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State Attorney Jeffrey L. Ashton Completes O'Connell Investigation, Issues Report

State Attorney Jeffrey L. Ashton released today an investigative report into the death of Michelle O'Connell and sent a letter to Gov. Rick Scott with his findings and decision.

An Executive Order tasked Mr. Ashton with investigating any newly-discovered evidence that could alter the outcome of a prior inquiry determining Ms. O'Connell's death was a suicide. Ms. O'Connell died in September 2010 in St. Johns County. The St. Johns County Sheriff's Office led the initial investigation.

Mr. Ashton appointed Investigator Patrick Schneider to thoroughly evaluate and review the previous investigations and alleged new leads. His findings confirmed that the case "does not meet the standards established for prosecution" as previously indicated by the State Attorney's Office, Fifth Judicial Circuit. In addition, the alleged new evidence did not alter the original findings.

"When I received this assignment from Governor Scott, I made a strong commitment the case would be investigated thoroughly," State Attorney Ashton said. "I am confident that we have followed through on that commitment. I have carefully considered the findings of this report and conclude the evidence does not support probable cause a homicide occurred in connection with Ms. O'Connell's death."

The release of the report and letter to Gov. Scott completes the duties assigned to State Attorney Ashton and his office. To see a copy of the report and letter, visit <http://sao9documents.net/>.

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