

Former Justice Christine Durham Joins Petito Family's Legal Team in Utah Wrongful Death Case

Former Utah Supreme Court Chief Justice Christine Durham has entered her appearance on behalf of Gabby Petito's family.

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, UNITED STATES, July 12, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Former Utah Supreme Court Chief Justice Christine Durham (<https://www.wsgr.com/en/people/christine-durham.html#experience>) has entered her appearance on behalf of Gabby Petito's family, joining the law firm of Parker & McConkie (<https://www.parkerandmconkie.com/>)



Former Justice Christine Durham

) in the Utah wrongful death case (Case No. 220700046). Christine Durham is a retired Justice of the Utah Supreme Court who served as a Justice from 1982 to 2017 and as Chief Justice from 2002 to 2012. She currently practices as Senior of Counsel with Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati.

In a statement, Former Justice Durham emphasized the "important state constitutional questions" at stake, noting that "this case presents a significant opportunity for the court to clarify the constitution's intent to preserve the right of Utah citizens to hold their government accountable in cases of wrongful death." Ultimately, this case is about ensuring "that the parents of Gabby Petito can exercise their constitutional right to recover for Gabby's wrongful death—a death that would not have occurred had it not been for the negligence and misconduct of Moab City and its officers," she stated.

"Christine Durham is one of the preeminent legal minds in Utah and the United States," Petito family attorney Brian C. Stewart stated. "She brings an unmatched wealth of experience and expertise, particularly in Utah constitutional law, to our efforts to fight for justice for Gabby."

The Moab City Police Department has filed a motion to dismiss

(<https://www.parkerandmconkie.com/blog/justice-christine-durham-joins-petito-familys-legal-team-in-utah>) the Petito family's lawsuit, arguing that their claims are barred by Utah's Governmental Immunity Act. However, in their opposition brief (<https://www.parkerandmconkie.com/blog/justice-christine-durham-joins-petito-familys-legal-team-in-utah>), filed on July 9, 2024, the Petito family argues that their wrongful death claims are protected under the Utah Constitution.

Gabby's mother, Nichole Schmidt, stated, "We are honored to have Former Justice Durham join us in this case. Her commitment to fighting for Gabby and the rights of all victims instills great confidence in our cause. This truly demonstrates the validity and importance of our claims. What is it that we are fighting for? Through dedicated training, collaboration, and accountability, we aim to transform outcomes for victims in grave danger."

In response to Moab Police Department's statements made on Tuesday, calling the lawsuit a "GoFundMe campaign," Joseph Petito, Gabby's father, called the comments "unfortunate" and said, "Moab still doesn't get it. This case has never been about money. It has always been about seeking accountability and fighting for change that will save lives. When law enforcement fails to follow the law, fails to protect, and refuses to learn from its mistakes, like the Moab police department, it puts us all at risk."

In addition to their lawsuit, the Petito family started the Gabby Petito Foundation (<https://www.gabbypetitofoundation.org/>) to prevent other domestic violence tragedies by supporting organizations that locate missing persons and assist domestic violence victims.

Parker & McConkie trial attorneys have been recognized for their expertise and long-standing commitment to standing up for the civil rights and protection of vulnerable groups and individuals, including victims of domestic violence like Gabby.

For more information, interviews, or media requests, please contact david.watkins@otterpr.com or visit <https://www.parkerandmconkie.com/blog/justice-christine-durham-joins-petito-familys-legal-team-in-utah>.

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