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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: July 16, 2025

RE: State v. Bobbie Sue Hodge

On July 1, 2025, Bobbie Sue Hodge, 66, of Edgewood, Maryland, was sentenced to life in prison, suspending all but 180 years to serve for a 2019 arson that killed four individuals. This case, previously prosecuted in 2022, was remanded by the Appellate Court of Maryland for a new trial after the original trial court did not conduct a hearing to determine whether Hodge had requested to discharge her counsel prior to trial. This new conviction and sentence will ensure that Hodge serves more time than she would have under her original 2022 sentence before being eligible for parole.

Facts presented in support of the conviction proved that on May 9, 2019, a dwelling fire was reported at 1962 Simons Court in Edgewood at approximately 2:30 a.m. The Joppa-Magnolia Volunteer Fire Company responded to extinguish the fire and rescue occupants. Three residents perished in the fire from smoke inhalation and thermal injuries. A fourth resident was rescued by firefighters but succumbed to their injuries eight months later. Three other residents escaped the fire, one of whom sustained serious injuries while leaping from a top-floor window.

A joint investigation was conducted by the Office of the State Fire Marshall, Harford County Sheriff's Office, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives to determine the origin and cause of the fire. From the investigation, it was learned that Bobbie Sue Hodge lived in a room in the basement of the residence and had escaped the fire fully clothed with her belongings and personal documents. It was learned that Hodge was to be evicted from the residence, had repeatedly left the kitchen stove on, and had made comments that she should burn the residence down. She was also seen by witnesses moving away from a couch on the second floor as the fire started. The cause of the fire was determined to be incendiary, resulting from deliberate acts of introducing an open flame to combustibles. The fire damage extended to five adjacent townhouses, causing significant property loss.

Hodge was sentenced by the Honorable Paul W. Ishak to 40 years of incarceration for each of the four counts of First-Degree Felony Murder and 20 years of incarceration for three counts of Second-Degree Assault. The sentences run consecutively for an aggregate sentence of 180 years to serve.

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Following the hearing, State's Attorney Alison M. Healey commented: "It can be very challenging to retry cases that were already successfully prosecuted when they are remanded for retrial. However, I am proud of the work my office does each day to seek justice for victims, no matter the obstacles and circumstances. Despite the hurdles, my office was able to secure a new sentence that will ensure that Bobbie Sue Hodge is never a danger to society again."

State's Attorney Healey thanks Deputy State's Attorney David Ryden and Assistant State's Attorney Jason Allen for securing this significant plea and sentence. Ms. Healey also thanks Master Deputy Salvage of the Office of the State Fire Marshall, Detective Burns from the Harford County Sheriff's Office, and Special Agent Herb from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives for their thorough investigation of this case. Ms. Healey also recognizes the members of the Joppa Magnolia Volunteer Fire Company for their heroic actions in their rescue attempts of the victims of this crime and for saving additional lives with their swift action.