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**S.C. SUPREME COURT**

ALAN WILSON  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

April 1, 2026

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

Re: The State v. Ernest C. Bethel  
Appellate Case No: 2026-000486

Dear Ms. Howard:

The Return to Petition for Writ of Certiorari is due to be served and filed today, April 1, 2026. Undersigned counsel hereby requests an 18-day extension in which to serve and file its Return. Due to counsel's caseload, including addressing capital matters, counsel has been unable to complete the return.

I respectfully request this Court grant an extension until April 20, 2026 to serve and file the Return to Petition for Writ of Certiorari. Opposing counsel has graciously consented to this request.

Sincerely,

*s/ Melody J. Brown*

Melody J. Brown  
Senior Assistant Deputy Attorney General

MJB/abb

cc: Dayne C. Phillips, Esquire (via email only)  
Justin M. Kata, Esquire (via email only)