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Attorney General Steve Marshall Announces the Conviction of Eleventh Judicial Circuit Judge for Abuse of Public Office

(Montgomery, Ala) – Attorney General Steve Marshall announced today the conviction of Gilbert Porterfield Self, Sr., former presiding judge of Alabama’s Eleventh Judicial Circuit, on 16 felony counts and one misdemeanor. After a three-week trial, a Lauderdale County jury found Self guilty on 17 counts for using his office for personal gain, lying to the Examiners of Public Accounts, and lying to the Lauderdale County Grand Jury.

During the trial, jurors heard evidence about how Self used Lauderdale County judicial accounts to fund personal vacations, including a ski trip to Montana, a cycling trip across Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, and a beach trip with his son. They also heard about how Self was using the judicial account to write himself checks for tuition and fees for conferences he did not attend to float his personal bank accounts when his accounts were overdrawn, and how he was paying himself for vacations he didn’t go on. They also heard about a number of personal items that were purchased with the accounts, including a couch for his home, his son’s college diploma frame, personal prescription eyeglasses, and alcohol on a weekend trip to Birmingham. Finally, the jurors heard about how Self tried to escape accountability for his use of public funds, including how he made false representations to the Examiners of Public Accounts about the nature of the expenditures and lying to the Grand Jury of Lauderdale County.

“Public office is a sacred trust, and Judge Self shattered that trust. This conviction proves that Alabama’s ethics laws are not symbolic; they have force, and they work when enforced. When officials put greed above duty and try to hide their misconduct behind lies, they attack the very foundation of our justice system,” Attorney General Marshall said. “My office will pursue public corruption without hesitation or exception and hold accountable anyone who puts personal gain ahead of the people of Alabama.”

The intentional use of public office for personal gain is a Class B felony and carries a potential sentence of two to twenty years in prison, while non-intentional use of office for personal gain is a Class A misdemeanor. Making a false statement to the Examiners of Public Accounts and perjury in the first degree are each Class C felonies and carry potential sentences of one year and one day to ten years in prison. A sentencing hearing is set for December 17.

Attorney General Marshall thanked his Special Prosecutions Division, particularly Assistant Attorneys General Alana K. Cammack, Jasper B. Roberts, Jr., and Assistant Chief Deputy Clark Morris, as well as the special agents who investigated the case. He also thanked the Alabama Department of Public Accounts and the Lauderdale County Circuit Court for their assistance in this case.

