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**Feb 23 2026**  
SC Court of Appeals

February 23, 2026

The Honorable Jenny A. Kitchings  
Clerk, South Carolina Court of Appeals  
Post Office Box 11629  
Columbia, South Carolina 29211

Re: The State v. Jody Lynn Ward  
Appellate Case No: 2025-001703

Dear Ms. Kitchings:

Please accept this letter in lieu of a formal response by the State to the Petition for Appointment of Outside Counsel in the above-referenced appeal. The petition concerns representation by Appellate Defense regarding appointment of counsel in the appeal. The State, as Respondent in this matter, does not take a position on the assertions or relief requested.

Should you require anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

*s/ Melody J. Brown*

Melody J. Brown  
Senior Assistant Deputy Attorney General

cc: Tristan M. Shaffer, Esq. (*via email only*)  
Jessica M. Saxon, Esq. (*via email only*)  
Wanda H. Carter, Esq. (*via email only*)