



AG ANNOUNCES 35-YEAR PRISON SENTENCE FOR ATTEMPTED MURDER OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS IN RUSSELL COUNTY

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Luther Strange announced that a Columbus man today was sentenced to 35 years in prison for attempted murder of two Phenix City police officers and menacing of two other law enforcement officers. Robert Lorenzo Anderson, 24, was found guilty by a jury on April 23 following a two-day trial in Russell County Circuit Court. Anderson was sentenced to 35 years for each of the two counts of attempted murder and six months for each of the two counts of menacing, with these sentences to run concurrently.

The crimes occurred on the afternoon of July 25 when Phenix City police officers Ryan Anglin and Kilpatrick Thomas, among others, responded to a 911 call reporting gunfire at the Riverview Apartments. Police received a subsequent call telling where the suspect was in the building, and while searching that apartment, officers encountered a man fitting the suspect's description who jumped out of a second-floor window and fled.

As officers Anglin and Thomas pursued, Anderson pointed a pistol at them and fired. This shooting was witnessed by at least one resident of the apartments. After Officer Thomas called the shooting over the police radio, additional law enforcement officers arrived at the scene to help. One of these was Ray Rogers, a Phenix City building inspector who also is a sworn law enforcement officer. Rogers testified that as he rounded the corner of one of the apartment buildings, Anderson shot at him. Shortly thereafter, Investigator Thomas Franklin of the Russell County District Attorney's Office, who was in his vehicle, saw Anderson running across a street. Anderson pointed his pistol at the investigator's vehicle as if to shoot, but ran away when Franklin fired at him. Investigator Franklin pulled his vehicle alongside Anderson, who again pointed his gun at the vehicle. The investigator fired again, this time hitting Anderson in the leg, and Anderson was then apprehended.

The Attorney General's Criminal Trials Division presented evidence at trial that included testimony of the victims who Anderson fired upon as well as a civilian eyewitness. Forensic evidence matched shell casings found on the scene to Anderson's gun. Additionally, as Anderson was receiving treatment in an ambulance on the crime scene, he said "Give me a gun and I'd do it again." He further stated to investigators that he had been in the apartment to sell drugs and admitted to firing his gun, but during interviews did not admit to shooting at the officers.



“It is right and important that this man will serve many years in prison,” said Attorney General Strange. “He conducted a terrible attack on the lives of law enforcement officers who responded to a call for help and put their lives, literally, on the line to protect residents of Riverview Apartments and the people of Phenix City. Officers Anglin and Thomas, Mr. Rogers and Investigator Franklin, are truly heroes and we are grateful that they were not killed. This sentence should serve as a warning that Alabama will not tolerate threats and assaults on our law enforcement officers, and those who do so will be held to account and face stern punishment.”

Attorney General Strange commended those involved in the prosecution of this case, noting in particular Assistant Attorney General Stephanie Billingslea, division chief; Assistant Attorney General John Hensley, and Paralegal Lori Arnold; all of the Attorney General’s Criminal Trials Division. He also thanked the Phenix City Police Department, the Russell County Sheriff’s Office, the Russell County District Attorney’s Office, the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences and the Muscogee County (GA) Sheriff’s Office.