

THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
In the Court of Appeals

APPEAL FROM HORRY COUNTY
PROBATE COURT

Charles R. Rhodes, Jr., Probate Court Judge

Case No. 2013-ES-26-01185

Appellate Case No. 2026-002316

In the Matter of: The Estate of Norma Jean Staton,

John C. Thomas, as Successor Personal Representative of the Estate of Norma
Jean Staton, Respondent,

v.

Victoria Ishee, Gwyn Staton, and Scott Staton,

of whom Scott P. Staton is the Appellant

and Victoria Ishee and Gwyn Staton are Respondents.

**MEMORANDUM OF RESPONDENT JOHN C. THOMAS,
AS SUCCESSOR PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE,
IN OPPOSITION TO NOTICE OF APPEAL**

John C. Thomas
Successor Personal Representative
107 Lewis Street
Conway, SC 29526
(843) 248-6277
S.C. Bar No. 6470

RECEIVED
Oct 27 2026
SC Court of Appeals

Other Counsel of Record:

Reese R. Boyd, Esq.
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Myrtle Beach, SC 29577

Bess D. Lochocki, Esq.
12117 Ocean Hwy
Pawleys Island, SC 29585

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4420 Oleander Dr., Ste 203
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577

MEMORANDUM

The Honorable Charles R. Rhodes, Jr., Chief Associate Judge, Horry County Probate Court, issued five (5) separate orders in this thirteen-year old estate on September 14, 2026. Four (4) of the orders concerned a Petition for Declaratory Judgment originally filed on October 8, 2015, by Gwen Staton and Victoria Ishee before they were relieved as Personal Representatives by the Court when it subsequently appointed Respondent John C. Thomas as Successor Personal Representative. The Successor Personal Representative then amended the petition, which had never been heard by the Court but was still pending, and scheduled a hearing. On August 12, 2025, after a hearing that took place over the course of three (3) days, the Court issued an Order to the Petition for Declaratory Judgment, to which Gwen Staton, Victoria Ishee and Scott Staton all timely filed Motions to Reconsider. The Probate Court addressed each motion by separate orders dated September 14, 2026, which were emailed to all parties by the Probate Court on September 15, 2026, two of which are the subject of Respondent Scott Staton's appeal.

On September 28, 2026, Respondent Gwen Staton filed a Notice of Intent to Appeal to Circuit Court on two of the orders, consisting of the Order on Gwen Staton's Motion to Reconsider, Alter, or Amend the Order on Successor Personal Representative's

Petition for Declaratory Judgment, and the Order on Gwen Staton's Motion to Clarify, Alter, or Amend the Order on Successor Personal Representative's Petition for Declaratory Judgment. On October 16, 2026, Respondent Scotty Staton filed his Notice of Intent to Appeal to the South Carolina Court of Appeals. Both appeals concern the Horry County Probate Court's rulings on motions for reconsideration resulting from the Probate Court's original Order for Declaratory Judgment.

I never consented, either verbally or in person, for any party to be able to appeal any of the Court's orders directly to the South Carolina Court of Appeals. This estate has been pending since 2013, and such a direct appeal would not be in the estate's best interests. Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. 62-3-703(a), I have a fiduciary obligation to settle and distribute the decedent's estate "as expeditiously and efficiently as is consistent with the best interests of the estate".

Respectfully submitted,



John C. Thomas, Esq.
Successor Personal Representative
107 Lewis Street
Conway, SC 29526
S.C. Bar No. 6470

October 27, 2026

Conway, South Carolina



JOHN C. THOMAS, P.A.
Attorney at Law

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SC Court of Appeals

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October 27, 2026

Sent by email only to ctappfilings@sccourts.org

The South Carolina Court of Appeals
Attn.: Jasmine D. Smith, Deputy Clerk
PO Box 11629
Columbia, SC 29211

RE: In the Matter of: The Estate of Norma Jean Staton
Appellate Case No. 2026-002316

Dear Ms. Smith:

Pursuant to your letter of October 21, 2026, in the above matter, please find Memorandum of Respondent John C. Thomas, as Successor Personal Representative, in Opposition to Notice of Appeal. All counsel have been copied with this email.

With best regards, I am

Very truly yours,

JOHN C. THOMAS, P.A.

John C. Thomas

JCT/

enclosure (as stated)

cc: Reese R. Boyd, III, Esq. (by email only, to reese@boydlawsc.com)
Bess D. Lochocki, Esq. (by email only, to bess@waccamawlawllc.com)
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