

1 tested.

2 What he's asking for is Michael Lee's DNA to be tested
3 against DNA that came from the autopsy of Karisha Crawford to
4 determine paternity when --

5 THE DEFENDANT: Objection.

6 MR. PAULING: -- she wasn't pregnant, Judge.

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SC Court of Appeals

7 But, first and foremost, what he's asking for, the
8 statute doesn't allow. And he doesn't check the box on any of
9 the other requirements as well, such as 17-28-40, Subsection
10 5, "Explain why the identity of the applicant was or should
11 have been a significant issue during the original court
12 proceedings;" 6, "Explain why the physical evidence or
13 biological materials sought to be tested was not previously
14 subject to DNA testing." But, No. 7, "Explain why, if the DNA
15 testing produces exculpatory results, the testing will
16 constitute new evidence that will probably change the result
17 of the applicant's conviction or adjudication if a new trial
18 was granted and not merely cumulative or impeaching."

19 But again, first and foremost, Judge, the statute doesn't
20 allow for that.

21 And, Judge, the written motion I provided to the Court
22 was also provided to Mr. Crawford, and I would -- I would
23 stand on the written motion as well, Your Honor, and
24 respectfully ask that this post-conviction DNA application be
25 dismissed. Judge, you can't order what he's asking for.

1 THE COURT: Okay. All right.

2 Mr. Crawford?

3 THE DEFENDANT: All right. Judge Newman, all right.

4 Let's -- first of all, let's give more context to the history.
5 This is part of the issue that we're trying to bring before
6 the Court. All right?

7 When you have a DNA application, subject matter
8 jurisdiction can be raised at any time, of course. It cannot
9 be waived or forfeited (indiscernible) after the final,
10 ultimate issue.

11 So the issues that I've put before this Court are
12 jurisdiction in nature, which cannot be waived or forfeited.
13 That's one thing I wanted to make sure (indiscernible) the
14 Court.

15 The issue I'm talking about is perjured testimony,
16 violation of due process. What they did is that, when I was
17 first arrested for two counts of unlawful neglect, the coroner
18 shows up at my bond hearing.

19 And let me ask something on the record: Are bond
20 hearings in this county recorded, ma'am? Are they normally
21 recorded in 2001?

22 THE COURT: I don't know. In 2001, I had just started
23 law school.

24 THE DEFENDANT: Is that normally -- does anybody --
25 anybody here in the court -- anyone in the court know are

1 bond hearings recorded?

2 THE COURT: It is not done in a court of record. There
3 typically is an audio recording that is available for a, I
4 believe, maybe 30 days after the bond hearing.

5 THE DEFENDANT: When I was at my bond hearing with the
6 charge of two counts of neglect, the coroner shows up at my
7 bond hearing with the autopsy in his hand, ma'am. I'm looking
8 at it. He's reading from it. And he said no alleged beating
9 killed my child. At most, it must have been a contributing
10 factor.

11 At that point, well, I said, "Well, geez, then, you know,
12 the hard part is over, because we need to find out what killed
13 her at that point."

14 Before she died, she had this unexplained weight loss
15 about 30 pounds, just out of -- overnight, out of nowhere.
16 And we were trying to figure out what that was. She was
17 scared to go to the doctor, and we never made it to that
18 point.

19 She was missing a period for three months. We discovered
20 that, too. All right?

21 They wind up getting perjured testimony, saying that she
22 was disciplined behind a \$5 telescope when she was disciplined
23 for having sex with her brother. All right? And so that's
24 what the issue was.

25 And so that was not neglect, and that's why they had to

1 come up with this excuse, because they had to prove the
2 elements of murder, a wicked and depraved mind.

3 So they went in and they compromised my family,
4 threatened them with putting them in jail. They suppressed
5 the SLED file -- SLED file 5501014 that's down at SLED. I
6 requested that as part of discovery. That SLED file has the
7 coroner's notes in it that will have the true cause of death
8 in it. That's why they suppressed it.

9 It was asked for at the competency hearing, and John
10 Meadors lied on the record and said he didn't even know what I
11 was talking about. All right? And the file does exist
12 because I just gave you the number.

13 So they suppressed evidence of actual innocence inside
14 that file. If that -- if the SLED file was revealed and the
15 coroner's notes were shown, then they would not have been able
16 to pull the stunt off that they pulled.

17 This is why, when the DNA was taken from my child at time
18 of death, they were supposed to have tested Michael Lee.

19 Now, if they would have tested Michael Lee and his DNA
20 would have showed up in the samples, they would not be able to
21 perpetrate the fraud in which they did. They wind up getting
22 an indictment. It never went to the grand jury on the day of
23 my trial -- and this was also, by the way, this DNA
24 application, too, the grand jury panel documents, to show they
25 wound up rubber-stamping the indictment the day of my trial,

1 never gave me notice until like an hour or two before the
2 trial began, but not for me to challenge it and wound up going
3 on with the trial.

4 Now, this is the thing. He said to the applicant objects
5 -- and this is part of the document I just served you with, a
6 copy of the 23-page document, and they filed objection to the
7 very response -- to which the respondent just mentioned to
8 you.

9 The applicant objects to the respondent's absurd claim
10 that the applicant has failed to show how the DNA testing will
11 constitute new evidence that will probably show probable cause
12 and result (indiscernible) as in -- required in
13 17-28-40(c)(7).

14 All right? Let's break this thing down. All right? The
15 pathologist and the coroner set up there and said that she was
16 not pregnant. All right? This would destroy the corpus
17 delicti if it was found out that she was.

18 There's a case called Howard v. City of Durham, 684 5th
19 F.4th [sic] 934, Fourth Circuit out of 2023. The Fourth
20 Circuit determined that it's a genuine cause of fact if you
21 can show that the DNA will inculcate someone else in the
22 crime. That triggers the statute.

23 Now, DNA from the -- from a male semen and the egg is
24 what is called haploid in nature; in other words, they have
25 one set of chromosome and alleles in it. All right? But if

1 it's DNA from a bio -- bio samples that will have mother and
2 father and child, then it will be called diploid. All right?

3 I was a paramedic in the military, ma'am. All right? I
4 was pre-med in school. I'm not the doctor, but I have a
5 little above-average normal understanding of medical --
6 certain medical terms.

7 With that being said, they perjured themselves to make it
8 look like it was a homicide when the person died of natural
9 causes. If they -- if I'm lying, then give me the DNA. The
10 DNA will kill the whole controversy across the board. All
11 right?

12 Then the one thing, too: the statute does not just simply
13 require my DNA. The statute requires the testing of any DNA
14 in the hands of the State that potentially prove my guilt or
15 innocence. Don't have to be my DNA. That's cited in that
16 24-page document that I served you just on the record there,
17 talking about that very thing.

18 Any DNA in the point -- that's in the possession of the
19 State that's relevant to my guilt or innocence, it can be
20 tested. And it's case law, too. I cited the 24-page
21 document, too. One of the cases, you talk about the case with
22 the guy in -- was it Iowa or wherever it was, where he wound
23 up killing the students? They wound up testing the DNA, the
24 ancestry registry. So it can be tested. There's plenty of
25 case law in support of that.

1 But the point is, if it's relevant, it's in the
2 possession of the State, it can be obtained. All the case law
3 put inside that 24-page document talk about that, and without
4 -- but when it comes to the very issue that I'm talking about
5 when it comes to Howard -- the case of Howard v. City of
6 Durham, the case citing I just gave you, that's in that
7 document, too, that we have what's called collateral estoppel
8 -- res judicata and collateral estoppel issue preclusion.
9 That Court determined it is a genuine issue of fact, if you
10 can get that DNA and prove and inculcate someone else.

11 Now, this is the issue here: If she was not pregnant,
12 then when you test those DNA samples, they will come back
13 saying that they are haploid. Okay? That's how the DNA is
14 going to prove my innocence. All right?

15 If the DNA samples come back and say they're diploid,
16 that's scientific proof and evidence that she was pregnant and
17 they perjured themselves at that testimony -- at that trial to
18 frame me for murder of my own child, ma'am.

19 That's how it triggers the statute. If what -- if you
20 come -- if that DNA's tested and it comes back the samples of
21 mother and father in there and it's easy to distinguish -- you
22 know what I'm saying? Because he's my stepson. Okay? So if
23 his DNA shows up in those samples, it will prove I was
24 innocent. They perjured themselves about the testimony about
25 the cause of death.

1 And so if he -- if the pathologist perjured himself that
2 she was not pregnant, that goes towards the autopsy itself,
3 and that would destroy the corpus delicti and, of course, it
4 would be more than sufficient grounds for a new trial. All
5 right?

6 But that's not even counting all the other things they
7 did. All right? Rubber stamping indictments. That's why
8 they didn't want to give it to the grand jury. Suppression of
9 the evidence of the actual innocence with the SLED file at
10 SLED; that he perjured himself on -- in the competency hearing
11 and said he don't even know what it exists. All right?

12 And they perjured testimony, she was just behind a \$5
13 telescope. If she was just behind a \$5 telescope, Your Honor,
14 why were they -- supposedly just signs of discipline on
15 Michael Lee? Where did that come from? Why were they both
16 disciplined? It don't -- their story don't add up.

17 I mean, that for both of them to be disciplined, they
18 both had to be doing something. They was having sex with each
19 other and that had to be stopped. All right? Whether anybody
20 want to admit that or not, that's a crime. That's a Class A
21 felony under South Carolina law, and it would be negligent for
22 any parent to allow that to go underneath this roof.

23 So with that being said, she was not beat to death. All
24 right? That will prove that, once that DNA is tested and
25 those DNA samples come back and if those samples turn out to

1 be diploid in nature as opposed to being haploid, it will
2 prove that something -- they falsified that autopsy and framed
3 me for murder, ma'am, behind religious and racial hatred,
4 because I was calling myself being Christian, Muslim, and Jew
5 combined. They couldn't comprehend something like that. All
6 right?

7 And so with that being said, this was -- all this is
8 impetus of. All right? They held me in that county jail for
9 almost five years. I had to go to the federal habeas corpus
10 court to force them to give the hearing. All right? So they
11 rushed me in the courtroom with an indictment they never even
12 had.

13 All right? The grand jury didn't even meet that time
14 when I wound up at an administrative law court, and they wound
15 up prosecuting this case, and they got that perjured testimony
16 and whatnot, because they figured they were going to
17 compromise my family because they wanted to attack me, because
18 Michael was afraid that that DNA is tested, that he would be
19 implicated in the crime that caused the child's death.

20 And so it does trigger the statute, ma'am. All right?
21 And the DNA statute does not just require the DNA of myself
22 being tested. It says any DNA in the possession of the State
23 that will prove my guilt or innocence and that that Durham
24 case is Howard v. City of Durham is the very case that talks
25 about that very thing. That was a murder case where the guy

1 sought that DNA to implicate someone else.

2 And so I have rights of res judicata and collateral
3 estoppel as it relates to the Durham case. That DNA
4 application should not be tossed out. And I tried to get
5 that. When I tried to file a PCR, they blocked me from the
6 court. Not this young lady, because there was another clerk.
7 I don't know why they wouldn't file my PCR. They blocked me
8 from the court. That forced me to file a case in Richland
9 County. All right? That's how it got there, because it
10 wasn't blocked -- wouldn't let me get inside this court here.

11 Why would you block me from the court on my DNA
12 application? Or, excuse me, on my PCR application.

13 So I had to make the point, when I tried to file -- like
14 he admitted, I tried to file the DNA in Richland and all over
15 the place because I was trying to get the evidence. And they
16 blocked me. Found every other reason not to give it to me.

17 Finally, I had to get my sister from Illinois to come and
18 file a DNA because it was blocking me. Why would I have to
19 get her to come if they were not blocking me? She had to file
20 it. That's the point. That's how this thing got here.

21 So, since 2000, they let it sit because they didn't want
22 to give me DNA even now. So after the four-year mark, based
23 upon Betterman, I went to the Supreme Court and said, "Look,
24 why these people still got this case sitting here?" All
25 right?

1 I said, "You already know I've been before that -- before
2 that court in 2020, 2006, or '13, trying to get that DNA."

3 So if I'm wrong, just kill it. Give me the DNA, test it.
4 All right? Because it (indiscernible) prove my innocence and
5 be done with it. If I'm a liar, that DNA is going to prove
6 it, ma'am. It triggers the statute. Any DNA in the
7 possession of the State. It don't matter whether it's me or
8 Michael Lee. If that DNA will prove my innocence, I'm
9 entitled to it under the statute.

10 THE COURT: Okay. What about that, Mr. Pauling, the
11 portion of the statute that says he may apply for forensic DNA
12 testing of his DNA --

13 THE DEFENDANT: Thank you.

14 THE COURT: -- and any physical evidence or biological
15 material related to his conviction or adjudication?

16 THE DEFENDANT: That's in the document. That's what I
17 was --

18 MR. PAULING: But he's asking for Michael Lee's DNA.

19 THE COURT: And you're saying that's not related to his
20 conviction?

21 MR. PAULING: That's correct.

22 THE DEFENDANT: It is, ma'am, because it says that --
23 that was -- the samples -- well, let me ask you also, too. At
24 the time when this happened, the DNA samples were taken from
25 my child. Right? I talked to the analyst myself, ma'am. He

1 told me those samples are in his possession.

2 He said, "Mr. Crawford, I got the samples." He said,
3 "The County is supposed the standard for Michael Lee and they
4 never did." He was waiting for months.

5 So why were they -- if there was a charge, an allegation
6 of CSC with a minor -- she was 11 years old. She could not
7 give consent -- why would the State not test that DNA? They
8 were obligated just for that reason alone.

9 So let me ask you this, Mr. Curtis now: At 25 -- 20
10 years -- 21 -- 20 years, has that boy been tested, that DNA?
11 Has he been arrested?

12 And the question is why? Because under South Carolina
13 law, it was a crime. And y'all did not prosecute it. Why?

14 So that being the case, ma'am, again, those samples were
15 taken. I talked to the analyst myself. He said, "Mr.
16 Crawford, they have it." So I called them him back. I
17 said -- said, "Why was it not tested?"

18 So he said, "Well, Mr. Crawford, we sent them back to the
19 Kershaw County coroner." They had them there since then, and
20 they were not tested, because if they would have tested them,
21 they will not be able to pull the stunt they pulled on me
22 inside that courtroom, ma'am.

23 The statute requires any DNA that's relevant. Just like
24 the part -- that's the part I was relying upon, the part you
25 just read. And he's -- he's not -- he's not correct in his

1 assertion of his claim.

2 Test the DNA and be done with it. And if I'm wrong, then
3 throw away the key. But they framed me, ma'am, and I need
4 that DNA.

5 THE COURT: Mr. Pauling, any response?

6 MR. PAULING: Your Honor, I stand on my previous
7 argument, Judge. I do have the transcript, and I can give you
8 the hard copy or email a copy of the trial transcript for the
9 Court's review as it relates to what was presented, Your
10 Honor.

11 THE COURT: I don't believe that's necessary.

12 Mr. Crawford, is there anything else you want me to
13 consider?

14 THE DEFENDANT: Judge Newman, like I said, if I went back
15 inside my records, you would see that I do have documents
16 waiting for those cases. This has been an issue going on
17 since 2006, and every court I tried to go through to get that
18 DNA, if I'm wrong, if I'm acting without merit, why not give
19 it to me? Give me enough rope to hang myself. All right?

20 But I know what I'm saying is true, ma'am. All right?
21 All the evidence point to it, including the fact that that
22 coroner, Johnny Felders (ph), showed up at my bond hearing and
23 said there was -- that was not the cause of death.

24 Now, all of a sudden it is? It was only because they
25 figured they could manipulate my family, the way they got

1 perjured testimony, she being disciplined behind a \$5
2 telescope. I throw stuff like that away. All right? I
3 made sure them kids had everything I could possibly give them.

4 I'm going to discipline -- and you can look at the sign
5 inside the reports. So you're talking about supposedly over
6 that period of time, that one incident had only been for a \$5
7 telescope? Then why was (indiscernible) of this one being on
8 Michael? It had to be because they was having sex with each
9 other, and that was the cause. Because they perjured
10 themselves -- got that perjured testimony on the record and
11 whatnot, and that's reversible error by itself. All right?

12 But this is the issue, like I said. It's simple to
13 prove, ma'am, outside of exhuming the body. All right?

14 If he -- if she was pregnant, that DNA is going to be
15 diploid in nature, having two sets of alleles and chromosomes.
16 If it's haploid and she wasn't pregnant, then it seals it.
17 The Court wouldn't have to hear the rest of -- until I die.
18 All right?

19 But I'm telling you, ma'am, the statute does allow for
20 any evidence in the possession of the State that will prove my
21 guilt or innocence. It's just you read it, and that was very
22 part that I was relying upon, ma'am.

23 THE COURT: So, Mr. Pauling, Mr. Crawford was convicted
24 -- and I'm just recapping because a lot has been said this
25 morning. He was convicted of murder for allegedly beating his

1 daughter to death. So your argument then would be -- I don't
2 know if she was pregnant with Michael Lee's child or not, but
3 that doesn't have anything to do with the allegations, the
4 cause of death --

5 MR. PAULING: Right.

6 THE COURT: -- et cetera.

7 MR. PAULING: Right. And I understand what he says, but
8 -- well, I'm not saying I understand. I'll take -- I don't
9 know the conversation he had with Johnny Felders. I guess
10 what I'm telling you, it's not (indiscernible) Joel Sexton can
11 testify as to the cause and manner of death and the fact that
12 she was not pregnant. So I'm -- so I can't speak to that.

13 But, again, yes, he's asking for Michael Lee's DNA.

14 THE COURT: Right.

15 THE DEFENDANT: And, again, if it would please the Court,
16 Your Honor, it does relate to the death. Even Stevie Wonder
17 can see that. Because if she was -- if she was not -- if she
18 was not pregnant, ma'am, then the Court -- if she was
19 pregnant, that would prove that the pathologist committed
20 perjury on the stand. And if people think that it's
21 unreasonable -- it's impossible for a pathologist to lie, I
22 put that inside the document to record the history of
23 pathologists and medical professionals giving perjured
24 testimony and misinformation on the stand. So it's not
25 something that's just unusual. It's not a fluke.

1 That's the point here. All right? If the DNA is tested
2 and the samples come back diploid in nature as opposed to
3 being haploid, all right, then it will prove that the
4 pathologist lied.

5 And if the pathologist's testimony and the autopsy was
6 the source of establishing the corpus delicti, then, of
7 course, it would have a bearing on the conviction itself.

8 And that new evidence, once they seen that, when they
9 know that path [sic] and everybody lied in a trial where
10 jurors would hear those facts, any jurors would reasonably --
11 was -- can see that the outcome would have been probably
12 different.

13 And so, again, I -- I detailed and looked at the statute
14 and extensively as I can, and the statute clearly says -- and
15 that's the very portion of which you spoke of, the language
16 that I'm relying upon. It's not just DNA, my DNA. It's any
17 DNA.

18 And I put the other case law that are relevant that talk
19 about that very thing with third-party people were testing
20 DNA. Even when they talk about the Ancestry Registry, 23 and
21 more, and all of those, where that's been constantly done
22 across the nation. And so it's not just my DNA alone, ma'am.
23 And then the solicitor's misinterpreting the statute.

24 THE COURT: I tend to agree with the State because it's
25 not an issue of your alleged sexual contact with your daughter

1 where the -- Karisha's DNA testing as opposed to yours or
2 compared to Michael Lee's or somebody else's would be
3 instructive as to who committed --

4 THE DEFENDANT: Did you read the Durham case, ma'am?

5 THE COURT: -- sexual assault.

6 I did. It's right here on my screen.

7 THE DEFENDANT: Right. And it says that it becomes a
8 material fact if you can prove that the DNA inculpatates
9 somebody else. Didn't say it had to be sexual. It said if
10 you can prove it inculpatates somebody else.

11 THE COURT: I wasn't finished talking, but...

12 Yeah, I think certainly the statute says your DNA or the
13 DNA of --

14 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. In their possession.

15 THE COURT: Any physical evidence or biological material
16 related to your conviction or adjudication.

17 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. Right. And that covers that,
18 ma'am.

19 THE COURT: But the question of pregnancy.

20 THE DEFENDANT: It's not like I'm trying to find out
21 whether it's pregnancy. I'm trying to find out whether or not
22 the perjured testimony occurred at the trial that established
23 what the cause of death was. That's a whole different matter
24 in itself, ma'am. Not about whether or not she was pregnant.

25 That pathologist got on the stand and said that this was

1 the cause of death. And if that DNA is tested and it finds
2 out that I am right, that the samples are diploid in nature as
3 opposed to haploid, that means that he perjured himself as to
4 what the cause of death was. It's not about him -- her being
5 pregnant, ma'am.

6 THE COURT: Ms. Ginger, would you return these to
7 Mr. Crawford? Thank you.

8 I've tried twice to articulate on the record the
9 reasoning for my ruling, but I keep being interrupted, so I'm
10 going to give up on that.

11 The Motion to Dismiss the application for post-conviction
12 DNA testing is granted.

13 MR. PAULING: Thank you, Your Honor.

14 THE DEFENDANT: Say again now.

15 THE COURT: Your case is dismissed.

16 THE DEFENDANT: What about the jurisdictional questions
17 that were part of the case, too, ma'am? That has not been
18 adjudicated and determined as well.

19 THE COURT: Subject matter jurisdiction?

20 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, ma'am.

21 THE COURT: That is denied as well. This Court certainly
22 has subject matter jurisdiction over matters like this.
23 That's why you filed it here.

24 THE DEFENDANT: We're talking about the constitutional
25 elements of subject matter jurisdiction, ma'am.

1 THE COURT: That's why you filed it here because you know
2 this Court has subject matter jurisdiction.

3 (The hearing concluded at 10:34 AM)
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Certificate of Transcriber

CASE NAME: State v. Lawrence Crawford
DATE OF HEARING: 9/11/25
RECORDING METHOD: Elize Peruzzi, DCRP (BIS)

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Bobbi Fisher

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Transcript Prepared: 8/10/26

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