

State of South Carolina  
Solicitor, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit

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Solicitor  
**W. Walter Wilkins**

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

**September 5, 2012**

**Man Sentenced to 27 Years in Mother's Death**

Thirteenth Circuit Solicitor Walt Wilkins states that eighteen-year-old Joshua David McEachern pled "guilty but mentally ill" on September 5, 2012, to Voluntary Manslaughter, Attempted Murder and Possessing a Handgun During a Violent Crime. The Honorable R. Lawton McIntosh sentenced McEachern to twenty-seven years in the South Carolina Department of Corrections. Due to the nature of the charges, McEachern will have to serve eighty-five percent of his sentence before he can be released from prison.

Evidence presented at the hearing by Assistant Solicitor Allen Fretwell established that McEachern, seventeen-years old at the time, shot his mother, Kathy McEachern, on Mother's Day in 2011. McEachern had been arguing with his mother who followed him into his bedroom where McEachern grabbed a handgun and shot his mother in the face. Hearing the shot, McEachern's brother, Daniel, entered the bedroom where he was shot three times in the chest by McEachern. Daniel survived surgery and Kathy McEachern was pronounced dead at the scene. Fretwell told the Court that McEachern has no prior record. Daniel McEachern and his sister, Debra Joy Davis, were present and Davis read a statement on her brother's behalf requesting leniency for McEachern.

Dr. David Price, a clinical psychiatrist, presented testimony on McEachern's behalf that he suffers from autism and has been diagnosed with Asperger's Disorder. The Court accepted McEachern's plea of "guilty but mentally ill" based on Dr. Price's testimony.