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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General James Uthmeier Announces Major Victory in Juvenile Parole Challenge

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.— Today, Attorney General James Uthmeier announced that the office of the Solicitor General secured a significant win in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, successfully defending the Florida Commission on Offender Review (FCOR) against a constitutional challenge brought by inmates serving life-with-parole sentences for crimes committed as juveniles.

“This ruling affirms what we’ve said all along—Florida’s parole system is constitutional and fair,” said **Attorney General James Uthmeier**. “These were serious, violent crimes with devastating consequences, and our laws must continue to reflect the gravity of those acts. Thanks to the work of Acting Solicitor General Jeffrey DeSousa and Senior Deputy Solicitor General Christopher Baum, we’ve once again defended the rule of law, and protected the rights of victims and their families.”

The plaintiffs—referred to as “juvenile lifers”—filed a class action lawsuit alleging that Florida’s parole system violated the Eighth Amendment by failing to provide a “meaningful opportunity for release.” Nearly all the plaintiffs were convicted of homicide offenses. The U.S. District Court previously granted summary judgment in favor of FCOR, and that decision has now been affirmed by the Eleventh Circuit in an opinion authored by the Honorable Kevin C. Newsom.

In its ruling, the court held that Florida’s parole process does not, on a class-wide basis, violate either the Eighth Amendment’s prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment or the Fourteenth Amendment’s guarantee of due process. While acknowledging that the parole system may be “a little stingy” in granting release, the court found no constitutional violations.

This decision reinforces the state’s authority to maintain a parole process that balances rehabilitation opportunities with public safety and accountability.

To view the [opinion of the court, click here](#).

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