



July 7, 2016

For More Information, contact:

Mike Lewis (334) 353-2199

Joy Patterson (334) 242-7491

Page 1 of 1

**AG STRANGE ANNOUNCES THAT COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS UPHOLDS
CONVICTION FOR FILING FRAUDULENT DOCUMENTS AGAINST PUBLIC OFFICIALS**

(MONTGOMERY)— Attorney General Luther Strange today announced that the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals has affirmed the conviction of William Peter Witwicki for four counts of filing fraudulent documents against public officials.

Witwicki was convicted by a jury on March 17, 2015, following a two-day trial. The Attorney General's Criminal Trials Division presented evidence showing that he and a co-defendant filed fraudulent liens against two circuit judges, a sheriff, and a circuit clerk. The fraudulent documents directed these public officials to pay Witwicki \$89.2 million in silver coins. Expert testimony was presented that linked characteristics of the fraudulent documents with the sovereign citizens movement, which advocates using certain phrases to declare their sovereignty and that no state court has jurisdiction over them.

"The actions of these men were an attempt to intimidate and defraud public officials and to interfere with their carrying out their sworn duties," said Attorney General Strange. "These are serious crimes that warrant a stern penalty. The State of Alabama will not allow so-called 'sovereign citizens' to impede our lawful government."

Witwicki subsequently sought to have his conviction reversed on appeal. The Attorney General's Criminal Appeals Section 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 1.

Attorney General Strange commended Assistant Attorney General Robin Scales of the Attorney General's Criminal Appeals Section, as well as Assistant Attorneys General Ternisha Miles Jones and John Hensley of the Criminal Trials Division, for their successful work in this case.

--30--

