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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Morris County (NJ) Attorney Files Petition to the United States Supreme Court in Unsolved 1946 Georgia Murder Case**

ROCKAWAY, NJ – Morris County Attorney Joseph J. Bell, Jr., has filed a petition to the United States Supreme Court asking it to hear a case dealing with grand jury secrecy in an unsolved 1946 Georgia lynching. Earlier this year a Federal Appeals Court had ruled Grand jury records from this case must remain sealed thus blocking final resolution of the case, which remains the last unsolved mass murder in modern American history.

Called “The Moore's Ford Lynching,” the case involves the brutal murders of four African-American farmhands by a mob of unmasked white men in Walton County, GA in July, 1946, a crime investigated by both the FBI and Georgia Bureau of Investigations without producing arrests, indictments or convictions. One of the victims, George W. Dorsey, had just returned from distinguished military service in the Pacific and African theatres of World War II.

The Supreme Court is being asked to resolve conflicting lower court decisions on whether the Grand Jury testimony and records from the original investigation in 1946 can or should be released. At issue for the Court is to determine whether District and Circuit Courts have the inherent authority to release grand jury records in cases of exceptional historic importance. With the current deep split in the circuit courts on this issue, the Supreme Court is the final venue for adjudication.

The Moore's Ford case was the subject of a book by author Anthony S. Pitch about the lynching. Pitch sought the sealed records to provide answers as to why no one was ever held accountable. He and Mr. Bell have been working on the case since late 2013 with favorable decisions in both the local District court and, upon government appeal, in the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals in February, 2019. However an en banc hearing of the case by the Eleventh Circuit in October, 2019 resulted in a reversal of its 2019 decision, now blocking access to the records.

Moore’s Ford author and expert Laura Wexler joined the case as Intervenor in July, 2019 after Pitch’s death in June.

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