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Cleveland – For 18 months Cuyahoga County prosecutors have been trying to move forward with the trial of suspected serial killer Anthony Sowell. His lawyers have been attempting to prolong this trial with new requests.

Sowell, 51, is charged with multiple counts of aggravated murder, kidnapping, abusing a corpse and tampering with evidence in the deaths of 11 women whose bodies were found in and around his Imperial Avenue home. His trial is scheduled to begin June 6, where he faces the death penalty if convicted.

Judge Dick Ambrose denied putting the trial off, despite Sowell’s lawyers' insistence that they and their experts need four more months to properly prepare his defense.

Ambrose refused to accept that the added allegation or any other factor would move him to postpone the trial which already has been delayed three times.

The judge admonished Sowell's attorneys, Rufus Sims and John Parker, saying that the case which has cost taxpayers more money than any in the county's history should have been their top priority.

Parker and Sims argued in a motion filed that some of their expert witnesses are busy working on other cases and need more time to analyze information or write their reports.

A crime scene expert was hired to analyze photos taken at Sowell's home to determine if evidence was properly preserved, Parker explained during the hearing. The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections is yet to provide nearly 1,000 pages of records on Sowell.

Recently it was found out that a sample of Sowell's DNA collected while he was in prison in the 1990s was never entered into a massive national database used to identify criminals and link them to crimes.

This possible link may have saved the Imperial Ave. victims had his DNA been in the system. The part that’s puzzling is state officials don't know where that sample is today.

The sample was sent in an envelope addressed to a private lab in Virginia but was never returned to the state, said Eve Mueller, a spokeswoman for Attorney General Mike DeWine.

The Ohio Attorney General's Office will no longer send DNA samples to private labs in hopes of avoiding mistakes like the one that allowed Sowell's DNA sample to go missing without being entered into a national database.

Sowell's DNA samples along with thousands of others taken from inmates were sent through U.S. Mail to the lab in northern Virginia, in accordance with prison policy. The packages could not be tracked to ensure they made it to the lab or that they were returned to the state.

The Attorney General's office initially said they thought those samples were all from inmates, but now say they were mostly from other agencies, such as the Adult Parole Authority, that collected DNA from felons.

The Cleveland Heights woman , whose 2009 rape case that was shelved by Cleveland Heights police, persisted in reporting the attack and now is expected to testify against Sowell.

DNA evidence collected in the Cleveland Heights case was never tested by Cleveland Heights police. The woman, upon recognizing Sowell in the news, reported the rape again in January, this time to
Cleveland
police. Detectives alerted county prosecutors, who retrieved the rape kit and tested it to find that the DNA profile matches Sowell.

The woman who did not want to be identified said she hopes that the stories of survivors might encourage other unknown victims to break their silence too. "We have to speak out," she said. "There must be a reason why some of us were given a second chance. Because otherwise, none of us were supposed to leave the place where he had us."

After Sowell’s arrest, other victims have came forth and said he had or attempted to rape them. The latest victim to step forward is a South Carolina woman who recently filed a report at the East Cleveland Police Department.

The report stated that sometime during October of 1988, a man named "Tone," who she met at a favorite hangout spot, dragged her behind an abandoned building, choked her with his bare hands and raped her.

This woman has joined the growing number of those who say they survived his brutal assault some years ago. Judge Ambrose also denied prosecutors' motion asking the court to unseal defense funding requests that were filed for Ambrose to review without prosecutors' scrutiny.

The court already has approved almost $600,000 in expenses for Sowell's defense.