

Woman pleads guilty to voter fraud

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MONTGOMERY | A Greensboro woman who was indicted on voter fraud charges stemming from the 2006 elections in Hale County has pleaded guilty, Attorney General Troy King said Tuesday.

King said Rosie Lyles pleaded guilty Monday in Hale County Circuit Court to a charge of third-degree possession of a forged affidavit of an absentee ballot with intent to defraud.

She was sentenced to a 12-month suspended sentence, placed on probation for two years and assessed \$400 in court costs.

Lyles, 68, is also prohibited from participating in absentee ballot voting or registration activity for two years, King said.

'This conviction represents an important victory for integrity at our ballot boxes,' said King, who vowed to prosecute voter fraud. 'Honest, fair elections are the foundation upon which our democracy stands.'

A Hale County grand jury returned indictments in August 2007 against Lyles and Valada Paige Banks, a former member of the Greensboro City Council.

Banks, 44, and Lyles were charged with second-degree possession of a forged instrument — an absentee voter affidavit — with the knowledge that it was forged and four counts of promoting illegal absentee voting. The two women entered not guilty pleas in October 2007.

The charges stemmed from a Democratic primary on Oct. 26, 2004, and a Democratic primary on May 3, 2005. Both primaries were part of special elections.

King said voter fraud charges against Banks and former Circuit Clerk Gay Nell Tinker are still pending. Tinker was indicted in March 2008 on nine charges of second-degree possession of a forged instrument, an absentee voter affidavit. She faces two charges of promoting illegal absentee voting and two counts of first-degree perjury.

Specially appointed Clarke County District Judge George Elbrecht presided over Lyles' case, King's office said. Hale County Circuit Judge Marvin Wiggins was removed from the case because he is related to some of the defendants.