

NEWS RELEASE

Luther Strange

Alabama Attorney General



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 17, 2015

For More Information, contact:

Mike Lewis (334) 353-2199

Joy Patterson (334) 242-7491

Page 1 of 1

AG STRANGE ANNOUNCES CONVICTION OF MONTGOMERY WOMAN FOR VIOLATION OF GRAND JURY SECRECY

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Luther Strange announced the conviction of a Montgomery woman, who was on the grand jury in a major drug case, for attempting to reveal confidential grand jury information. Latoya Ware pleaded guilty yesterday in Montgomery County Circuit Court to the unclassified felony.

A date for sentencing has not been set because Ware has applied for pretrial diversion, which the State is opposing. She faces a potential sentence of three years and a fine of \$3,000.

In August, Ware was among 18 citizens serving on a Montgomery County grand jury that considered a case presented by the Attorney General's Office concerning 15 individuals who were ultimately indicted on state charges of drug conspiracy in a major joint investigation by state, federal and local law enforcement. She and the other grand jurors were instructed that grand jury proceedings are secret and must not be discussed with anyone outside the grand jury. However, during a break, Ware was observed taking photographs of some of the physical evidence that was shown to the grand jury. When questioned by another grand juror, she said she had deleted the information. She denied to the prosecutor and investigators of the Attorney General's Office that she had taken any photographs. However, after she gave permission for her phone to be searched, it was discovered that photographs of the physical evidence had been deleted but saved to the internet cloud.

"This conviction is important because it is vital that the integrity of the grand jury process be preserved," said Attorney General Strange. "These proceedings are preliminary to a prosecution, and are confidential by law for the protection of witnesses, law enforcement and even the suspects in a case. Abuse of the grand jury secrecy act must not be tolerated."

Attorney General Strange commended Assistant Attorneys General Bill Lisenby and James Rutter of his Criminal Trials Division, and Special Agents of his Investigations Division. He thanked Montgomery County District Attorney Daryl Bailey's office for assistance.

--30--

