

NEWS

Kevin Garrison Talks with ABA Journal About Private Probation

The issue of private probation has become the hottest flashpoint on a firecracker strand of "offender-funded" justice that has been steadily increasing for a couple of decades, particularly since the economy soured in 2008. For example, Harpersville, Alabama, with a population of 1,620, is a notorious speed trap. In July 2012, Shelby County Circuit Court Judge Hub Harrington ruled in *Burdette v. Harpersville* that the town's municipal court and JCS were extending probation beyond statutory limits and charging "unconscionable fines and fees," developing what "could reasonably be characterized as the operation of a debtors' prison." In this ABA Journal article, Kevin Garrison discusses the ongoing problem of private probation.

"The strong wording in his order got something going," says Mr. Garrison who has been working pro bono on the *Harpersville* case with plaintiffs lawyers. "It caught people's attention, which is the best thing that could have happened here in Alabama."

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