



**AG ANNOUNCES THAT COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS UPHOLDS
HOUSTON COUNTY CAPITAL MURDER AND ATTEMPTED MURDER
CONVICTIONS**

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Luther Strange announced that the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals on Friday upheld the capital murder and attempted murder convictions of Marcus Dantrell Rivers. Rivers, 28, of Dothan, was convicted in Houston County Circuit Court in August of 2014 for the murder of Patrick Dixon and the attempted murder of Tyrance Byrd.

Evidence presented at trial revealed that on April 19, 2006, Rivers, along with Everett Morton and Michael James, were at Morton's house in Dothan, Alabama. James called Patrick Dixon and Tyrance Byrd in order to set up a drug deal and rob them of their drugs.

Rivers and James hid in some bushes and waited for Byrd and Dixon to arrive. When the two men drove up, Morton approached the vehicle and exchanged ten dollars with Dixon for a bag of marijuana. James then approached the passenger's side of the vehicle and told Byrd to "give it up." James then began firing a gun into the vehicle at which point Rivers approached the driver's side of the vehicle and began to shoot his gun into the vehicle as well. Rivers later admitted to police that he fired his gun eight times. Dixon died as a result of the gunshot wounds; Byrd survived but sustained a gunshot wound to his leg.

The case was prosecuted at trial by Houston County District Attorney Doug Valeska's office. Rivers was convicted and was sentenced to concurrent terms of life imprisonment without the possibility of parole for the capital murder convictions and to a consecutive term of 99 years imprisonment for the attempted murder conviction. He subsequently sought to have his convictions reversed on appeal.

The Attorney General's Criminal Appeals Section handled the case during the appeals process, arguing for the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals to affirm the convictions. The Court did so in a decision issued on Friday, October 16.

Attorney General Strange commended Assistant Attorney General Ferris Stephens of the Attorney General's Criminal Appeals Section for his successful work in this case.

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