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**Mississippi: \$27M from contractors in prison bribery case**

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — Mississippi Attorney General Jim Hood said Thursday that his office is collecting nearly \$27 million from contractors involved in bribing a former head of the state prison system. The money comes from 11 lawsuits filed in February 2017. The lawsuits said the contractors used consultants to influence Corrections Commissioner Christopher Epps, who resigned in 2014 after a dozen years on the job. Epps acknowledged accepting more than \$1.4 million in bribes and pleaded guilty in 2015. He is serving a nearly 20-year federal prison sentence. Hood said more than \$10 million of the money is going into the general state budget, nearly \$7 million is going to the Department of Corrections and more than \$6 million is for fees and expenses of attorneys who sued on behalf of the state. "These companies — they had to pay and pay dearly," Hood said during a news conference in his Jackson office. He said one of the companies, Branam Medical Corporation, which has drug-testing products, made a contract profit of \$450,000 and will pay the state \$2 million. Global Tel-Link Corporation, which provides telephone services for inmates, made a profit of \$750,000 and will pay the state \$2.5 million, he said. "We did more than just disgorge them of their ill-gotten gains," Hood said. "We recovered more." The other collections from the lawsuits, according to Hood:

- \$5.2 million from a private prison company, Management & Training Corporation.
- \$4.6 million from another private prison operator, Cornell Companies Inc. (GEO Group).
- \$4 million from a prison health care provider, Wexford Health Sources Inc.
- \$3.1 million from a commissary management services company, Keefe Commissary Network LLC.
- \$3.1 million from C. N. W. Construction Company.
- \$1.3 million from an offender tracking and monitoring company, Sentinel Offender Services LLC.
- \$750,000 from CGL Facility Management LLC, which provides correctional maintenance services.
- \$32,188 from AdminPros LLC, which provides Medicaid eligibility services.
- \$100,000 from insurance agent Guy E. "Butch" Evans.

One company sued by the state, prison health care provider Health Assurance LLC, went into bankruptcy and will not pay the state.