

# Madison County DA gets big voter fraud conviction

By **YallPolitics Staff** - May 17, 2011

## Canton Man Receives Maximum Sentence for Voter Fraud

Madison and Rankin Counties' District Attorney Michael Guest announced today that Terrance Watts was sentenced to 10 years in prison for his illegal participation in two elections held in Madison County.

In May and June, 2009, the City of Canton conducted the Municipal elections for Mayor and Aldermen. There were a total of three elections in this time span: the Primary, the Run-off and the General elections.

During and after the elections, several candidates and numerous citizens complained to the District Attorney's Office about wide-spread criminal activity that, if true, would amount to voter fraud, to include disenfranchised, convicted felons voting in the elections. Based upon these complaints, the District Attorney's Office initiated and conducted an investigation into all three elections held in Canton.

During the investigation, it was determined that Watts had voted by Absentee Ballot in the May 19 and June 2, 2009, elections, even though he had been previously convicted of Forgery, a disenfranchising crime, in 2005.

"The crime was that Mr. Watts falsely swore to an Affidavit on an Absentee Ballot that he was a duly and qualified elector of Madison County, when he knew he was not," stated Guest.

As a result of the investigation a Madison County Grand Jury indicted Watts charging him with two (2) counts of voter fraud, with each count carrying a maximum of five (5) years in prison. Watts pled guilty Monday and was sentenced to the maximum term of five (5) years on each count, to run consecutively to each other, for a total of ten (10) years.



**HIRE THE  
EMPLOYEES  
YOU NEED**

Guest stated, "Electoral fraud can reduce voters' confidence in our democracy and we will always guard against those who illegally manipulate an outcome of an election. Even the perception of fraud can be damaging because it makes people less inclined to accept election results and fosters mistrust in our system."

Guest concluded, "I would like to thank my Investigators and Assistant District Attorney Bryan Buckley for their hard work on these cases, as well as the Secretary of State's Office for their assistance in the investigation."

Madison County DA Press Release

5/16/11

---

---

### YallPolitics Staff

This article was produced by Y'all Politics staff.

