



## **AG STRANGE ANNOUNCES CONVICTION OF FORMER SELMA ATTORNEY FOR FELONY THEFT FROM CLIENT**

(MONTGOMERY) –Attorney General Luther Strange announced the Dallas County Circuit Court’s conviction yesterday of a former Selma Attorney for first-degree theft from a client. Moments before his trial was due to start, Robert Roland Blair pleaded guilty to the class B felony charge. Blair entered a blind plea, without a recommendation from the State regarding his sentence.

Blair, 62, now of Louisiana, was sentenced to 24 months, which was suspended for a term of 24 months probation. Blair previously was suspended by the Alabama State Bar Association and no longer is a practicing attorney.

The conviction arises from Blair’s representation of a client who was injured in a 2004 vehicle accident. Without proper authority from his client, Blair settled the case for \$25,000 and kept the money. He deposited a check with the client’s forged signature and spent the money for his personal use while his client was still in a rehabilitation center due to her injuries. Blair did not return the money until ordered to compensate the State Bar, which had paid the full amount of the settlement to Blair’s client following a complaint.

“I am pleased that we called this defendant to account for his crimes and made him answer to justice,” said Attorney General Strange. “It is reprehensible that he settled this case without proper authority from his client and spent her money even while she still was suffering from the injuries for which he pledged to seek compensation for her.”

The Attorney General’s Office presented evidence to a Dallas County grand jury in May of 2013 resulting in a second indictment against Blair. The first case was tried in 2012 and resulted in a hung jury.

Attorney General Strange commended those involved in bringing this case to a successful conclusion, noting in particular Assistant Attorneys General Cameron McEwen and Noel Barnes of his Consumer Litigation Section, Assistant Attorney General Ternisha Miles of his Criminal Trials Division, and Special Agents of his Investigations Division.

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