



AG ANNOUNCES CONVICTION IN CONECUH COUNTY

(MONTGOMERY) –Attorney General Luther Strange announced the conviction of an Evergreen man for felony interference with custody of a child. James Leon Windham, 67, was found guilty on Wednesday following a trial that began on Monday in Conecuh County Circuit Court. Sentencing is set for December 5, when he faces a potential penalty of one to 10 years and a fine of up to \$15,000 for the Class C felony.

The Attorney General’s Criminal Trials Division presented evidence regarding a confrontation between Windham and the father of two children, ages 9 and 5, which resulted in Windham taking the children. The incident occurred at the father’s workplace, a local animal shelter. Prosecutors stated that Windham was angry because he thought the children’s father was involved in Windham’s wife losing her job at the shelter. Windham took the children without their father’s permission, drove away in his car, and told them that he was taking them to get new parents. Testimony was presented to show the children were extremely frightened. When Windham realized the father was following, he took the children to their mother’s workplace and gave them to her. He then went to DHR and claimed he had taken the children because their father had abandoned them. The father was the custodial parent, with full custody of the children. The jury deliberated less than five minutes before returning a guilty verdict.

“It is a serious crime to take children from their parents and to interfere with their lawful custody,” said Attorney General Strange. “The defendant had no right to do so, and now he has been called to account for his wrongful actions.”

Attorney General Strange commended those involved in bringing this case to a successful conclusion, noting in particular Assistant Attorney General Stephanie Billingslea, chief of the Criminal Trials Division; Assistant Attorneys General Leigh Gwathney and John Hensley of the Criminal Trials Division; the Attorney General’s Office of Victim Assistance; and Special Agents of the Attorney General’s Investigations Division. He also thanked the Evergreen Police Department and the Conecuh County Sheriff’s Office.

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