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July 18, 2025

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S.C. SUPREME COURT

The Honorable Patricia A. Howard
Clerk, South Carolina Supreme Court
Post Office Box 11330
Columbia, South Carolina 29211

RE: The State v. Charles Dent
Appellate Case No: 2024-000355

Dear Ms. Howard:

On July 16, 2025, the Court issued published opinion number 28289 in the above-referenced criminal appeal, which affirmed in part and reversed in part Mr. Dent's convictions. Upon reviewing the opinion, this Office's Director of our Victim Advocacy Division brought a concern to my attention. It appears the opinion contains personal identifying information that is not permitted in a party's appellate filings pursuant to the provisions of this Court's April 15, 2014, Order: "Re: Revised Order Concerning Personal Identifying Information and Other Sensitive Information in Appellate Court Filings." That Order provides in part:

Names of Minor Children. If a minor is the victim of a sexual assault or the victim in an abuse or neglect case, the minor's name must be completely redacted and a term such as "victim" or "child" should be used. In all other cases, the minor's first name and first initial of the last name (i.e., John S.), or only the minor's initials (i.e., J.S.) should be used.

Here, the published opinion identified the minor victim of the alleged sexual abuse by using her initials. Almost immediately after that, it also identified her mother by her full name, which compounded the identification concern. By way of this letter, I am now respectfully requesting that the published opinion be rescinded and removed from all publicly viewable spaces, including any Advance Sheets, and that it be replaced with an opinion that incorporates appropriate safeguards to protect the minor victim's significant privacy concerns. At a minimum, I respectfully request that the victim's initials and her mother's name be removed from the opinion. Additionally, if the Court deems it appropriate in its discretion, I would ask that victim's

mother simply be referred to as victim's mother rather than "Dent's daughter."

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. As you know, every day the current opinion remains in the public domain exposes the minor victim to further invasions of her privacy.

Sincerely,



J. Benjamin Aplin
Assistant Attorney General
S.C. Bar Number 8729

JBA/ss

cc: E. Charles Grose, Jr., Esquire (*via electronic mail*)
Victim Advocacy Division