



AG STRANGE WARNS THAT SO-CALLED ELECTRONIC BINGO MACHINES STILL ILLEGAL UNDER STATE LAW

(MONTGOMERY) – In the wake of several announcements made by the owners of shuttered casinos that they will reopen, Attorney General Luther Strange pledged that his office will be vigilant in enforcing the rule of law as prescribed by the Alabama Supreme Court. He also provided fair warning to anyone planning to operate a so-called “electronic bingo” casino, and pledged that the Attorney General’s Office will not allow the State of Alabama to spiral back into the gambling problems of the past.

“This is not about whether I believe gambling is good or bad,” said Attorney General Strange. “This is about the rule of law, pure and simple. When the Alabama Supreme Court makes a ruling, it is my job and my duty to uphold the rule of law. The Alabama Supreme Court has been crystal clear about what is legal in Alabama when it comes to so-called ‘electronic bingo,’” said Attorney General Luther Strange.

“The only form of bingo authorized by any amendment to the Alabama Constitution is the traditional game commonly known as bingo. The six mandatory characteristics of bingo set forth by the Alabama Supreme Court in the 2010 *Cornerstone* case, which plainly requires that the human elements of the traditional game of bingo must be fully preserved in order for a game to potentially qualify as legal bingo, will be strictly followed. Slot machines and other illegal gambling devices cannot be used to play bingo, period. My office, along with other state and local law enforcement agencies, has been aggressive in investigating and shutting down illegal gambling operations since I took office in January 2011, and absolutely nothing has changed,” said Attorney General Strange.

“Bingo operators have tried to create confusion in the law but no one should be confused about my commitment and duty to enforce the law. Those currently engaged in illegal gambling activities or contemplating opening an illegal gambling facility under the guise of so-called ‘electronic bingo’ in defiance of Alabama law should be aware that this office will continue to enforce the law.” said Attorney General Strange.

“Finally, the bingo amendments to the Alabama Constitution require that gambling proceeds must go to bona fide charities. For-profit casinos that rake in millions of dollars from Alabama’s poorest citizens are not charities under any definition of the term. There is no back door loophole in our gambling laws for anyone to make a handsome profit off the backs of charities through thinly veiled shams or gimmicks,” said Attorney General Luther Strange.

