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Attorney General Steve Marshall Statement on the Execution of Derrick Dearman For Murdering Family of Five

(Montgomery, Ala) – Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall issued the following statement tonight after the execution of Derrick Dearman at the William C. Holman Correctional Facility in Atmore, Alabama:

“Tonight, Derrick Dearman was executed via lethal injection for the murders of Joseph Adam Turner, Shannon Randall, Justin Kaleb Reed, Chelsea Marie Reed, who was expecting her second child, and Robert Lee Brown.

Dearman’s request to halt appeals and proceed with the execution was appropriate in the interest of justice and finality for the families. As a jury of his peers unanimously agreed, the gruesome facts of this case merited the ultimate punishment. Dearman viciously struck his victims with an axe, leaving them conscious and suffering for some time before he executed each at close range. Dearman showed no pity and no mercy.

Tonight, my prayers are with the families of Joseph, Shannon, Justin, Chelsea, Robert and especially with Joseph and Shannon’s son, who was three months old and present during the commission of this horrific crime. I hope their families find some peace and closure now that the state has finally carried out the imposed sentence.”

Attorney General Marshall cleared the execution to commence at 5:58 p.m.

Derrick Dearman’s time of death was 6:14 p.m.

Summary of Dearman’s Crimes

Derrick Dearman and Laneta Lester were involved in a volatile longtime relationship. On the evening of August 19, 2016, Lester was staying at the residence of her brother, Joseph Adam Turner, and his wife, Shannon Randall, in Citronelle. Dearman was told that he was not allowed to stay the night, and he was asked to leave that evening. In the early morning hours of August 20, Dearman broke into the house through two locked sliding glass doors. Armed with an axe that he had retrieved from the front yard, Dearman struck Robert Lee Brown, who was asleep in a recliner, multiple times in the head. Lester was asleep on an air mattress in the living room. Dearman then proceeded to the bedroom occupied by Turner, Randall, and their three-month-old infant. He struck Turner multiple times in the head, then struck Randall in the head as well when Randall awoke.



Dearman then went into the bedroom occupied by Chelsea and Justin Reed. He confronted and struck Chelsea multiple times before turning to Justin. As Dearman and Justin wrestled for Justin's gun, Dearman struck him multiple times with the axe.

With his victims severely injured but clinging to life, Dearman used Justin's gun to shoot Chelsea, Justin, and Turner, then shot Randall in the back of the head as she lay in bed with the infant.

Dearman then returned to the living room and shot Brown in the head, leaving Lester unharmed. He then stole the keys to Randall's vehicle and fled the scene with the infant and Lester, but the following day, Dearman turned himself in to law enforcement.

At trial, Dearman pleaded guilty to five counts of murder made capital because the murders were committed during a burglary and five counts of murder made capital because the victims were murdered by one act or pursuant to one scheme or course of conduct. The jury unanimously recommended a sentence of death.