

State of South Carolina  
Solicitor, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit

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Greenville County Courthouse  
305 E. North Street, Suite 325  
Greenville, SC 29601-2185

Solicitor  
W. Walter Wilkins

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**For Immediate Release**

**December 13, 2021**

**Pickens Man Sentenced on Murder, Burglary 1<sup>st</sup> Degree (two counts), Criminal Sexual Conduct, Assault and Battery of a High and Aggravated Nature**

Thirteenth Circuit Solicitor Walt Wilkins states that THOMAS JAMES CHAPMAN, age 23, pled guilty on December 13, 2021 to Murder, Criminal Sexual Conduct 1<sup>st</sup> Degree, Burglary 1<sup>st</sup> Degree (two counts), Assault and Battery of a High and Aggravated Nature and was sentenced to LIFE in the South Carolina Department of Corrections by the Honorable Edward W. Miller.

Evidence presented at the plea hearing by Solicitor Wilkins established that during the nighttime to early morning hours of April 11 and April 12, 2020, THOMAS JAMES CHAPMAN broke into the Pickens County home of the 89 year old victim. While inside the residence, CHAPMAN strangled the victim and sexually assaulted her. He then stole cash from her and fled the scene. Later that night, CHAPMAN returned to her home, breaking in again, this time violently cutting her throat with a large knife, resulting in her death. The case was investigated by the Liberty Police Department, Pickens County Sheriff's Office and SLED.