

June 10, 2024

**Steve Marshall**  
Alabama Attorney General



For **press** inquiries only, contact:

Amanda Priest (334) 322-5694

William Califf (334) 604-3230

Page 1 of 1

## **Attorney General Marshall: Supreme Court Vacates and Remands Eleventh Circuit Ruling Regarding 1996 Convicted Murderer of St. Clair County Mother**

(Montgomery, Ala) – Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall today applauded the U.S. Supreme Court order in *State of Alabama v. Marcus Bernard Williams*. Williams confessed to the 1996 brutal murder and rape of Melanie Rowell of St. Clair County and received the death penalty. Later in his appeals, Williams argued that he was abused as a child and became a “hypersexual” predator as a result. The federal courts then vacated his sentence on the ground that his trial counsel was ineffective for failing to investigate and present such evidence to the jury.

The Attorney General argued to the U.S. Supreme Court that if Williams had presented evidence of his “compulsive sexuality” at trial, the jury would not have changed its mind. In fact, the State would have introduced evidence that weeks after the murder, Williams committed another violent sex crime – aggravating the case for capital punishment. Today, the U.S. Supreme Court granted certiorari, vacated the Eleventh Circuit’s ruling, and remanded for further proceedings.

“Melanie’s family has waited decades to see justice done for this heinous crime. Williams’s backstory cannot excuse the brutal murder and rape of a young single mother as her toddlers slept in the next room,” said Attorney General Marshall. “A jury would have easily seen through any desperate attempt by Williams to distract from his vicious crime with stories from his childhood. Marcus Williams’s crimes merit the ultimate punishment, and the Supreme Court’s decision today brings us one step closer to justice.”

To read the State’s petition, [click here](#).

-30-

