



## Justice for Victims- You Are My Fight Song!

Geraldine (Geri) Williams  
October 22, 1923 – January 13, 1990

**We Love you Mom**

**Goal: Sentencing Imposed Without Reduction by Diminution Credits on Crimes of Violence and Repeated Offenders**

### Brief Background

On January 13, 1990, our 67-year-old, 110lb. mom, Geraldine Williams was murdered in her Suitland Maryland home, where she was left to bleed out on her bed, where she was found with: **The pillow used to suffocate her was left across her face.** The police report stated her **throat had been cut and the knife left plunged in the side of her neck. Over 30 stabbed wounds were noted; the bedroom and other areas in her home had been vandalized.**

In **2005**, in another state, on a B&E charge, Michael L. Johnson was arrested and as he was being **booked**, his DNA was flagged on the system's **Cold Hit** list as a match and perpetrator of our mother's murder in **1990**, here in Maryland. We would learn Johnson had a history of drug use and priors of B&E's throughout his life.

Approximately **17 years** after our mom's murder, upon Johnson's completion and release of his 2yrs. incarceration for the out of state offenses, Johnson was arrested and transported back to Maryland, where he was booked and incarcerated until his trial for her murder and B&E.

We were informed there would **not be a trial**, just a sentencing hearing in front of the judge on **six charges that included: felony first degree murder, and five charges of B&E including robbery with intent.** This was because Johnson accepted Maryland's State's Attorney's **Afford Plea offer.** We also learned he had been **given credit** for time he'd just served and credits earned from his **incarceration in the other state.**

Along with the **Alford plea** Johnson's sentence was **reduced from a LIFE sentence, to 40 years,** with, the privilege of **parole** after **serving 50% (2025),** of his original sentence. **Diminution Credits was not mentioned** to us during the hearing.

### Diminution Credits

In early spring of 2015, we received notice that Michael Lamont Johnson has been scheduled for a parole hearing after only **serving less than 10 years of his sentence.** When inquiring as to why he was coming up for a parole hearing so early, we then learned of – **Diminution Credits,** and, credit for prior time served.

These are credits awarded for: good behavior, work services, education, and other voluntary projects offered to reduced time served on their sentence. This part of the system is contrary to the law which states: **a percent of a sentence must be served before parole on major violent crimes.**

**Diminution Credits applied towards reducing time served. Inmates are also given a certain amount of credits once they initially enter their facility. During incarceration, credits are awarded for behavior, education/skill training classes, and work projects. A total up to 20 days per month can be earned to reduce their physical time served; which is against the law which states a certain amount of time to served before they come up for a parole hearing.**

### **Diminution Credits and Offenders**

My mother's offender's record indicated years of crimes and court affiliations relating to B&E and drugs; which he advanced her B&E to include "*with the intent*", and, committed his first murder - "***felony first degree murder***".

He is a major offender who went from one incarceration from one state, directly to being incarcerated in another state (Maryland). Dim Credits should not have been imposed. It is an insult to the act of "Equal & Fair" justice for the victims and their love ones. To be inform

I am here to seek for your support and vote in **elimination of Dim Credits and Pleas** which advances offenders of crimes of violence early release. Parole, although I feel should **not** be warranted for such horrific crimes - but since it is, it should be more than sufficient leniency as to whether or not the offender get to return to society, before serving their full term.

Additionally, parole hearings are emotionally stressful on victim's family members as they re-live the pain, anger and loss from the tragedy. To be informed time is being reduce due to **"Pleas - Diminution Credits"** in cases of heinous major crimes of violence before the law mandates, is an insult to the victim and the family. It does **NOT** represent **"Equal & Fair" Justice**.

Please approve this bill that all offenders of major crimes of violence, must serve, the mandated sentence impose by law, without reduction by Diminution Credits or other modifications under a plea or otherwise.

Thank you,

Linda Duncan