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## **Attorney General Steve Marshall Applauds Alabama Senate’s Passage of the Speedy Trial Act**

(Montgomery, Ala) – Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall today commended the Alabama Senate for its swift approval of Senate Bill 178, also known as the Speedy Trial Act. This critical legislation is designed to expedite trials for violent criminal cases, reduce court backlogs, and ensure swift justice for victims. Sponsored by Senate Judiciary Chairman Will Barfoot (R-Pike Road), the bill now moves to the Alabama House for consideration.

“Today’s action by the Senate sends a strong message about our justice system: we are taking critical steps toward a safer, more efficient Alabama, where victims receive the justice, they deserve and violent criminals are swiftly held accountable,” Attorney General Marshall said. “Chairman Barfoot understands the significance of this bill for victims of violent crime and has done an outstanding job guiding it through the chamber. I look forward to the House approving its companion bill soon, ensuring that violent offenders face justice without unnecessary delays. This legislation will bring fairness, efficiency, and swift justice to our courts.”

Under current Alabama law, the state supreme court has the authority to appoint special judges, but there has been no formal process for prosecutors to request additional judicial resources to address the backlog of violent crime cases. Senate Bill 178 and its companion, House Bill 307 – sponsored by House Judiciary Chairman Jim Hill (R-Moody) – fill this gap by allowing district attorneys or the Attorney General to request temporary judicial appointments. The legislation also establishes the Speedy Trial Fund, which ensures the availability of financial resources for special judges, court reporters, and additional juries, eliminating logistical barriers that often cause trial delays.

Attorney General Marshall emphasized that timely trials are crucial not only for defendants but for victims and their families. “When trials drag on for months or even years, victims and witnesses are forced to relive their trauma repeatedly, evidence deteriorates, and the likelihood of securing justice diminishes. The Speedy Trial Act ensures that our courts operate efficiently, keeping Alabama families and communities safer,” he added.

The House Judiciary Committee advanced House Bill 307 last week.

“I am grateful for the leadership of Chairman Barfoot in championing this vital legislation, and for Senate Pro Tem Gudger who made this a priority for the Senate. I urge the House to move quickly so that we can get this bill to the Governor’s desk,” Marshall said.

