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AG MARSHALL ANNOUNCES MULTIPLE LAWSUITS TO ENFORCE STATE LAW BANNING ILLEGAL GAMBLING

(MONTGOMERY)—Attorney General Steve Marshall announced Wednesday the filing of multiple lawsuits against casinos in five counties that continue to operate illegal slot machines, as so-called “electronic bingo,” in defiance of state law. The lawsuits call upon local circuit courts to prohibit the defendants from promoting, operating and transporting so-called “electronic bingo” machines and slot machines in those counties. The State also filed motions requesting that the circuit courts grant preliminary injunctions to cease unlawful gambling operations in these counties while the lawsuits are pending.

The civil lawsuits were filed in Greene, Houston, Lowndes, Macon and Morgan counties against the operating casinos, machine manufacturers and vendors, and the governmental authorities responsible for licensing and overseeing electronic bingo operations in those counties.

“It is the responsibility of the Attorney General to ensure that Alabama’s laws are enforced, including those laws that prohibit illegal gambling,” said Attorney General Steve Marshall. “Through multiple rulings in recent years, the Alabama Supreme Court has made it abundantly clear that electronic bingo and the use of slot machines are illegal in all Alabama counties. Therefore, we have taken action to hold accountable those who defy the laws of our state. These lawsuits represent a comprehensive legal approach developed by the Attorney General, with the assistance of the Office’s career experts, to finally put a stop to illegal gambling.”

Since assuming office in February, Attorney General Marshall has continued to assist other agencies and district attorneys in the enforcement of anti-gambling laws in Alabama. The multi-county lawsuits filed today are the culmination of ongoing investigations into these casinos and gambling ventures around the state. The civil complaints call for the closure of the casinos because the illegal gambling they offer presents legal nuisances in the state.

The State has pursued numerous cases over the past five years to bring clarity and enforcement to the anti-gambling laws of the state. In each of these cases, the courts of the state have repeatedly determined that the game of bingo cannot be played on electronic devices, and slot machines are clearly illegal in the state.

The most significant cases include the following:

- *State v. Anchor Club, et al.*, CV-2011-900213 (Jefferson Co. Circuit Court) – the trial court granted summary judgment in favor of the State because the devices were illegal slot machines



- *State v. Southern Star*, CV-2012-900053 (Lowndes Co. Circuit Court, 2013) – the trial court granted summary judgment in favor of the State as machines cannot play the game of bingo in Lowndes County
- *Ex parte State*, 121 So. 3d 337 (Ala. 2013) – the Supreme Court ordered that the Macon County Circuit Court issue a search warrant for illegal gambling devices at VictoryLand because the machines did not appear to play bingo and were slot machines
- *State v. Greenetrack, Inc.*, 154 So. 3d 940 (Ala. 2014) – the Supreme Court ruled that games of bingo in Greene County must meet all Cornerstone requirements and a machine cannot play the entire game, ordered the trial court to issue a search warrant for gambling machines in Greene County
- *HEDA v. State*, 168 So. 3d 4 (Ala. 2014) – the Supreme Court upheld the Houston County Circuit Court’s determination that machines do not play the game of bingo
- *State v. \$223,405.86 et al.*, 203 So. 3d 816 (Ala. 2016) – the Supreme Court found that bingo cannot be played on machines in Macon County, contrary to the trial court’s ruling and ordered the condemnation of all seized devices and money from at VictoryLand
- *State v. \$191,249.11 et al.*, CV-2014-900041 (Greene Co. Circuit Court, 2016) – the trial court held that the seized devices, records and currency from Frontier Bingo in Greene County were condemned and forfeited as illegal gambling devices
- *State v. Choctaw Entertainment Center, et al.*, CV-2013-903288 (Mobile Co. Circuit Court, 2017) – the trial court held that bingo could not be played on electronic devices in Mobile County
- *State v. 825 Electronic Gambling devices, et al.*, --- So. 3d ---- (Ala. 2016) – The Supreme Court held that machines could not be used to play bingo in Greene County and overturned the trial court’s erroneous ruling
- *State v. \$1,077.00 et al.*, CV-2016-903396 (Jefferson Co. Circuit Court, 2017) – the trial court found that the games played at Bid City in Jefferson County were illegal slot machines and condemned them

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