



December 18, 2015

AG STRANGE ANNOUNCES CONVICTION OF FORMER BIBB COUNTY DEPUTY SHERIFF FOR MULTIPLE SEXUAL OFFENSES AND OTHER CRIMES

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Luther Strange announced the conviction of Ervin Heard, a former Bibb County deputy sheriff, on six criminal charges stemming from allegations that he sexually exploited women he encountered during traffic stops.

Heard, 44, of Centreville, was found guilty on December 17, 2015, of charges of custodial sexual misconduct, first degree sexual abuse, second degree human trafficking, intimidating a witness, unlawful imprisonment and harassing communications. Heard was fired from the Bibb County Sheriff's Office in 2013 for behavior unbecoming a law enforcement officer.

During the trial, seven female witnesses testified that Heard, while on duty as a deputy sheriff, solicited and received sexual favors from them in exchange for not taking them to jail for committing various criminal offenses. Evidence presented by the prosecution showed that Heard transported at least one of these female victims in his patrol car to the Sheriff's Office for the purpose of forcing her to perform a sexual act.

Heard is scheduled to be sentenced on May 23, 2016. The Attorney General's Criminal Trials Division prosecuted the case at the request of the Bibb County District Attorney's Office, which recused itself from the case.

"Law enforcement personnel are sworn to protect the public," said Attorney General Strange. "When someone crosses the line and abuses their authority there can be no excuse. The defendant, while an officer of the law, chose to ignore his duty to protect and defend. He should therefore be held accountable to the law and face the full measure of justice."

Attorney General Strange commended those involved in bringing this matter to a successful conclusion, noting Assistant Attorney General Stephanie Billingslea, chief of his Criminal Trials Division, Assistant Attorney General Ternisha Miles Jones of the Criminal Trials Division, Special Agents of the Criminal Trials Division, and Patty Debortoli, Director of the Attorney General's Victim Assistance section. He also thanked the Bibb County Sheriff's Office, the Bibb County District Attorney and Agent Eric Stallings from Fourth Judicial Circuit Drug Task Force.

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