

SCHUSTERMAN LAW FIRM, P.A.

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STEPHEN D. SCHUSTERMAN

February 6, 2017

V. Claire Allen, Deputy Clerk
South Carolina Court of Appeals
PO Box 11629
Columbia, SC 29211

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FEB 09 2017

Re: The State v. Laterrica Hill
Appellate Case No: 2016-001955 SC Court of Appeals

Dear Ms. Allen:

Pursuant to your letter of January 26, 2017, it is the intent of this letter to clarify whether the issues set forth in the guilty plea explanation were raised to the plea Court and ruled upon.

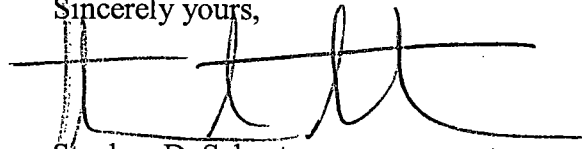
Ms. Hill alleges that she did not enter into the plea freely, voluntarily, and knowingly. Throughout the plea hearing, there was extensive discussion by her attorney's regarding her mental state at the time of the commission of the crime. The Court was advised that Ms. Hill had contemplated suicide prior to and since the commission of the crime. There was information provided that she had not had any treatment regarding her mental state and the issues that existed at the time of the commission of the crime continued to exist, untreated, on the day of the plea. These issues caused her to exercise poor judgment, be impulsive and confused, as identified in her psychological evaluation, not only upon commission of the crime but also in understanding and properly processing the plea process. Her public defender indicated to the Court that all of this information concerning the case was very difficult for Ms. Hill to understand. Her attorney's essentially went through a process that was very familiar to them, not taking into consideration her mental health issues, and pushed her through the process. The process was not objected to by counsel because they felt this was the best deal for Ms. Hill as is indicated in the transcript. Ms. Hill was unknowledgeable in the legal process and was unaware that objections had to be made. In fact, she was informed that she could actually appeal the guilty plea within ten days.

The issue of not being properly informed of the nature and crucial elements of the charges and the proper maximum penalty of the crime which she was charged was not addressed by either attorney to the Court.

If you wish to discuss this matter in further detail, please do not hesitate to contact me.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Schusterman', written over a horizontal line.

Stephen D. Schusterman

SDS/

Cc: Laterrica Hill

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