

Good afternoon to the Connecticut Sentencing Commission: the Honorable Joseph M. Shortall, Judicial Branch, vice chair by the OPM Under Secretary Mike Lawlor, Executive Branch, and Andrew J. Clark, Acting Executive Director, Central Connecticut State University

My name is Pam Guilbeault and I live in Southington. I am testifying regarding the Reconsideration of Juvenile Sentences Proposal. I do not support this proposal in the case of violent crimes.

I want to tell you about my son Eric. Eric was having problems growing up and been in some trouble but was turning his life around. He'd just been hired by Whole Foods in Cheshire and things seemed to be going in a better direction.

In July of 2006 he rented an apartment in Waterbury, he was 19 years old at the time. The reason he rented it was because he had promised a friend of his that he would take care of his friend's 16 year old brother. Alex was just being released from jail after robbing a man and he had nowhere to go. Eric bought Alex some clothes, provided food and a place to live. One night in the beginning of September Eric came home from work and found Alex and a few women that he didn't know in his apartment smoking crack cocaine. Eric wanted nothing to do with hard drugs was furious and threw them all out but punched Alex giving him a black eye and told Alex he couldn't live there anymore.

Two weeks later Alex, age 16, Kenneth, age 17, who had just been released early from jail after stabbing someone, and Michael, age 20, went to my son's apartment to rob him. When Eric answered the door they pushed their way in and the 17 year old fired a shot over Eric's head to show him they were serious. They ordered him lie down on his stomach on his kitchen floor with his hands over his head while the 20 year old was screaming at him and holding him down. The other two ransacked the apartment looking for money and marijuana. During this entire time my son was pleading for his life screaming, "take what you want, don't shoot me, don't kill me, don't kill me, don't kill me!". Alex found a gun and I quote, "I thought about how Eric punched me in the face and about how a couple of weeks earlier he was disrespecting me, I

was mad at Eric because I felt like he disrespected me and looked at me different". He then stood over him, pointed the gun at my son's forehead and pulled the trigger. After he executed him they ran out of the apartment, and then tried to steal his car. After two days no one had discovered the body yet so they went back into the apartment to see what else they could steal with Eric laying dead on his own kitchen floor.

Not only did my son die that day but his family and friends that loved him will never be the same, part of us died that day too.

Alex stated many times that when no one else would help him, Eric was the only one that would. While being sentenced Alex was laughing and making remarks during and after reading our Victim Impact Statements. The state's attorney reported to the newspaper that this was one of the cruelest things he'd ever seen. We were told by the lawyers that he had no remorse. We have heard that he writes letters stating he still has no remorse and he is now 22 years old.

All three of them plea bargained to lengthy sentences with no chance of parole.

I am not a vengeful person; I do hope they have opportunities for education and take advantage of programs while being incarcerated. But I do feel that they have to take responsibility for what they did.

Under the Juvenile Sentence Reconsideration Proposal it states that, and I quote, "because juveniles have lessened culpability, they are less deserving of the most severe punishments".

So I ask myself and this Committee, Why would they be let out early? Oh, because two of them were under 18 when they did this heinous act? Does a 16 or 17 year old not know that murdering someone is wrong? Do they have no need to control their anger? Do they not have to take any accountability for their actions?

I keep thinking that "children" are able to get their driver's license in the state of Connecticut at the age of 16. Does

that mean that they don't have to take responsibility for their actions, that they can cause harm to someone while driving because they're mad at them or because they are under the age of 18? I certainly hope not.

I'd like to thank the Committee for allowing me to present my viewpoint and urge exclude violent crimes in the Juvenile Sentence Reconsideration Proposal.

Respectfully,
Pam Guilbeault
11/29/12