

ORIGINAL

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF OHIO

09-1661

STATE OF OHIO

Appellee

-vs-

MAXWELL WHITE

Appellant

* ON APPEAL FROM THE ASHLAND
* COUNTY COURT OF APPEALS,
* FIFTH APPELLATE DISTRICT

*

* COURT OF APPEALS
* CASE NO. 07 COA 037
* 07 COA 038

*

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF JURISDICTION OF
APPELLANT, MAXWELL WHITE

NATHAN A. RAY
Reg. No. #0041570
137 South Main Street, Suite 201
Akron, Ohio 44308
330-253-7171

Attorney for Appellant

RAMONA FRANCESCONI ROGERS
Ashland County Prosecutor
307 Orange Street
Ashland, Ohio 44805

Attorney for Appellee

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**EXPLANATION OF WHY THIS CASE IS A CASE OF
PUBLIC OR GREAT GENERAL INTEREST AND
INVOLVES A SUBSTANTIAL CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTION**

This case presents a critical issue for those individuals who have been sentenced to death on or before March 23, 2005. The issue being whether they can once again be sentenced to death after a reviewing court has reversed the original death sentence. This issue is of critical importance as it involves the unconstitutionally retroactive application of a statute which would permit the death sentence to once again be imposed, despite the fact that at the time of the offense, the death sentence could not be imposed upon remand.

Ohio Revised Code § 2929.06 is the statute in Ohio which guides any resentencing in death penalty cases. While this statute has changed several times over the years since its original enactment, it is Mr. White's position that the law as it was in effect at the time of his original offense, January 19, 1996, should be controlling in his case. Specifically, as of that date, R.C. § 2929.06 only allowed for the resentencing of an individual whose death sentence had been reversed on appeal to 20 or 30 years to life imprisonment. The death sentence was not an option under the statute.

Effective October 16, 1996, R.C. § 2929.06 was amended. The statute was amended to permit the empanelling of a new jury upon remand when a reviewing court had reversed the death penalty. The jury could consider as a sentencing option the death penalty. The statute was silent as to its retroactive application.

Effective March 23, 2005, R.C. § 2929.06 was once again amended. This time the Ohio Legislature made the statute retroactive to October 19, 1981, the date of the original enactment of the death penalty in Ohio. This amendment permitted the empanelling of a jury to consider the death sentence as a sentencing alternative for any defendant whose death sentence had been

vacated on appeal. This amendment included those defendants who, at the time of their original offense, death was not a possible sentence upon remand where the original death sentence had been vacated.

The Court of Appeals decision reversed the trial court. The trial court had determined, after conducting a hearing on this matter, that R.C. § 2929.06, effective March 23, 2005, was unconstitutional under Article II, §28 of the Ohio Constitution, as it applied to Mr. White.

This case involves a substantial constitutional question. The decision of the court of appeals offends Ohio's Constitutional scheme by retroactively applying an amended statute to Mr. White. Specifically, the appellate courts decision violates Section 28, Article II, of the Ohio Constitution which states that "[t]he general assembly shall have no power to pass retroactive laws..." It also violates this Courts decisions in *Van Fossen v. Babcock & Wilcox Co.* (1988), 36 Ohio St.3d 100 and *Cincinnati v. Seasongood* (1889), 46 Ohio St. 296.

Contrary to this Courts holding in *Van Fossen v. Babcock & Wilcox Co.* (1988), 36 Ohio St.3d 100, the court of appeals interpretation of R.C. § 2929.06 was that it was not substantive in nature. This was incorrect. R.C. § 2929.06 is substantive in nature for several reasons. First and foremost, it imposes on Mr. White the burden of once again going through a jury proceeding where none existed before. A jury proceeding is a time consuming process which places a burden on all those involved. This would be especially true for a defendant in a death penalty case. The death penalty phase of a capital trial is not one where the defendant can simply sit back and hope that the state fails to meet its burden. Rather, a defendant facing the death penalty must actively attempt to defend himself against the imposition of a death sentence. In defending himself against the imposition of the death penalty, Mr. White would once again be forced to

present mitigating evidence as set forth in R.C. § 2929.04(B). Further, the change has attached a penalty which did not exist before, that being the death penalty.

The legislature in this case has created a jury trial where one did not exist before, and has created under this statute an enhanced penalty which did not exist before. The decision of the court of appeals, in determining that R.C. §2929.06 is applicable to Mr. White and that the state can seek the death penalty is unconstitutional as applied to Mr. White. It is requested that the decision of the court of appeals be reversed.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE AND FACTS

On January 25, 1996, Appellant Maxwell White was indicted by the Ashland County Grand Jury for offenses that occurred on January 19, 1996. Included in the indictment was a count of aggravated murder which contained a death penalty specification. On June 10, 1996, the guilt phase of Mr. White's trial commenced, with the jury returning a verdict of guilty on all counts, including the death penalty specifications, on June 19, 1996. On June 24, 1996, prior to the commencement of the sentencing phase of his trial, defense counsel requested that Mr. White be permitted a jury instruction as to life without parole, which was a sentencing option that the legislation had adopted and which was effective July 1, 1996. The prosecutor opposed this instruction and the trial court denied the request. On June 26, 1996 the penalty phase portion of the trial began. On June 29, 1996, the jury recommended a sentence of death for Mr. White. On July 12, 1996, the trial court imposed a sentence of death in this case.

On December 7, 2005, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed and remanded the sentence in Mr. White's case based on error at the *voir dire* in the original trial. On March 13, 2007, defense counsel filed with the trial court Motions A and B, both of which sought to prohibit the State from seeking the death penalty for Mr. White again. Both of the motions raised a number of issues, however, the trial court only ruled on only one issue raised by Mr. White. In its ruling the trial court found R.C. § 2929.06 to be unconstitutional under Article II, § 28 of the Ohio Constitution as it was to be applied retroactively to Mr. White.

The State appealed the trial court's ruling. On August 3, 2009, the Fifth District Court of Appeals reversed the decision of the trial court and held that the state could once again seek the death penalty against Mr. White. Mr. White now requests that this Court accept jurisdiction in this matter and reverse the decision of the appellate court.

ARGUMENT IN SUPPORT OF PROPOSITION OF LAW

PROPOSITION OF LAW NUMBER ONE

Retroactive application of O.R.C. § 2929.06 is unconstitutional.

As the legislature in this matter specifically determined that § 2929.06 was to apply retroactively, the question for this court then becomes whether the legislation was substantive or remedial. It is Mr. White's position that the legislation is substantive in nature and retroactive application is therefore unconstitutional under Article II, Section 28 of the Ohio Constitution and the decisions of this Court.

When evaluating retroactive laws, this Court has admonished that “[r]etroactive laws and retrospective application of laws have received the near universal distrust of civilizations.” *Van Fossen v. Babcock & Wilcox Co.* (1988), 36 Ohio St.3d 100, 104.¹ This distrust was also recognized when the Ohio Constitution was adopted, by setting forth at Section 28, Article II, that “[t]he general assembly shall have no power to pass retroactive laws...” In *Van Fossen*, supra, at 106, the Ohio Supreme Court, quoting *Cincinnati v. Seasingood* (1889), 46 Ohio St.296, 303, stated that “[u]nder the constitutional prohibition, the general assembly has no power to pass retroactive laws....Every statute which takes away or impairs vested rights acquired under existing laws, or creates a new obligation, imposes a new duty, or attaches a new disability, in respect to transactions or considerations already past, must be deemed retrospective or retroactive.”

¹ The United States Supreme Court has also recognized that retroactive laws are generally disliked. In *Landgraf v. USI Film Products* (1994), 511 U.S. 244, 265, the Court set forth that “...the presumption against retroactive legislation is deeply rooted in our jurisprudence, and embodies a legal doctrine centuries older than our Republic.”

If the legislature does pass a retroactive law, the question then becomes whether the law is substantive or remedial. A statute is “substantive” if it impairs or takes away vested rights, effects an accrued substantive right, imposed new or additional burdens, duties, obligation or liabilities as to a past transaction, or creates a new right. *Id.* at 107. Conversely, remedial laws are those effecting only the remedy provided, and include laws that merely substitute a new or more appropriate remedy for the enforcement of an existing right. *Id.* at 107. A purely remedial statute does not violate § 28, Article II of the Ohio Constitution, even if applied retroactively.

Some examples of decisions wherein this Court has found statutes to be substantive and therefore unconstitutionally retroactive include *Van Fossen v. Babcock & Wilcox Co.* and *Kunkle v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.* (1988), 36 Ohio St.3d 135. In *Van Fossen*, the new statute would impose “...a new, more difficult statutory restriction upon Appellee’s ability to bring the instant action. We therefore hold that this result constitutes a limitation, or denial of, a substantive right...” *Id.* at 109. In *Kunkle*, this Court noted that “[s]ince the new statute purports to create rights, duties and obligation, it is (to that extent) substantive law.” *Id.* at 138.

Van Fossen, supra at 107, determined that “[r]emedial laws are those affecting only the remedy provided. These include laws which merely substitute a new or more appropriate remedy for the enforcement of an existing right.” In *State v. Ferguson* (2008), 120 Ohio St.3d 7, which dealt with the question of whether amendments to Ohio’s sexual predator registration laws were constitutional, this Court determined that the statute was remedial in nature. One of the factors that the Court considered was that changes in the sexual predator laws were not an increased punishment.² For example, the *Ferguson* Court noted that “[w]e again noted the

²“As an initial matter, we observe that an offender’s classification as a sexual predator is a collateral consequence of the offender’s criminal acts rather than a form of punishment per se.” *State v. Ferguson* (2008), 120 Ohio St.3d 7, 15.

remedial nature of R.C. Chapter 2950 in *State v. Williams* (2000), 88 Ohio St.3d 513, 528, observing that the statute was ‘neither ‘criminal’, nor a statute that inflicts punishment.’” *Ferguson* at 14, (emphasis added). The *Ferguson* Court again addressed the punishment factor when it stated that, “Ohio retroactivity analysis does not prohibit all increased burdens; it prohibits only increased punishment.” (citations omitted). *Ferguson* at 16, (emphasis added).

In its decision, the court of appeals relied upon *Ring v. Arizona* (2002), 536 U.S. 584 and *Schriro v. Summerlin* (2004), 524 U.S. 348, for support by noting in its decision that Ring “did not alter the range of conduct Arizona law subjected to the death penalty”, but rather “altered the range of permissible methods for determining whether a defendant’s conduct is punishable by death, requiring that a jury rather than a judge find the essential facts bearing on punishment.” *State v. White*, Case No. 07-COA-037, p.10 (5th Dist. Ct. App., August 3, 2009), quoting *Schriro*, supra. The court of appeals reliance on these cases is misplaced. In *Ring*, the death penalty had always been an sentencing option. What was decided was that a jury, and not the judge, had to make the findings, otherwise it violated the Sixth Amendment to the United States Constitution. Here, at the time of the offense, death was not an option upon remand. It did not become an option until the legislature made R.C. § 2929.06 retroactive in 2005.

In this case, at the time of Mr. White’s original sentencing, the death penalty was not an option upon remand due to a sentencing phase error. In choosing to make death an option where it had not existed before, the Ohio Legislature has increased the punishment. To apply this change to R.C. § 2929.06 retroactively is unconstitutional.

CONCLUSION

Mr. White respectfully requests that this Court accept jurisdiction in this case and reverse the decision of the court of appeals and determine that R.C. § 2929.06, as applied retroactively to him, is unconstitutional under Article II, Section 28 of the Ohio Constitution.

Respectfully submitted,



NATHAN A. RAY #0041570
Attorney for Appellant
137 South Main Street, Suite 201
Akron, Ohio 44308
330-253-7171
330-253-7174 (fax)
burdon-merlitti@neo.rr.com

PROOF OF SERVICE

I certify that a copy of this Notice of Appeal was sent by regular U.S. Mail this 15th day of September, 2009, to Ramona Francesconi Rogers, Ashland County Prosecutor, 307 Orange Street, Ashland, Ohio 44805.



NATHAN A. RAY
Counsel of Record
Attorney for Maxwell White

COURT OF APPEALS
ASHLAND COUNTY, OHIO
FIFTH APPELLATE DISTRICT

2009 AUG -3 AM 11:35

APPELLATE CLERK OF COURTS
ASHLAND, OHIO

STATE OF OHIO

Plaintiff-Appellant

-vs-

MAXWELL D. WHITE, JR.

Defendant-Appellee

JUDGES:

Hon. Sheila G. Farmer, P.J.
Hon. W. Scott Gwin, J.
Hon. William B. Hoffman, J.

Case No. 07-COA-037;
07-COA-038

OPINION

CHARACTER OF PROCEEDING:

Appeal from the Ashland County Court of
Common Pleas, Case No. 96-CRI-07366

JUDGMENT:

Reversed and Remanded

DATE OF JUDGMENT ENTRY:

APPEARANCES:

For Plaintiff-Appellant

RAMONA ROGERS
Ashland County Prosecuting Attorney

By: PAUL LANGE
Assistant Prosecuting Attorney
307 Orange Street
Ashland, Ohio 44805

For Defendant-Appellee

DAVID BODIKER
Ohio Public Defender
STEPHEN P. HARDWICK
KELLY L. CULSHAW
Assistant Public Defender
8 East Long Street, 11th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

For Amicus Curae

MARC DANN
Ohio Attorney General
BRIAN J. LALIBERTE
HENRY G. APPEL
ZACHARY SWISHER
Assistant Attorneys General
30 East Broad Street 17th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

For Defendant-Appellee

NATHAN RAY
137 South Main Street, Suite 201
Akron, Ohio 44308

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7
2as
diker
y
pel

Hoffman, J.

{¶1} Plaintiff-appellant State of Ohio appeals the July 12, 2007 Judgment Entry entered by the Ashland County Court of Common Pleas, which found R.C. 2929.06, effective March 23, 2005, unconstitutional as applicable to defendant-appellee Maxwell D. White, Jr., and ordered Appellee be sentenced under the provisions of R.C. 2929.06, in effect as of January 19, 1996, the date of the offenses.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE¹

{¶2} On January 25, 1996, the Ashland County Grand Jury indicted Appellant on one count of aggravated murder with two death penalty specifications; one count of having weapons while under disability; and one count of abduction. Appellee appeared before the trial court on January 29, 1996, and entered a plea of not guilty to all counts and specifications contained within the Indictment. Following a jury trial, Appellee was convicted of all three counts and attendant specifications, and was sentenced to death. The Ohio Supreme Court affirmed Appellee's convictions and sentence. *State v. White*, 82 Ohio St.3d 16, 1998-Ohio-363. Appellee filed a petition for certiorari with the United States Supreme Court which was denied. *White v. Ohio* (1998) 525 U.S. 1057, 119 S.Ct. 623.

{¶3} On May 5, 1997, Appellee filed a petition for post-conviction relief pursuant to R.C. 2953.21. The trial court dismissed the petition via Judgment Entry filed August 18, 1997. Appellee appealed the dismissal to this Court which affirmed. *State*

¹ A thorough rendition of the facts underlying Appellee's conviction and sentence is set forth in *White v. Mitchell* (C.A. 6, 2005), 431 F3d 517.

v. White (August 7, 1998), Ashland App. No. 97COA01229. The Ohio Supreme Court denied jurisdiction. *State v. White* (1998) 84 Ohio St.3d 1445. Subsequently, Appellant filed an application to reopen his direct appeal with the Ohio Supreme Court. The Ohio Supreme Court denied the application on August 2, 2000. *State v. White* (2000) 89 Ohio St.3d 1467. After exhausting all of his State court remedies, Appellee filed a petition for writ of habeas corpus in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio. Following the denial of the petition by the District Court, Appellee filed an appeal in the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. The Sixth Circuit affirmed the District Court's denial of Appellee's petition with respect to the issues raised regarding his convictions, but reversed the decision and remanded the matter to the District Court with instructions to issue a writ of habeas corpus vacating Appellee's death sentence. *White v. Mitchell* (Sixth Circuit 2005), 431 F3d 517.

{¶14} After the District Court's granted Appellee's writ of habeas corpus which vacated his death sentence, the State filed a motion with the trial court requesting the matter be scheduled for a new penalty phase proceeding. Appellee filed a motion to prohibit the State from seeking the death penalty. Therein, Appellee asserted R.C. 2929.06, in effect at the time of the offense and his trial, did not permit the State to seek the death penalty a second time. Appellee further argued the application of current R.C. 2929.06 violated his constitutional right to due process and the constitutional prohibition against ex post facto laws. The State filed a memorandum in opposition thereto. On June 25, 2007, the trial court conducted a hearing on Appellee's motion. Via Judgment Entry filed July 12, 2007, the trial court sustained Appellee's motion, finding current R.C. 2929.06 was unconstitutional as applied to Appellee.

{¶5} It is from this judgment entry the State appeals, raising as its sole assignment of error:

{¶6} "I. THE TRIAL COURT ERRED IN HOLDING THE AMENDMENT TO OHIO REVISED CODE 2929.06 THAT WOULD ALLOW DEATH TO BE CONSIDERED AS A POSSIBLE PENALTY AT A RESENTENCING HEARING UNCONSTITUTIONAL AS APPLIED TO APPELLEE, UNDER THE OHIO CONSTITUTION ARTICLE II, SECTION 28."

I

{¶7} Herein, the State contends the trial court erred in finding the current version of R.C. 2929.06 to be unconstitutional as applied to Appellee, thereby prohibiting the State from seeking the death penalty again.

{¶8} Section 28, Article II of the Ohio Constitution prohibits the General Assembly from passing retroactive laws and protects vested rights from new legislative encroachments. *Vogel v. Wells* (1991), 57 Ohio St.3d 91, 99, 566 N.E.2d 154, 162. The retroactivity clause nullifies new laws which "reach back and create new burdens, new duties, new obligations, or new liabilities not existing at the time [the statute becomes effective]." *Miller v. Hixson* (1901), 64 Ohio St. 39, 51, 59 N.E. 749, 752.

{¶9} The Ohio Supreme Court has articulated the procedure this Court should follow in order to determine when a law is *unconstitutionally* retroactive. *State v. Cook* (1998), 83 Ohio St.3d 404, 410, 700 N.E.2d 570, 576, citing *Van Fossen v. Babcock & Wilcox Co.* (1988), 36 Ohio St.3d 100, 522 N.E.2d 489, paragraph one of the syllabus. We emphasize the phrase "*unconstitutionally* retroactive" to confirm that retroactivity itself is not always forbidden by Ohio law. Although the language of Section 28, Article II

of the Ohio Constitution provides the General Assembly “shall have no power to pass retroactive laws,” Ohio courts have long recognized there is a crucial distinction between statutes which merely apply retroactively (or “retrospectively”) and those that do so in a manner which offends our Constitution. See, e.g., *Rairden v. Holden* (1864), 15 Ohio St. 207, 210-211; *State v. Cook*, supra, at 410. We also note the words “retroactive” and “retrospective” have been used interchangeably in the constitutional analysis for more than a century. *Id.* Both terms describe a law which is “made to affect acts or facts occurring, or rights accruing, before it came into force.” Black’s Law Dictionary (6 Ed.1990) 1317.

{¶10} The test for unconstitutional retroactivity requires this Court first to determine whether the General Assembly expressly intended the statute to apply retroactively. R.C. 1.48; *State v. Cook*, supra at 410, citing *Van Fossen*, supra. If such intent is found, this Court then determines whether the statute is substantive, rendering it *unconstitutionally retroactive*, as opposed to merely remedial. *Cook* supra, at 410-411.

{¶11} The current version of R.C. 2929.06, which became effective March 23, 2005, provides, in pertinent part:

{¶12} “(B) Whenever any court of this state or any federal court sets aside, nullifies, or vacates a sentence of death imposed upon an offender because of error that occurred in the sentencing phase of the trial and if division (A) of this section does not apply, the trial court that sentenced the offender shall conduct a new hearing to resentence the offender. If the offender was tried by a jury, the trial court shall impanel a new jury for the hearing. * * * At the hearing, the court or panel shall follow the procedure set forth in division (D) of section 2929.03 of the Revised Code in

determining whether to impose upon the offender a sentence of death, a sentence of life imprisonment, or an indefinite term consisting of a minimum term of thirty years and a maximum term of life imprisonment. * * *

{¶13} The trial court in the case sub judice found, and we agree, the current version of R.C. 2929.06 clearly expresses the Ohio Legislature's intent the statute be applied retroactively. See, R.C. 2929.06(E). Having found such intent, we must now determine whether R.C. 2929.06 is remedial or substantive.

{¶14} Remedial legislation affects "the methods and procedure by which rights are recognized, protected and enforced, not * * * the rights themselves." *Weil v. Taxicabs of Cincinnati, Inc.* (1942), 139 Ohio St. 198, 205. Furthermore, as stated in *Bielat v. Bielat*, 87 Ohio St.3d at 354, 2000-Ohio-451, remedial laws " 'merely substitute a new or more appropriate remedy for the enforcement of an existing right.' " *Id.*, quoting *Cook*, supra at 411. A purely remedial statute does not violate Section 28, Article II of the Ohio Constitution, even if applied retroactively. *Van Fossen*, supra at 107. And, while the retroactive application of a remedial statute may have the occasional substantive effect, generally laws which relate to procedures are ordinarily remedial in nature. *Id.*, supra at 107-108, citing *Wellston Iron Furnace Co. v. Rinehart* (1923), 108 Ohio St. 117, 140 N.E. 623, paragraph one of the syllabus.

{¶15} Conversely, a statute is "substantive" if it impairs or takes away vested rights, affects an accrued substantive right, imposes new or additional burdens, duties, obligation, or liabilities as to a past transaction, or creates a new right. *Van Fossen*, supra at 107.

{¶16} In *State ex rel. Matz v. Brown* (1988), 37 Ohio St.3d 279, 281, the Ohio Supreme Court explained "a later enactment will not burden or attach a new disability to a past transaction or consideration in the constitutional sense, unless the past transaction or consideration, if it did not create a vested right, created at least a reasonable expectation of finality." *Id.* at 281.

{¶17} The trial court found current R.C. 2929.06 was unconstitutional as applied to Appellee because the statute created a right which did not exist under the version of R.C. 2929.06, in effect at the time Appellee committed the offenses. The trial court also found under former R.C. 2929.06 there was no existing right to impanel a new jury for death penalty resentencing. The trial court added the creation of that right resulted in a burden being placed upon Appellee to defend a second death penalty proceeding when no such obligation existed under the prior law. Having made such findings, the trial court ordered Appellee be sentenced under the provisions of R.C. 2929.06, in effect as of January 19, 1996, the date of the offenses, thereby, precluding the State from seeking the death penalty again. We respectfully disagree with the trial court's findings and order.

{¶18} R.C. 2929.06, in effect as of the date Appellee committed the offenses, provided:

{¶19} "If the sentence of death that is imposed upon an offender is vacated upon appeal because the court of appeals, in a case in which a sentence of death was imposed for an offense committed before January 1, 1995, or the supreme court, in cases in which the supreme court reviews the sentence upon appeal, could not affirm the sentence of death under the standards imposed by section 2929.05 of the Revised

Code, is vacated upon appeal for the sole reason that the statutory procedure for imposing the sentence of death that is set forth in sections 2929.03 and 2929.04 of the Revised Code is unconstitutional, or is vacated pursuant to division (C) of section 2929.05 of the Revised Code, the trial court that sentenced the offender shall conduct a hearing to resentence the offender. At the resentencing hearing, the court shall sentence the offender to life imprisonment with parole eligibility after serving twenty full years of imprisonment or to life imprisonment with parole eligibility after serving thirty full years of imprisonment.”

{¶20} Appellee argues, pursuant to R.C. 2929.06, in effect at the time he committed the offenses, the trial court’s only options for resentencing are life imprisonment with parole eligibility after serving twenty full years of imprisonment, or life imprisonment with parole after serving thirty full years of imprisonment. Although R.C. 2929.06, in effect at the time Appellee committed the offenses, permitted a trial court to resentence an offender whose death sentence had been vacated to only life imprisonment, such sentence was not available to Appellee as his death sentence was not vacated under one of the three situations set forth in the statute. Under former R.C. 2929.06, a trial court resentencing an offender whose death sentence had been vacated was required to impose a life sentence if the death sentence was vacated because 1) the court of appeals or the supreme court could not affirm the death sentence under the standards imposed by R.C. 2929.05; or 2) the death sentence was vacated for the sole reason the statutory procedure for imposing the sentence was unconstitutional; or 3) the

death sentence was vacated pursuant to R.C. 2929.05(C). Appellee's sentence was not vacated based upon the limited circumstances set forth in former R.C. 2929.06.²

{¶21} Accordingly, we find Appellee did not have the right not to face the death penalty again under the former statute.

{¶22} Assuming, arguendo, such right does apply to Appellee, we find while the error causing the death penalty to be vacated occurred at trial, the right to resentencing did not vest until the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals vacated his sentence in 2007. Thus, we do not find current R.C. 2929.06 to be a substantive law as it did not impair or deprive Appellee of a vested right at the time it was enacted. Nonetheless, current R.C. 2929.06 may be a substantive law if it creates a new right or imposes additional burdens. We believe current R.C. 2929.06 did not create a new right or impose a new burden upon Appellee. Appellee always had a right to have the death penalty determined by a jury and always had the obligation to defend against it. We do not believe the fact current R.C. 2929.06 mandates the impaneling of a new jury renders substantive what is otherwise procedural.

² The Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals did not vacate Appellee's sentence based upon former R.C. 2929.05, which required an appellate court or the supreme court to "review and independently weigh all of the facts and other evidence * * * in the record * * * and consider the offense and the offender to determine whether the aggravating circumstances * * * outweigh the mitigating factors in the case and whether the sentence of death is appropriate." Nor did the Sixth Circuit vacate Appellee's death sentence upon a finding the statutory procedure for imposition of such sentence pursuant to former R.C. 2929.03, which addressed the proof of relevant factors and alternative sentences, or former R.C. 2929.04, which listed the criteria for imposing death or imprisonment, were unconstitutional. Further, the Sixth Circuit did not vacate Appellee's sentence pursuant to former R.C. 2929.05(C), upon a finding he was not 18 years of age or older.

{¶23} In *Ring v. Arizona* (2002), 536 U.S. 584, 122 S.Ct. 2428, 153 L.Ed. 2nd 556, the United States Supreme Court held a sentencing judge sitting without a jury, could not find an aggravating circumstance necessary to impose the death penalty because the Sixth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution required aggravated circumstances be found by a jury. *Id.* at 609. Subsequently, the United States Supreme Court explained the holding in *Ring* “did not alter the range of conduct Arizona law subjected to the death penalty”, but rather “altered the range of permissible methods for determining whether a defendant’s conduct is punishable by death, requiring that a jury rather than a judge find the essential facts bearing on punishment.” *Schriro v. Summerlin* (2004) 542 U.S. 348, 353, 124 S.Ct. 2519, 159 L.Ed. 2nd 442. The *Schriro* Court noted “*Ring*’s holding is properly classified as procedural.” *Id.*

{¶24} We find the situation herein is similar to the situation in *Ring*. The amendment to R.C. 2929.06, mandating the impaneling of a new jury for death penalty resentencing, does not alter the range of conduct Ohio law subjects to the death penalty, but instead alters the range of permissible methods for determining whether a defendant’s conduct is punishable by death, requiring a new jury rather than the original jury make the determination of whether a defendant should be resentenced to death. “Rules that allocate decision making authority in this fashion are prototypical procedural rules.” *Id.* Because we find current R.C. 2929.06 to be procedural, we conclude it does not violate the Ohio Constitution against retroactive application of laws. We further find the State may seek the death penalty again during the resentencing of Appellee.

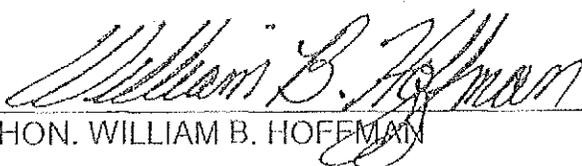
{¶25} The State’s sole assignment of error is sustained.

{¶26} The judgment of the Ashland County Court of Common Pleas is reversed and the matter remanded for further proceedings consistent with this opinion and the law.

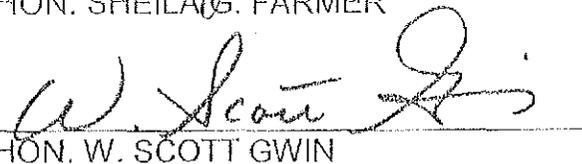
By: Hoffman, J.

Farmer, P.J. and

Gwin, J. concur


HON. WILLIAM B. HOFFMAN


HON. SHEILA G. FARMER


HON. W. SCOTT GWIN

IN THE COURT OF APPEALS FOR ASHLAND COUNTY, OHIO
FIFTH APPELLATE DISTRICT

2009 AUG -3 AM 11:35

ANGELA M. HAN
CLERK OF COURTS
ASHLAND, OHIO

STATE OF OHIO
Plaintiff-Appellant

-vs-

MAXWELL D. WHITE, JR.
Defendant-Appellee

JUDGMENT ENTRY

Case No. 07-COA-037;
07-COA-038

For the reasons stated in our accompanying Memorandum-Opinion, the judgment of the Ashland County Court of Common Pleas is reversed and the matter remanded for further proceedings consistent with our opinion and the law. Costs assessed to Appellee.

William B. Hoffman
HON. WILLIAM B. HOFFMAN

Sheila G. Farmer
HON. SHEILA G. FARMER

W. Scott Gwin
HON. W. SCOTT GWIN

app.
ppas
diker
y
ppel
A

JM # CA-1
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