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JUDGE SENTENCES KILLER TO LIFE IN PRISON AFTER JOINT INVESTIGATION & WEEK-LONG TRIAL

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Charleston, S.C.— Solicitor Scarlett A. Wilson announced that the Honorable Roger Young sentenced Taylin Greene to life in prison after a Charleston County jury convicted him of the murder and armed robbery of Richard Rios Rivera, the armed robbery of Darryl Thomas, and three associated weapons charges. The jury reached unanimous guilty verdicts on all six charges on January 16, 2026, after a week-long trial. Solicitor Wilson stated, “The open lines of communication between both the City of Charleston and the North Charleston Police Departments helped us convict this cold-blooded killer. Their thorough investigations brought the community this guilty verdict.”

Assistant Solicitors Stephanie Linder and Madeline Neese presented the State’s case with the assistance of their investigators Dustin Morris, Jennifer Butler, and Jennifer Hall.

The North Charleston Police Department initially responded to the Mattress Deals store located at 5900 Rivers Avenue in response to a man found deceased in the store. Detectives immediately began canvassing the area for possible surveillance video. Officers found images that included a suspect wearing a distinct camouflage bookbag and black Nike Air-Force Ones pacing around the shopping center for an hour before entering the Mattress Deals store where he robbed and murdered Richard Rios Rivera, a store clerk. A Carolina Waste truck captured a green “Emeline” bicycle with that camouflage bookbag located in the basket propped up against a dumpster in the shopping center that morning. A mere fourteen hours later, the City of Charleston Police Department responded to an armed robbery at the Circle K gas station located at 1811 Sam Rittenberg Boulevard. Again, officers quickly gathered surveillance footage that depicted a suspect robbing the gas station, riding a green “Emeline” bicycle, wearing a distinct camouflage bookbag, and wearing black Nike Air-Force One shoes. A City of Charleston Officer on routine patrol spotted that distinct green bicycle hours later in the same vicinity. After back-up arrived to help the officer, Taylin Greene was taken into custody without incident. On the property where Taylin Greene was hiding, officers found a camouflage bookbag, green “Emeline” bike, a Circle K cash drawer, loose dollars and change, and two nine-millimeter weapons located in the bookbag.

Officers transported Taylin Greene to City of Charleston Police headquarters where he was interviewed, confronted with images from the City of North Charleston murder and armed robbery, and the City of Charleston armed robbery. He confessed to both crimes. Greene gave intimate details of each crime which at that time were unknown to law enforcement and the public, including which weapon he used for the murder, the manner in which he shot Rivera, and described details of the Circle K robbery. Firearms analysis revealed that a fired cartridge case found on scene at the Mattress Deals store matched that of one of the nine-millimeter handguns found in Taylin Greene’s camouflage bookbag.

As Assistant Solicitor Linder stated during sentencing, these were horrific and unnecessary attacks that cost a hard-working, innocent man his life. The State thanks the Rivera family for their sincere and incredible strength in the face of this brutal slaying and its aftermath.