

**PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**LAWSUIT FILED AGAINST CITY OF MOBILE AND DOLLAR GENERAL
IN CASE WHERE DEAF AND MENTALLY DISABLED MAN
WAS TASERED IN STORE BATHROOM**

A lawsuit was filed today in Mobile County Circuit Court stemming from an incident that occurred on July 24, 2009 at the Dollar General on Azalea Road in Mobile, Alabama. On that date, Antonio Love, who is deaf and mentally disabled, was wrongfully pepper-sprayed, tasered and arrested by Mobile police officers while he was in the store's bathroom.

On the day of this incident, Mr. Love went inside the Dollar General and subsequently began feeling sick to his stomach and proceeded to enter the restroom. Despite knowing that it was Mr. Love in the restroom and being aware of the fact that he was deaf and mentally disabled, the store manager called 911.

Mobile Police officers arrived at the store and proceeded to the restroom where they began banging on the door and yelling for Mr. Love to come out. However, due to being deaf, Antonio could not hear the officers. After receiving no response, the police officers shot pepper spray underneath the door into the restroom. The officers then forced the door open with such intensity that it caused a wound to Antonio's head as it threw him backwards.

With no provocation from Mr. Love, the officers tasered him at least three times while he was lying on his back. The officers later learned that Mr. Love was deaf because he was able to show them his card from the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind. Even after learning of Antonio's disability, the officers arrested him on charges of

failing to obey orders, resisting arrest and disorderly conduct. The officers then took Mr. Love to jail where the magistrate on duty refused to issue the arrest warrants.

Birmingham attorney Tommy James of the law firm Morris, Haynes and Hornsby represents Antonio Love and his family. James said, "It is clear that what happened to Antonio should have never happened. He has never had any run-ins with the law and he was not a threat to anyone. Once Antonio realized that it was the police trying to get into the bathroom, he put up no resistance and yet police still tasered him three times. Even after discovering that Antonio was deaf and mentally disabled, the police still charged and arrested him. Thankfully, the Magistrate had the good sense not to sign the warrants. It is very rare for a Magistrate not to sign off on warrants."

"Why the police were even called in the first place is puzzling," James said. "It is also odd that the store manager or police did not simply unlock the door. The type of lock on the door is extremely easy to unlock from the outside." Mr. James anticipates that the City of Mobile will transfer this case to Federal Court. "The Mayor and the Chief need to explain why they do not want the good citizens of Mobile County to decide this case," he said.

Mr. James has handled many cases involving the abuse of disabled individuals and says, "Sadly, things like this keep happening. We must protect and care for our most vulnerable citizens better than we are doing now. Antonio and his family are hopeful that this suit will result in positive change and that disabled individuals will be better protected from future abuse."

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