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Steven T. Marshall
Alabama Attorney General



For More Information, contact:

Mike Lewis (334) 353-2199

Joy Patterson (334) 242-7491

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ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE ANNOUNCES THAT SHAHAN CASE WILL NOT BE PROSECUTED AT THIS TIME

(MONTGOMERY) – The Attorney General's Office filed a motion today in Jefferson County Circuit Court to "nolle prosequi without prejudice" a charge against Richard Shahan for the murder of his wife Karen Shahan in Homewood in 2013.

On January 1, 2014, Shahan was arrested at the direction of the Jefferson County District Attorney's Office for the July 23, 2013, murder of his wife, Karen Shahan. Karen Shahan was found in her home stabbed to death. At that time, Richard Shahan was an associate pastor at First Baptist Church in Birmingham. Subsequently, the Jefferson County District Attorney's Office obtained an indictment charging Richard Shahan for her murder. In December of 2016, the Jefferson County District Attorney's Office recused itself from the case and requested that the Alabama Attorney General's Office assume the prosecution. A trial date had already been set for May 2017.

Immediately upon the matter's referral to the Attorney General's Office, a team of attorneys from the Criminal Trials Division began preparations for trial. A thorough review of the evidence and comprehensive attempts to discover new evidence led to the conclusion that the evidence currently in the State's possession is insufficient to move forward with prosecution.

Today's action effectively preserves the State's opportunity to prosecute the case at a later date if additional evidence is developed. There is no statute of limitation for the prosecution of murder, so this may be done at any appropriate time in the future.

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