

NEWS RELEASE

Luther Strange

Alabama Attorney General



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 8, 2015

For More Information, contact:

Mike Lewis (334) 353-2199

Joy Patterson (334) 242-7491

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AG ANNOUNCES THEFT CONVICTION IN ELMORE COUNTY

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Luther Strange announced the conviction today of a Lauderdale County man for first-degree theft by deception in a scheme to defraud victims of credit card information. Barry Gene Holder, age 54, pleaded guilty this morning in Elmore County Circuit Court. Sentencing is set for November 9.

According to information presented in court by the Attorney General's Criminal Trials Division, Holder and a co-defendant perpetrated the crime together. During the summer of 2013, Holder and Jonathon Sharpton were involved in a fraudulent use of credit card and identity theft scheme. Sharpton, who pleaded guilty in June 2015, was incarcerated in Elmore Correctional Facility, a state prison in Elmore, Alabama. Sharpton would obtain identification and credit card information from individuals, order items from businesses using the stolen credit card information, and then have the items picked up by people outside the prison. Holder owned a pawn shop in Colbert County and, as part of the scheme, took some of the illegally obtained merchandise for sale at his business and some for his personal use. Multiple businesses in several counties had property illegally acquired from them.

"The manner by which this information was obtained is particularly disturbing, and demonstrates how vital it is that consumers be vigilant about their credit card and identification information," said Attorney General Strange. According to information from prosecutors, Sharpton obtained a cell phone and made calls from the prison. One of the schemes was to call a hotel, ask for a certain room number, and then when the guest answered, he would claim to be from the front desk and tell them their credit card had not gone through and he needed the number again. "The defendant Barry Holder was an active participant in the theft, by taking property that he knew had been stolen. I am pleased that my Criminal Trials Division was able to put an end to these treacherous acts and that these men will be punished for their crimes."

Attorney General Strange commended Assistant Attorneys General John Hensley and Bill Lisenby of his Criminal Trials Division and Special Agents of his Investigations Division. He also thanked the Sheffield Police Department for its role in investigating this matter.

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