



**AG STRANGE ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING COUNTS
FILED AGAINST FLORENCE ATTORNEY, ANOTHER MAN ALREADY FACING
INDICTMENT**

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Luther Strange announced additional counts have been filed against a Florence attorney and another man who were originally arrested May 26 on human trafficking charges. Edward Ray Dillard, also known as Chip Dillard, 51, and Timothy Wylie Staggs, 83, were indicted on a total of 12 additional counts Wednesday, including multiple charges of human trafficking. Dillard remained in custody following his May 26 arrest and was served with the new charges on Wednesday, while Staggs, who was free on bond, turned himself in this morning at the Lauderdale County Jail.

Attorney General Strange’s Office presented new evidence to a Lauderdale County grand jury on Monday, which resulted in an additional indictment* each issued against Dillard and Staggs.

The new indictments charge Dillard with two counts of human trafficking in the first degree (one involving a minor), one count of human trafficking in the second degree, two counts of bribing a witness, two counts of destruction of evidence during an Attorney General’s investigation, and two counts of tampering with evidence. Staggs is charged in a new indictment with two counts of human trafficking first degree (one involving a minor) and one count of human trafficking second degree.

On May 26, Dillard and Staggs were arrested on a 24-count indictment also including multiple charges of human trafficking. That indictment charged Dillard with seven counts of human trafficking in the second degree, four counts of conspiracy to commit human trafficking in the second degree, one count of sexual abuse in the second degree, two counts of making terroristic threats and one count of intimidating a witness. Staggs was charged in the same indictment with five counts of human trafficking in the second degree and four counts of conspiracy to commit human trafficking.



Human trafficking in the first degree is defined as either knowingly subjecting another person to labor or sexual servitude through use of coercion or deception or knowingly obtaining, recruiting, enticing, soliciting, inducing, threatening, isolating, harboring, holding, restraining, transporting, providing or maintaining *any minor* for the purpose of causing *a minor* to engage in *sexual servitude*. Human trafficking in the second degree is defined as knowingly obtaining, recruiting, enticing, soliciting, inducing, harboring, transporting, holding, restraining, providing, maintaining, subjecting or obtaining by any means another person for the purpose of labor servitude or sexual servitude. Dillard and Staggs are accused of using various methods to take advantage of young female victims in the Lauderdale County area.

The possible penalties are 10 years to life for each count of human trafficking in the first-degree, a class A felony; two to 20 years for each count of human trafficking in the second-degree, a class B felony; one to 10 years for each count of bribing a witness, a class C felony; one to 10 years for each count of destruction of evidence during an Attorney General's Office investigation, a class C felony; and up to one year for tampering with evidence, a class A misdemeanor.

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