



**Attorney General Steve Marshall Announces Court of Criminal Appeals Upholds Murder Conviction in Tuscaloosa County**

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Steve Marshall announced that the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals has upheld the murder conviction of Kendal Tyler Battles, 32, of McCalla. Battles was convicted in Tuscaloosa County Circuit Court on November 17, 2021, for the murder of Marka Willoe Watkins.

The evidence at trial showed that in June 2019, Battles, along with others, beat, raped, and strangled Watkins to death near Battles' mobile home. Battles confessed his crime to his brother and implicated others in the victim's murder. Based upon Battles' confession, police discovered the victim's body under two feet of concrete at the bottom of a well. The jury subsequently convicted Battles of murder.

Tuscaloosa County District Attorney Hays Webb's office successfully prosecuted this case and obtained a guilty verdict. Battles was sentenced to life imprisonment for his crime. Battles sought to have his conviction reversed on appeal.

"Kendal Battles committed a horrendous act of violence upon his victim, taking her life before attempting to hide her body in a well," said Attorney General Marshall. "As a result, he justly received the maximum punishment under the law."

The Attorney General's Criminal Appeals Division handled the case during the appeals process, arguing for the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals to affirm Battles' conviction. The Court did so in a decision issued Friday, August 26, 2022.

Attorney General Marshall commended Assistant Attorney General Jordan Shelton for her successful work on this case, and thanked Tuscaloosa County District Attorney Hays Webb and his staff for their valuable assistance in defending the murder conviction.

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