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PRESS RELEASE
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TO: Media
FROM: Jody Pickens, District Attorney General, 26th Judicial District
RE: State of Tennessee v. Robert James Tipler

On February 18, 2019, the Jackson Police Department dispatched officers to 51 Coach Dr., in response to a 911 call about a shooting in progress. Officers arrived moments after the call, at approximately 11:00 P.M. and found a victim, Ronnie Hines, age 40, who was lying on the side of the street in a pool of his own blood with multiple gunshot wounds to his head struggling to breathe. Despite best efforts to save his life, Ronnie Hines succumbed to his injuries. An autopsy later revealed that he was shot in the head at least 11 times, with entry wounds in the front, side, and back of his head.

Investigator Joseph Williams of the Jackson Police Department Major Crimes Unit led the investigation. Multiple witnesses to the shooting identified Robert James Tipler, 34 years of age from Lexington, Tennessee, as the person who killed Ronnie Hines. Tipler was brought to 51 Coach Dr. by two women involved in an altercation at the address earlier that day where Hines had asked them to leave. One witness stated that when the three arrived back at 51 Coach Dr., one of the females pointed Hines out to Tipler. Tipler then approached the victim and the two shook hands. After taking Hines' hand, Tipler shot him multiple times. Once Hines lay on the ground incapacitated, Tipler stood over him and continued to fire down at his helpless body. Crime scene investigators recovered 15 shell casings from the area around Hines' body. All witnesses to the shooting described Ronnie Hines as a "peacemaker" merely trying to deescalate the situation between the females involved in the altercation.

On December 2, 2019, the Madison County Grand Jury indicted Robert James Tipler for the First Degree Murder of Ronnie Hines. He was also indicted for being a Convicted Felon in Possession of a Firearm. Tipler had two prior felony convictions from 2016 at the time of the murder – one for Reckless Endangerment with a Deadly Weapon, and one for Tampering with Evidence.

On May 30, 2023, the State of Tennessee tried Tipler on the indictment before a jury. The State was represented by Assistant District Attorney General Bradley F. Champine. At the conclusion of the trial on June 1, 2023, the jury convicted Tipler on all counts of the indictment. On July 10, 2023, Tipler was sentenced to Life in Prison for First-Degree Murder and 10 years for Possessing a Firearm as a Convicted Felon. A co-defendant, Teriney McIntosh, was sentenced on August 29, 2023, to a total effective sentence of 7 years on probation for being an Accessory After the Fact to First Degree Murder and Aggravated Assault.

"Ronnie Hines was described as a peacemaker," said District Attorney General Jody Pickens. "And Robert Tipler chose to take his life for that in a brutal, savage display of violence. His actions left no question about the cold and premeditated way he took another human being's life. Such callous disregard for the dignity of human life demonstrates a cruel and merciless intent. Ronnie Hines' death demanded justice, and we are thankful to the witnesses who bravely came forward to identify this killer, as well as to the twelve jurors who had to hear this gruesome case. Though they will never be made whole, we know this verdict allows some measure of comfort and closure to the family Ronnie Hines leaves behind. While they waited for a long time for justice, they can rest now knowing that the man responsible has been held accountable."

Respectfully Submitted,

Jody S. Pickens
District Attorney General
26th Judicial District