

NEWS RELEASE

# Luther Strange

Alabama Attorney General



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## AG ANNOUNCES THAT COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS UPHOLDS TUSCALOOSA COUNTY MURDER CONVICTION

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Luther Strange announced that the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals on Friday upheld the murder conviction of Christopher Dewayne Patton. Patton, 32, of Northport, was convicted in Tuscaloosa County Circuit Court in August of 2014 for the murder of Kenneth McDaniel.

Evidence presented at trial showed that on the evening of July 17, 2012, Sandra McDaniel and her husband, the victim Kenneth McDaniel, were at home and heard a loud noise outside. Kenneth McDaniel stated, "There goes the air conditioner"; a later investigation of the scene showed that the breaker to the air conditioning unit had been manually switched off. After Kenneth McDaniel walked out of the back door of the house, Sandra McDaniel looked out of the kitchen window, and saw "a man swinging a weapon as hard as he could." She identified the man as Patton, whom she had seen walking on her property about eight weeks before. As police responded to the scene, Patton was seen walking down the shoulder of the road holding a pipe in his hands. Patton dropped the pipe and fled but was later apprehended. A DNA analysis confirmed that the blood on the pipe belonged to Kenneth McDaniel. Kenneth McDaniel died as a result of blunt force trauma to his head.

The case was prosecuted at trial by Tuscaloosa County District Attorney Lyn Head's office. Patton was sentenced to life imprisonment on the murder conviction and subsequently sought to have his conviction reversed on appeal.

The Attorney General's Criminal Appeals Division handled the case during the appeals process, arguing for the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals to affirm the conviction. The Court did so in a decision issued on Friday, August 7.

Attorney General Strange commended Assistant Attorney General Kristi Wilkerson of the Attorney General's Criminal Appeals Division for her successful work in this case.

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