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SC Court of Appeals

VIA EMAIL ONLY

The Honorable Jenny A. Kitchings
Clerk, South Carolina Court of Appeals
PO Box 11629
Columbia, SC 29211
ctappfilings@sccourts.org

RE: State of South Carolina v. Marlon M. Alford
Appeal from Florence County, General Sessions Court
Appellant Case No. 2026-000836

Dear Madame Clerk:

Please be advised, our office does not represent the above-named Appellant in this appeal. However, our office is in receipt of this Court's letter dated April 8, 2026, requiring the Appellant to submit his grounds within ten (10) days. Due to the time constraints to submit the grounds for appeal, our office submits the below response on behalf of the Appellant.

The Appellant was pressured and coerced by the State into pleading guilty to the above-referenced charge April 1, 2026. The Appellant was not given ample time consider the initial plea offer. As a result of not being given ample time to consider the initial plea offer, the Appellant did not accept the plea offer and was set for trial. The Appellant then pled after arguments were heard on two pre-trial motions.

The Supreme Court has held "a guilty plea is valid if it represents a voluntary and intelligent choice made among the alternatives available to a defendant." Boykin v. Alabama, 395 U.S. 238 (1969). The Appellant's plea was not a voluntary choice as he was pressured and given no other alternatives. The State was forcing the appellant into a guilty plea without adequate time for the Appellant to weigh his options. The Supreme Court additionally held "whether the plea represents a voluntary and intelligent choice among the alternative courses of action open to the defendant." Hill v. Lockhart, 474 U.S. 52, 56 (1985) (citing North Carolina v. Alford, 400 U.S. 25, 31 (1970)).

Sincerely,

Lauren K. Anderson

Cc: Alan Wilson, Esquire
Mark Reynolds Farthing, Esquire
Jeremiah S. Freeman, Esquire
Marlon M. Alford, Appellant

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