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S.C. SUPREME COURT

ALAN WILSON
ATTORNEY GENERAL

July 20, 2026

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

Re: The State v. Anthony Woods
Appellate Case No: 2006-041900

Dear Ms. Howard:

Attached, for filing in the referenced capital matter, are two recent status reports. By way of brief explanation, please accept the following.

Anthony Woods is a death-sentenced inmate in active litigation. On January 12, 2018, the federal district court issued a limited stay of execution in order for Woods to received counsel and file a federal habeas corpus action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2254. The stay was subsequently extended to cover the duration of the federal litigation. The inmate filed a motion to stay the federal habeas action and return to state court on an allegation of intellectual disability presented through a 2018 PCR action. The federal court granted the stay on October 22, 2018. The Honorable Benjamin H. Culbertson was appointed to preside over the action. On June 3, 2019, Judge Culbertson granted the State's motion to dismiss as procedurally barred. This Court subsequently reversed Judge Culbertson and allowed the claim of intellectual disability to proceed in the successive PCR action.

As of this writing, the federal case remains stayed, and the parties are required to provide periodic updates. Attached is a copy of Respondent's most recent status update and Woods' status update. Respondent submits this filing to keep the Court informed of the status of the federal action and the continued existence of the federal stay of execution.

Sincerely,

Melody J. Brown
Senior Assistant Deputy Attorney General

MJB/abb
Enclosure

cc: Emily C. Paavola, Esquire (via email only)

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

Anthony Woods, #06023,

Petitioner,

VS.

Bryan P. Stirling, Commissioner,
South Carolina Department of
Corrections, and **Lydell Chestnut**, Deputy
Warden, Broad River Correctional
Secure Facility,

Respondents.

C/A No. 5:18-cv-00144-DCN-KDW
Capital Case

RESPONDENT'S STATUS REPORT

Respondents, through undersigned counsel, hereby make their Status Report regarding Petitioner's pending state post-conviction relief (PCR) case. Respondents would respectfully show the Court:

Petitioner is currently pursuing additional state PCR review to present a claim of intellectual disability and argue exemption from capital punishment. *See Atkins v. Virginia*, 536 U.S. 304 (2002). The Honorable Benjamin H. Culbertson is assigned to hear the action. Judge Culbertson held a status conference with the attorneys on June 26, 2026. Matters regarding substitution of counsel, completion of discovery and whether the court would designate its own expert were discussed. An additional conference is scheduled to be held on September 1, 2026. The state action remains pending.

Respectfully submitted,

ALAN WILSON
Attorney General

DONALD J. ZELENKA
Deputy Attorney General

MELODY J. BROWN
Senior Assistant Deputy Attorney General
I.D. No. 7979

s/Melody J. Brown

By: _____

Office of the Attorney General
Post Office Box 11549
Columbia, South Carolina 29211
Telephone: (803) 734-6305

ATTORNEYS FOR RESPONDENTS

July 15, 2026

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

ANTHONY WOODS,	)	
	)	
Petitioner,	)	
	)	CASE No. 5:18-cv-00144-DCN-KDW
vs.	)	
	)	
BRYAN P. STIRLING, Commissioner,	)	
South Carolina Department of Corrections,	)	
and LYDELL CHESTNUT, Deputy	)	
Warden, Broad River Secure Facility	)	
	)	
_____ Respondents.	)	

PETITIONER’S STATUS REPORT

Petitioner, Anthony Woods, through undersigned counsel, submits this report of the status of his state post-conviction relief (“PCR”) action.

1. On October 22, 2018, this Court stayed Petitioner’s federal habeas corpus proceedings pending the disposition of Petitioner’s state post-conviction relief (“PCR”) action.

2. Judge Benjamin H. Culbertson is assigned to oversee Petitioner’s PCR action in the circuit court. The matter is currently being investigated and prepared for a hearing on the issue of whether Petitioner is a person with intellectual disability, barred from execution pursuant to *Atkins v. Virginia*, 536 U.S. 304 (2002).

3. Judge Culbertson held a status conference on June 26, 2026. The parties discussed pre-hearing matters, including substitution of counsel and discovery. An additional status conference is expected to take place on September 1, 2026.

4. Petitioner’s state post-conviction proceedings remain pending before the South Carolina state courts.

Respectfully submitted,

s/ Emily C. Paavola

Emily C. Paavola, Fed ID #11488
Justice 360
900 Elmwood Ave., Suite 200
Columbia, South Carolina 29201
(803) 765-1044
Emily@justice360sc.org

July 16, 2026.