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Alabama Attorney General



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Attorney General Steve Marshall Announces Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals Affirms Denial of Relief for Convicted Child Murderer

(Montgomery, Ala) – Attorney General Steve Marshall announced that the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals has affirmed the Middle District of Alabama's denial of habeas corpus relief for Timothy Boyle, convicted of the capital murder of a child. The decision was issued on June 23, 2026. Boyle was convicted in the Etowah County Circuit Court and sentenced to death on March 12, 2010.

In 2005, Boyle was dating Melissa White, the mother of two young daughters: H.D., age five, and Savannah, who was not quite two years old. Witnesses described a pattern of abuse Boyle inflicted on Savannah, including slamming her head against a car door when angered and burning her with cigarettes.

One night in late October, while the girls were bathing, Boyle burst into the bathroom and ordered H.D. to leave. She watched through a crack in the door as Boyle threw her little sister against the bathtub wall and repeatedly held her underwater. That night, Savannah cried while the girls were in bed together and then vomited. By morning, H.D. could not wake her. Boyle eventually took Savannah to the emergency room, where he gave three conflicting accounts of what had happened. On October 26, the day after her second birthday, Savannah was pronounced dead. The autopsy revealed that her brain had been so severely damaged that tissue had broken off and been forced into her spinal cord. Multiple witnesses, including H.D., testified to the horrors Savannah suffered.

Boyle was convicted of capital murder of a child under the age of fourteen and unlawful possession of a controlled substance. The jury unanimously recommended the death penalty, and the trial court sentenced him accordingly. Boyle's conviction and sentence were affirmed on direct appeal, and his state postconviction proceedings concluded without relief in 2018. The Middle District of Alabama denied federal habeas relief in 2022. The Eleventh Circuit, having granted review on a single issue, has now affirmed that ruling.

Attorney General Marshall commended Deputy Attorney General Lauren Simpson for her successful work on this case.

