

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH
CAROLINA

Findley v. Durham

Findley · No. 1:25-cv-12798-RMG · Decided November 24, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the District of South Carolina adopted the Magistrate Judge’s Report and Recommendation and dismissed Darrell Allen Findley’s 28 U.S.C. § 2241 petition without prejudice. The court held that Younger abstention barred federal interference with the petitioner’s ongoing state criminal proceedings and denied a certificate of appealability.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the District of South Carolina
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Richard Mark Gergel
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the District of South Carolina
DECIDED	November 24, 2025
DOCKET	1:25-cv-12798-RMG
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	A pro se pretrial detainee petitioned under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 for federal habeas relief seeking dismissal of pending South Carolina criminal charges. The Magistrate Judge recommended dismissal without prejudice under Younger abstention, and the District Court reviewed the petitioner’s objections, adopted the Report and Recommendation, dismissed the petition without prejudice, and denied a certificate of appealability.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The District Court independently determines those portions of a magistrate judge’s Report and Recommendation to which specific objections are made and may accept, reject, or modify the recommendation in whole or in part. The court reviews the legal basis for Younger abstention and considers whether a certificate of appealability is warranted.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential district court order
PARTIES	Darrell Allen Findley v. Kevin Durham

TOPICS

federal habeas corpus

criminal procedure

post-conviction relief

PRACTICE AREAS

federal habeas corpus

criminal procedure

state-federal abstention

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Younger abstention required dismissal of a § 2241 petition seeking federal interference with pending state criminal proceedings.
2. Whether the petitioner's objections established extraordinary circumstances, including the absence of an adequate state remedy and irreparable injury, sufficient to overcome Younger abstention.
3. Whether the petitioner was entitled to a certificate of appealability.

HOLDINGS

1. The federal court must abstain from interfering with the petitioner's pending state criminal proceedings because ongoing state judicial proceedings implicate important state interests and provide an adequate opportunity to raise federal claims.
2. The petitioner did not establish extraordinary circumstances warranting an exception to Younger abstention.
3. A certificate of appealability was denied because reasonable jurists would not find debatable the court's assessment that the petitioner's grounds were procedurally barred and that no exception applied.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"It is well settled that a federal court should not interfere with pending state court proceedings when "(1) there are ongoing state judicial proceedings; (2) the proceedings implicate important state interests; and (3) there is an adequate opportunity to raise federal claims in the state proceedings." (at 2)

"For the foregoing reasons, the R & R of the Magistrate Judge (Dkt. No. 9) is ADOPTED as the order of the Court, and Petitioner's Petition (Dkt. No. 1) is DISMISSED WITHOUT PREJUDICE and without requiring Respondent to file a return." (at 3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Petitioner Darrell Allen Findley was a pretrial detainee at the Pickens County Detention Center facing pending South Carolina charges of assault and battery of a high and aggravated nature. Proceeding pro se, he sought federal habeas relief under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 to dismiss the state charges and alleged defects in the state indictment and proceedings. He asserted in his objections that he had raised various issues in state court without success, but did not identify facts establishing extraordinary circumstances warranting federal interference.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Findley filed a § 2241 petition challenging pending state assault-and-battery charges and alleged deficiencies in the state indictment and proceedings. The Magistrate Judge recommended dismissal without prejudice without requiring the respondent to file a return. After Findley objected, the District Court conducted de novo review of the challenged portions, adopted the Report and Recommendation, dismissed the petition without prejudice, and denied a certificate of appealability.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- *Younger v. Harris*, 401 U.S. 37 (1971)
- *Mathews v. Weber*, 423 U.S. 261 (1976)
- *United States v. George*, 971 F.2d 1113, 1118 (4th Cir. 1992)
- *Doe v. Chao*, 306 F.3d 170, 183 & n.9 (4th Cir. 2002)
- *Caldwell v. Jackson*, 831 F. Supp. 2d 911, 914 (M.D.N.C. 2010)
- *Martin Marietta Corp. v. Maryland Commission on Human Relations*, 38 F.3d 1392, 1396 (4th Cir. 1994)
- *Miller-El v. Cockrell*, 537 U.S. 322, 336 (2003)
- *Slack v. McDaniel*, 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000)
- *Rose v. Lee*, 252 F.3d 676, 683 (4th Cir. 2001)

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