

COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA



OFFICE OF THE COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY CITY OF PORTSMOUTH



MEDIA RELEASE

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Portsmouth, VA

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COURT OF APPEALS OF VIRGINIA UNANIMOUSLY AFFIRMS CONVICTION IN COMMONWEALTH V. STEPHEN RANKIN

PORTSMOUTH, VA – Portsmouth Commonwealth's Attorney Stephanie N. Morales announces that on April 24, 2018, the Virginia Court of Appeals unanimously affirmed the voluntary manslaughter conviction of Stephen Rankin. During the appellate process, the Portsmouth Commonwealth's Attorney's Office submitted a brief in opposition to Rankin's petition for appeal, arguing that the conviction should stand and that there were no legal errors at trial. The Virginia Office of the Attorney General filed a subsequent brief echoing that position. In affirming the conviction, the Court of Appeals adopted and agreed with the position of both the Portsmouth Commonwealth's Attorney's Office and the Virginia Office of the Attorney General.

Commonwealth's Attorney Stephanie Morales, Chief Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney Cedric Wiggins, and Senior Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney Brandon Wroblewski prosecuted the case for the Commonwealth.

"Today the Court of Appeals agreed that the conviction of Stephen Rankin was proper in all respects, and we are thankful for this ruling. Our team of attorneys sought to uphold the law and seek justice, and we are glad to learn that the Court of Appeals agrees that we did so appropriately. This ruling is the culmination of many months of litigation, and it encourages us to continue to seek justice for all victims of violent crime, but especially those whose ability to speak for themselves has been taken away too soon."

- Stephanie N. Morales

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Stephanie N. Morales, Commonwealth's Attorney
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