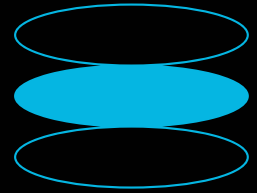




CASE BRIEF

Smith & Smith Law Offices



Case Background

Henderson v. Taylor (Based on *Rompilla v. Beard*, 2005)

Marcus Henderson was convicted of murder and other crimes. During the penalty phase, the jury found the aggravating factors that the murder was committed during a felony, that it was committed by torture, and that Henderson had a significant history of felony convictions indicating the use or threat of violence. Before sentencing, five members of Henderson's family beseeched the jury for mercy. He was sentenced to death, and the Florida Supreme Court affirmed. He is asking us to appeal his case to the Supreme Court.

Demographics

- **Age:** 50
- **Gender:** Male
- **Ethnicity:** White
- **Location:** Sarasota, Florida
- **Occupation:** N/A
- **Education:** High School Diploma
- **Marital Status:** Single

Client Narrative

My name is Marcus Henderson, and I was sentenced to death for a terrible crime I committed in Pennsylvania. I'm not here to make excuses for what I did—but I do want people to understand that I never got a fair shot. I had a right to a real defense, and that's not what I got.

My lawyers—public defenders—did almost nothing to really learn about me before the sentencing. They barely scratched the surface. They talked to my family for a few minutes, skimmed through some school records, and thought that was enough. But they didn't dig deeper, and they ignored the one place where all the truth was sitting: the case file from one of my past convictions.

That file had everything—mental health reports, psychological evaluations, evidence of abuse. The prosecution said straight up they were going to use that conviction to push for the death penalty. And still, my lawyers didn't bother to read the file. They didn't open the cabinet that held my entire history—who I was, where I came from, and why I ended up like this.

I've lived through things I wouldn't wish on anybody. I was beaten constantly by my father, locked in closets and cages, and ridiculed by teachers because I couldn't read right. I had learning problems, mental health issues, and spent most of my life drowning in alcohol. That's not an excuse—it's my reality. But none of that came out in court because my lawyers didn't look for it.

Previous Attorney Information

My Lawyers were public defenders. I could not afford to pay for a private law firm to represent me. While my defense team was experienced, they were greatly overwhelmed. They said they were trying to help me, but they did not go far enough. Mr. Taylor, my lead attorney, had his team only make a few calls and ask a few questions. They missed the most important thing - the paper trail of my life. I have evidence of trauma, psychological evaluations, and diagnostic results. If they would have just looked into my background, they would have known that while I was a criminal, I was a broken man that needed help.

Summary

I know that I committed a terrible crime. I am willing to accept a fair punishment, but I do not believe my lawyers did enough to preserve me from death. Please review the evidence provided and take my case.