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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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**For Immediate Release  
August 30, 2018**

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### **HABERSHAM COUNTY WOMAN CHARGED WITH ARSON AND INSURANCE FRAUD**

**Atlanta, GA** – Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner Ralph Hudgens today announced that a Habersham County woman has been charged with first-degree arson for allegedly setting fire to her home and one count of insurance fraud for submitting a fraudulent insurance claim.

Rebecca Lynn Abernathy, 49, was arrested on August 29 and booked into the Habersham County Jail. The charges are the result of an investigation by an Arson Investigator in Hudgens' State Fire Marshal Division, with assistance from the Habersham Fire Department and Sheriff's Office.

Investigators allege that on January 21, around 12:30 a.m., Abernathy intentionally set fire to the home located at 4195 Cannon Bridge Road, Demorest, Ga., Abernathy would later file an insurance claim with State Farm with the potential to receive up to \$240,000 in insurance proceeds from the loss.

"Arson is a crime that puts our residents and first responders at tremendous risk," said Commissioner Hudgens. "I urge all residents to report any information regarding arson so we can hold individuals accountable for their actions."

If convicted, Abernathy could face up to one to 20 years in prison and could be ordered to pay restitution and up to \$50,000 in fines.