

**BARRETT
JOHNSTON
MARTIN &
GARRISON LLC**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 15, 2019**

Contacts: [Kiara Pesante Haughton](#), Civil Rights Corps, 202-656-3183
[Brenda Pascoe](#), Hughes Schol Piers Rednick & Dym, 312-604-2618
[Scott Tift](#), Barrett Johnston Martin & Garrison, 615-244-2202
Attorney [Kyle Mothershead](#), 615-982-8002

Federal Court Prohibits Giles County Sheriff From Jailing Poor People

Giles County, Tenn. – On Thursday, a federal judge prohibited Giles County from jailing people simply because they cannot afford to pay money bail following arrest for an alleged misdemeanor probation violation. This complaint was part of a class action lawsuit challenging the unconstitutional misdemeanor probation system in Giles County, jointly brought by [Civil Rights Corps](#), [Barrett Johnston Martin & Garrison](#), [Hughes Schol Piers Rednick & Dym](#), and [Attorney Kyle Mothershead](#).

“Jailing people because they can’t afford bail is just one component of this insidious probation scheme in Giles County,” **said Elizabeth Rossi of Civil Rights Corps**. “This user-funded, for-profit system has allowed two private companies to generate profit off the backs people already struggling to meet basic necessities, through a system of arrest, jailing, and extended probation solely based on an inability to pay court costs, fines, fees, and surcharges the companies demand. This is the first step in dismantling the unconstitutional probation system in Giles County.”

“This ruling confirms, once again, that when people stand up to challenge systematic injustice, their efforts can prompt great change,” **said Scott Tift of Barrett Johnston Martin & Garrison**.

“Jailing people solely because they cannot afford to pay for their release has devastating consequences for individuals struggling with poverty and for their surrounding communities,” **said Kate Schwartz of Hughes Schol Piers Rednick & Dym**. “The injunction is a critical step towards righting that unconstitutional practice in Giles County, which, for far too long, has obstructed equal access to justice for some of the most vulnerable members of our society.”

“Props to Ms. Indiya Hilfort, who is still on probation with Giles County, for being willing to put herself on the line to put an end to this injustice,” **said Attorney Kyle Mothershead**.

The ruling by Judge William L. Campbell goes into effect immediately and prohibits Giles County from jailing people accused of misdemeanor probation violations without first considering if cash bail is absolutely necessary and whether a person can pay it.

###