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**Attorney General Steve Marshall Announces Victory as Federal Court Rejects Challenges to Alabama Felon Voting Law**

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Steve Marshall announced a victory for the State of Alabama’s voting laws after a federal district court ruled Thursday against legal challenges to the State’s laws and practices concerning felon voting.

“Alabama’s voting laws have once again withstood legal challenges,” said Attorney General Marshall. “The federal district court for the Middle District of Alabama ruled against multiple challenges to Alabama’s law preventing certain felons from voting as well as the process through which voting rights may be restored for some felons. It is particularly gratifying that the Court rejected constitutional claims of intentional racial discrimination for lack of evidence.”

In 1996, Alabama’s voters overwhelmingly amended the State Constitution to limit disenfranchisement to only those convicted of felonies involving moral turpitude (rather than all felons). It is this provision that was the subject of most of the claims in the case. Moral turpitude is an established legal concept, and in 2017 the Legislature enacted an administratively useful list of disenfranchising felonies. The list is available at <http://www.sos.alabama.gov/mtfelonies>.

Alabama’s laws also provide for some felons who have lost their voting rights to regain those rights. Pardons have long existed. In 2003, the Legislature created a Certificate of Eligibility to Register to Vote which allows for certain felons to regain their voting rights through a quicker, non-discretionary process. In 2016, the Legislature revised the Certificate process to make it easier. More information is available at <http://www.pardons.alabama.gov/about-us/pardons-restoration-of-voting-rights/>

Rather than invoking the political process to seek further changes, opponents of Alabama’s felon voting laws brought multiple challenges in federal court. Among other things, they alleged that Alabama’s constitutional provision was racially discriminatory and imposed cruel and unusual punishment, and they sought to have the voter registration form list each and every disqualifying felony. Additionally, similar to a high-profile lawsuit brought in Florida, they alleged that requiring felons to pay certain court-ordered monies to be eligible for a Certificate was unconstitutional wealth discrimination.

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On Thursday, the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Alabama ruled in *Treva Thompson et al. v. Secretary of State John H. Merrill et al.*, finding for the State officials on each and every claim.

Link to [federal court ruling](#)