name and password for access to computerized confidential law enforcement records contained in the National Crime Information Center database, or "NCIC."

"The Alabama Digital Crime Act is an important law to protect our state and to maintain the security of confidential law enforcement records," said Attorney General Strange. "I am proud of the work by my Special Prosecutions Division in bringing this case to a successful conclusion."

Attorney General Strange commended Deputy Attorney General Pete Smyczek and Investigators of the Attorney General's Special Prosecutions Division. He thanked the Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center (now a part of the State Bureau of Investigation in the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency), which investigated the case. The Attorney General also thanked the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and the Chickamauga Police Department for their assistance in this case. SBI Director Gene Wiggins said, "The State Bureau of Investigations will continue to aggressively investigate allegations of misuse to protect the integrity of our information systems."

--30--

