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RE: Letter of Support, SB 782

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept this letter of support for SB 782.

On the afternoon of Thursday, June 9, 2022, as I was starting a long-awaited vacation with my grandchildren, I received a phone call that changed my life forever.

I was told that my son, Joshua Wallace and 2 of his coworkers had been murdered in cold blood at Columbia Machine earlier that day by 23 year old Joseph Esquivel. I would later find out that my son had been shot 9 times. Mr. Esquivel also shot Brandon Michael and a police officer who survived.

Not only were we left to deal with the senseless deaths of our loved ones, we had to make sure their killer was held accountable. I had faith in our legal system, that surely someone who committed such a crime would be locked away forever, and we could focus on grieving and healing.

My misplaced faith in the Maryland justice system was wiped away when, on November 17, 2022, we were informed by Christopher McCormack, one of the prosecutors on the case, that a Not Criminally Responsible Plea was being entered. We were also informed that we could not appeal this decision and that their hands were essentially tied. We were told that Mr. Esquivel would be placed in a mental institution until he was determined not to be a threat to himself or others.

We were told we would be given a chance to give a Victim Impact Statement, but it wasn't going to change anything. Mr. McCormack told us if we were unhappy with this decision, we should reach out to our state lawmakers.

I would like to thank Angie Frey for reaching out to everyone she could find, and for Senator Paul Corderman for responding.

Senate Bill 782 will allow the mentally ill to receive the treatment they need while eliminating the annual review for release.

We have already been given a life sentence of having to live without our loved ones who were taken from us by Mr. Esquivel, but we are now sentenced to carry this trauma and revisit it every time he gets his yearly review for release. The idea that he could one day walk freely among us is unimaginable to me. I believe you would feel the same way if this had happened to you.

When Joshua, Mark and CJ went to work that Thursday morning, they all had plans for the weekend, and dreams for their future. Please do not allow their needlessly shortened lives to be in vain.

Vote yes for this bill, keep killers where they belong, and spare victim's families a lifetime of trauma having to spend the rest of our lives fighting for the justice they were denied.

Thank you,

*Tammy M Roberts*

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