



Department of Justice

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NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ALABAMA

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NORTH ALABAMA POSTAL EMPLOYEES INDICTED FOR STEALING MAIL

BIRMINGHAM, AL - REBECCA SUE (“BECKY”) JOHNSTON and TOMMIE JOE SMITH, JR., have been indicted in United States District Court today in two separate and unrelated cases for stealing United States mail. JOHNSTON was also charged with witness tampering.

The separate indictments are announced by United States Attorney Alice H. Martin of the Northern District of Alabama, and Yeudele Allen, Special Agent in Charge, United States Postal Service, Office of Inspector General in Atlanta.

JOHNSTON, 35, of Centre, was charged in a 4-count indictment alleging that, on three occasions between August 2, 2007, and September 28, 2007, JOHNSTON stole mail entrusted to the Postal Service for delivery. The indictment also charges that JOHNSTON later attempted to persuade one of her victims to lie on her behalf if questioned about his missing mail.

If convicted, JOHNSTON faces a maximum sentence of 5 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 for each mail-theft count, and a maximum sentence of 20 years and a fine of \$250,000.00 if convicted of witness tampering.

SMITH, JR., 39, of Tuscaloosa, was charged in an 18-count indictment alleging that, between June 11, 2006, and April 20, 2007, SMITH stole CDs and DVDs entrusted to the Postal Service for delivery.

The maximum sentence for SMITH, upon conviction, is 5 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 for each count of mail theft .

“These are serious crimes. When a postal employee steals the very mail he or she is entrusted to handle, it undermines our postal system. Likewise, any person who asks a witness, much less a victim, to lie on her behalf affects the criminal justice system itself,” stated U.S. Attorney Alice H. Martin.

“Stealing customers’ mail is a serious crime that is vigorously investigated by Special Agents of the Office of Inspector General. Customers have an expectation that their mail and merchandise is going to be delivered on time, intact, and not stolen. And the overwhelming majority of postal

employees do that. They are honest and hard-working. But those few postal employees who betray that trust and steal, risk throwing away their careers and will end up facing federal charges." said Special Agent in Charge Yeudele Allen.

These cases were investigated by United States Postal Service Office of Inspector General. Assistant United States Attorney Melissa K. Atwood is prosecuting both cases on behalf of the United States.

Members of the public are reminded that the indictment contains only charges. A defendant is presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government's burden to prove a defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

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