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Page 1 of 1

## **AG STEVE MARSHALL ANNOUNCES ALABAMA SUPREME COURT DENIES APPEAL OF CHOCTAW COUNTY MURDER CONVICTION**

(MONTGOMERY) - Attorney General Steve Marshall announced the Alabama Supreme Court has denied a petition for writ of certiorari seeking to appeal the murder conviction of Joe Brown. Brown, 55, of Butler, was convicted in Choctaw County Circuit Court in 2017 for the murder of Jeremy James.

Evidence presented at trial showed that on August 22, 2014, Brown killed James by an attack that caused injuries including cutting James' jugular vein. The victim was found next to his truck, left on Johnny Williams Road, a dirt road in Choctaw County. Law enforcement used a tracking dog to find who may have fled the scene of the crime. The tracking dog picked up a scent from a pool of blood where James' body was found, and tracked the scent to where Brown lived. Among other evidence connecting Brown to the murder, Brown's DNA was found on vegetation at the crime scene and on nail clippings from James' hand. Also, a witness placed Brown at the scene where James's body was found. The exact circumstances of the murder are not known.

The case was prosecuted at trial by Choctaw County District Attorney Spence Walker's Office. Brown was sentenced as a habitual offender to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole. Brown's subsequent attempts to have his conviction and sentence reversed on appeal have been rejected by the courts. The Attorney General's Criminal Appeals Section has handled Brown's cases during the appeals process, including Brown's present petition to overturn his conviction. The Alabama Supreme Court denied that request in a decision issued last Friday, July 13. Attorney General Marshall commended Criminal Appeals Section Chief Beth Poe for her successful work in this case.

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