

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
BLUE RIDGE JUDICIAL CIRCUIT



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Man Convicted of Jewelry Store Armed Robbery to Serve Life in Prison Without Parole
State vs. Erin Stephon Arms

September 19, 2024 – District Attorney Susan K. Treadaway announces that on September 13, 2024, Superior Court Judge David Cannon Jr. sentenced Erin Stephon Arms, 40, of DeKalb County, to life without the possibility of parole. A Cherokee County jury previously found Arms guilty of armed robbery.

The defendant's charges stem from an armed robbery that occurred on November 22, 2013, in Canton. On that day, Arms entered the Cartersville Jewelry Exchange on Riverstone Parkway, wearing a mask, gloves, and a red Alabama sweatshirt. Once inside the store, Arms pointed a silver handgun at two employees and ordered them to get on the floor.

Arms fled the scene in a green Ford F-150 with more than \$50,000 worth of jewelry. Law enforcement later learned that the truck was stolen and had been carjacked in Atlanta earlier in the month.

Several members of the community provided tips to law enforcement that aided in the identification and arrest of Arms.

A man driving by the jewelry store saw Arms flee from the store and followed him in his car, which was equipped with a dash cam that recorded the truck's path of travel from the jewelry store. After Arms abandoned the truck on Hidden Creek Lane, another witness saw someone toss a red sweatshirt and gloves on the I-575 on-ramp.

Law enforcement collected the discarded clothing and a handgun, which was recovered near where the truck had been abandoned on Hidden Creek Lane. Through the use of advanced DNA science, known as TrueAlle, the GBI was later able to link the defendant to the clothing worn during the armed robbery.

The trial took place from December 4-8, 2023. The State brought 12 witnesses to the stand and presented more than 80 exhibits, including surveillance video of the robbery, DNA evidence, and the firearm.

During the sentencing hearing, the State presented the facts of the case and provided evidence of the defendant's three prior felony convictions, arguing that Arms is a recidivist offender, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 17-10-7(a) and § 17-10-7(c) and, as such, should receive the maximum sentence without parole eligibility.

The State recommended a sentence of life without the possibility of parole, which is the maximum sentence for armed robbery in Georgia. The Defense recommended a sentence of 20 years in confinement, with credit for time served.

“This crime terrified two employees who were working the day this defendant threatened them with a handgun,” said Deputy Chief Assistant District Attorney Geoffrey Fogus, who prosecuted this case on behalf of the State. “These young women were scared to death and the effects have endured through their lives. Now they just want this defendant to be held accountable.”

One of the employees provided a written victim impact statement to be read during the sentencing hearing. In the statement, the employee described the trauma of having someone point a gun at her while her terrified coworker sobbed in fear of her life.

“I had nightmares for months. I still have nightmares. Every time I get a call about the trial, the nightmares return. The terror. I can’t wake myself up and over and over and over I have to hear my teenage coworker cry and whimper in fear of her life. I’m right back in the moment, praying, crying, pleading to walk away,” the armed robbery victim said.

At the conclusion of the hearing, Judge Cannon agreed that life without the possibility of parole was the appropriate sentence, based on the findings of the jury as well as the defendant’s criminal history. Judge Cannon also ordered no contact with the victims in the case.

“After several years had passed, it was the modern DNA science utilized by the GBI that ultimately led to the conviction of this defendant,” said District Attorney Susan K. Treadaway. “This case is testament to the fact that justice will prevail and that the District Attorney’s Office will remain steadfast in prosecuting violent crimes for the protection of the citizens of Cherokee County.”

The case was investigated by the Cherokee Sheriff’s Office and the Canton Police Department. It was prosecuted by Deputy Chief Assistant District Attorney Geoffrey L. Fogus and Assistant District Attorney Rebecca Visockis, Office of the District Attorney, Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit.

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