

'Horrendous lack of evidence' – Chunchula man acquitted of murdering cousin

[Brendan Kirby](#) Published: Jan. 17, 2025 at 4:42 PM CST

MOBILE, Ala. ([WALA](#)) - Drayson Stone Kelly has been in jail for two years on charges that he [murdered his cousin](#).

Soon, the 27-year-old Chunchula resident will be a free man.

A Mobile County Circuit Court jury on Friday returned a unanimous not guilty verdict.

"I think that they got it right in this case," defense attorney ChaLea Tisdale said after the verdict. "For sure, there was a horrendous lack of evidence in this case."

Prosecutors presented days' worth of circumstantial evidence. There were no eyewitnesses to Gilbert "Scotty" Bohannon III's death in December 2022. And investigators did not find the gun used to shoot him several times or DNA pointing to the killer.

Instead, prosecutors built a case against Kelly that largely relied on the defendant's statements to police and surveillance videos that prosecutors contended tracked his journey toward the oil field near Citronelle where a worker found the victim's body.

Mobile County Assistant District Attorney Megan Everitt pointed to two interviews Kelly sat for with law enforcement investigators. During her closing argument, she focused on what she described as conflicting statements. In one session, he said he stayed up all night on the date of the shooting; in another, he said he slept in his truck at a hayfield. In one

interview, Kelly gave a detailed description of the truck he said his cousin got in when they departed; in the other interview, he said he did not remember what the truck looked like.

“Drayson Kelly’s words speak volumes,” Everitt said. “There are so many inconsistencies, and they matter.”

Tisdale showed jurors a picture of puzzle pieces as a metaphor for putting together a case that in the end, should paint a coherent picture of a crime.

“Ladies and gentlemen, they haven’t even put the border of this puzzle together,” she said.

She called the prosecution case “a complete and utter travesty” that does not come close to proving murder.

“They have no evidence,” she said. “They have no witnesses. They have nothing.”

Tisdale said the prosecution’s theory of motive – that Kelly was upset that Bohannon was sleeping with his girlfriend – is based on testimony from a “jailhouse snitch.” She said jurors should discount that testimony because the witness said Kelly died from a blast from a 12-gauge shotgun. The evidence, she reminded jurors, pointed to a revolver.

Tisdale told FOX10 News that investigators could not even be certain that the shooting took place at the oil field. Prosecutors argued that it did, which would be consistent with their theory that Kelly and Bohannon drove there and that Kelly shot him.

But Tisdale argued it is likely that someone killed Bohannon somewhere else and dumped the body at the oil field. She pointed to a law enforcement officials’ written narrative early in the investigation indicating that was likely what happened.

"There was no way to determine when or where Mr. Bohannon died," she said. "All we knew is how."

Kelly still was at Mobile County Metro Jail Friday afternoon, held on an unrelated charge of shooting into a building or vehicle. But Tisdale said her client will be able to bond out on that charge now that he has been acquitted by the murder charge.

"He's obviously very relieved," she said. "You know, he was quite anxious throughout the trial, understandably so."

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