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## **AG ANNOUNCES ARREST OF FORMER NURSING ASSISTANT FOR STRIKING ELDERLY WOMAN AT NURSING HOME**

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Luther Strange announced the arrest of a former employee of a Tuscaloosa County nursing home for abuse of an elderly resident of the facility. Anita Brenett Watford, 47, of Tuscaloosa, was arrested on January 8 and released on a \$10,000 bond.

The Attorney General’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit presented evidence to a Tuscaloosa County grand jury resulting in an indictment\* on October 31, 2014, charging Watford with a violation of the Adult Protective Services Act of 1976. The charges allege that Watford, a certified nursing assistant (CNA) at Glen Haven Health and Rehabilitation, struck Emma Matthews, 93, a resident of the facility, on the head causing injury. The investigation was initiated after management of the facility was alerted to Matthews’ injuries. It is alleged that Watford attempted to forcibly give Matthews medication but that she kept spitting the medication out. Watford then punched Matthews on the head above her eye. Watford told administrators at the nursing home that she was attempting to hold Ms. Matthews hands down and that Matthews forced Watford’s hands to hit her on the head; however, other witness statements contradict Watford’s account.

The Adult Protective Services Act of 1976 (Ala. Code 1975 §38-9-7d) provides that any person who intentionally abuses or neglects a “protected person” shall be guilty of a Class C felony if the intentional abuse or neglect causes physical injury. The Act defines a “protected person” as any person who resides in a nursing home, mental institution, development center for people with intellectual disability and/or other convalescent care facility.

Watford is scheduled for arraignment before Tuscaloosa County Circuit Judge James H. Roberts Jr. on April 3, 2015.

*\*An indictment is merely an accusation. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.*

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