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Alabama Attorney General



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Attorney General Marshall Announces Court of Criminal Appeals Upholds Reckless Manslaughter Conviction in Lee County

(Montgomery, Ala) – Attorney General Steve Marshall announced that the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals affirmed the conviction of Raphael Maurice Browning, 40, of Opelika, for reckless manslaughter. Browning was convicted in the Lee County Circuit Court on October 23, 2024.

The evidence at trial showed that on the evening of March 2, 2021, Browning got into a domestic altercation with his girlfriend, Denise Spivey. Browning claimed that during the confrontation between him and Spivey, the victim allegedly began swinging a knife at him and she stabbed herself while attacking him with the knife. Browning's claim of self-defense was rejected by the trial court and the jury.

Lee County District Attorney Jessica Ventiere's office successfully prosecuted this case and obtained a guilty verdict. Browning was sentenced to 17 years' imprisonment for his reckless manslaughter conviction. Browning sought to have his conviction reversed on appeal.

The Attorney General's Criminal Appeals Division handled the case during the appeals process, arguing for the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals to affirm Browning's conviction. The Court did so in a decision issued Friday, August 15, 2025.

Attorney General Marshall commended Assistant Attorney General Kyley Goldhagen for her successful work on this case and thanked District Attorney Jessica Ventiere and her staff, for their valuable assistance in defending the reckless manslaughter conviction.

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