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**PRESS RELEASE**  
**COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY VS. MARCO ALLEN CHAPMAN**  
**COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY, 54<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit**

While this day has been a long time in the making, it seems like only yesterday that this horrible tragedy occurred. Clearly, the facts of this case have always supported the decision of the Commonwealth to pursue the Death Penalty, and the decision of the Judge to impose it. Make no mistake about it – had this case been tried to a jury, the result would have been no different. Mr. Chapman recognized this very early on, and sought to try to “do the right thing” by preventing any further trauma to Carolyn and Courtney, and the rest of the family and friends of Codi and Chelbi.

Hopefully, what this day does bring is a turning of attention to where it rightfully belongs – Codi and Chelbi, and to those who miss them so desperately. In the weeks, months and even years following the commission of heinous crimes such as this, in courtrooms across the Commonwealth, the focus quickly shifts from the lives that are lost to the person of the accused. Right, wrong or indifferent, that's what the Constitution requires. From that perspective, it is the perpetrators of these awful crimes that live on in legal infamy. We cite cases like “Sanborn” and “St. Clair” in prosecutions that follow, all the while forgetting that those cases are not about the criminals who committed them, or the legal principles that those decisions pioneered, but the innocent lives that were lost at their hands. And while we respect the rights of those that choose to attend prayer vigils or protest against the imposition of Chapman's punishment tonight, it would seem that our time could be better served holding daily prayer vigils or protests in hopes of preventing the violence that occurs in our communities every day; violence that rips precious, innocent people from their families.

For months now, Mr. Chapman's name has been repeatedly uttered in newspaper articles and other media accounts, while only briefly alluding to Codi and Chelbi, and oftentimes virtually ignoring the horror suffered by their mother and sister. My sincere hope is that we find a way to return the focus to the victims. As such, we would ask that your thoughts and prayers be focused on healing for all of those affected by this horrible tragedy; most notably, the Marksberry and Sharon families.

We would also ask that you remember the law enforcement officers, first responders, and other witnesses who cannot erase the memories of what they saw and heard on August 23, 2002. Any of us involved in this process can attest that this has been a life altering case. The entire Gallatin County community has been forced to learn the hard way that things like this can and will happen in our own backyards. The false sense of security that they once enjoyed is now replaced by locked doors and drawn curtains at night. With that knowledge, we should all cling to our loved ones a little bit more, and adopt a sense of vigilance to do what we can to keep our families isolated from the senseless dangers that exist in this world.

Codi and Chelbi are no longer with us, and nothing that could happen today can change that. Please pray for their family and friends, so that they can try to draw upon memories of them in happier times, instead of dwelling on the painful circumstances surrounding their death. Also, pray for peace for Carolyn and Courtney so that the nightmares subside and they can attempt to live their lives free of fear, despite the direct knowledge that evil dwells amongst us every day. They are two of the strongest women that I have ever known, and are role models for healing and perseverance. I am confident that their strength comes from the two angels daily watching over them – watching over us all.

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