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SCARLETT A. WILSON

Solicitor, Ninth Judicial Circuit

For Immediate Release

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CHARLESTON MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO MURDER OF MOTHER OF SEVEN ON THE EVE OF TRIAL

Charleston, S.C.-- Solicitor Scarlett A. Wilson announced that Denzel Laron Washington, 32, pleaded guilty Wednesday, October 23, 2024 to Murder and Possession of a Weapon during the Commission of a Violent Crime. The defense requested the minimum 30-year prison sentence, while the State requested 45 years. After hearing from both sides, Circuit Court Judge Jennifer B. McCoy sentenced the defendant to 40 years. Solicitor Wilson stated, "We are grateful to Judge McCoy giving this abuser a stiff sentence. This is yet another life cut short by inexcusable gun violence."

On July 11th, 2021, North Charleston Police Department (NCPD) responded to Roper Physicians Urgent Care in response to a gunshot victim. The victim, Toni Frasier, was pronounced dead at the scene due to a gunshot wound to her face. During their investigation, NCPD officers learned that the victim was actually shot at 5529 Blackwell Street, in Charleston County, by the defendant, who is the father of the victim's 7 children.

According to one of the couple's children, the argument between the defendant and victim began earlier that morning at a home in North Charleston. They later arrived at the victim's house, where the argument continued. Surveillance video from a neighbor's home showed the couple arguing in the front yard, with the victim keeping a car in between them. The video shows the defendant walking to his car on the street, and the victim going into the house. It also showed the defendant retrieve a handgun from the car and then following the victim. The argument continued for several seconds before the defendant shot and killed the victim as she ran across the yard. The defendant took the victim to Roper Urgent Care, but she was already dead.

Benjamin Mack with the Public Defender's Office represented Washington. Assistant Solicitors Jessica Baldwin and Catherine Fries prosecuted the case.

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