



# Department of Justice

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Middle District of Alabama

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## **LOWNDES COUNTY MEN CHARGED WITH CARJACKING AND FIREARMS OFFENSE**

*Montgomery, Alabama* - Wayne Ware, age 25, and James Steiner, age 19, both of Fort Deposit, Alabama, have been indicted by a federal grand jury for their roles in a carjacking in Lowndes County that occurred on January 16, 2009, U.S. Attorney Leura G. Canary announced today. Ware and Steiner are charged in the indictment with conspiracy to commit carjacking, carjacking, and using a firearm in furtherance of a crime of violence. Torie Wilson, age 23, also of Fort Deposit, was previously charged in a separate indictment with carjacking and use of a firearm in furtherance of a crime of violence for his role in the same incident. Federal law prohibits taking a motor vehicle that has been shipped in interstate commerce by use of force or intimidation with the intent to cause death or serious bodily harm. Federal law also prohibits using a firearm to commit a crime of violence.

Ware and Steiner were arraigned on the charges on July 9, 2009, before a federal magistrate judge in United States District Court in Montgomery, and pled not guilty to the charges. A bond hearing was held on July 14, 2009, and the magistrate judge determined that Ware and Steiner posed a danger to the community and ordered them detained without bond pending trial. Wilson is also in federal custody after having been transferred from state custody

**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.**

to be tried on the federal charges. Previously, Wilson also pled not guilty to the charges.

Attorneys have been appointed to represent Ware, Steiner, and Wilson.

Trial for Ware and Steiner was set for September 28, 2009, at the United States District Court in Montgomery, Alabama. Wilson's trial is scheduled for August 24, 2009, at the same location.

If convicted of all counts, Ware and Steiner face a maximum punishment of five years in federal prison for the conspiracy, fifteen years for the carjacking, and a mandatory minimum of ten years up to a maximum of life in prison for using the firearm. Any sentence for the firearm charge must be served consecutively to any sentence the defendant receives for the conspiracy or carjacking. Wilson is also subject to a maximum sentence of fifteen years in prison for the carjacking charge and the mandatory minimum consecutive sentence of ten years to life for using a firearm if convicted of both counts. There is no parole from federal prison.

The case was investigated as part of the Department of Justice's Project Safe Neighborhoods and Middle District of Alabama's Alabama ICE programs, aimed at preventing violent crime and the illegal possession of firearms. According to United States Attorney Leura G. Canary, "The Alabama ICE program is aimed at prosecuting violent crimes involving firearms such as this one to make our community safer."

This case was investigated through the joint efforts of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives ("ATF"), the Lowndes County Sheriff's Office, the Fort Deposit Police Department, and the Lowndes County District Attorney's Office. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Matthew Shepherd.

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