

Attorney Says Case Against Dylann Roof Provides Prosecutors Some Insurance

Dylann Roof will face the death penalty after a Charleston, South Carolina, jury found him guilty of shooting and killing nine people at the historic Emanuel AME Church in June 2015. Although he had legal representation during the federal trial, he chose to represent himself during the penalty phase, leaving open the possibility of an appeal. It also sets the stage for South Carolina prosecutors to seek the death penalty in an upcoming state murder trial, according to an article published by **Androvett Legal Media & Marketing**.

Explains Dallas criminal defense attorney **Nicole Knox**:

“Roof’s decision to take the innocent lives of South Carolina citizens is deplorable, and the pursuit of the death penalty in state court is likely an effort to offset any potential success he may find during his federal appeal. Roof has a sound basis to support his motion for new trial because he did not have the benefit of qualified counsel during the punishment phase. Without the arguments of defense counsel, we cannot be sure that Roof, arguing for himself, was capable of pursuing mitigation arguments that could have precluded a death penalty verdict. His post-trial motions and the appeals could continue for several years. Should the state pursue and succeed in obtaining a death penalty verdict on its own case, then Roof will be able to appeal that case as well, but it will give the state another opportunity to hold him accountable for his crimes.”

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