

November 20, 2019

Honorable Laurie A. White  
Orleans Criminal District Court, Section A  
2700 Tulane Avenue  
1st Floor, Courtroom #3  
New Orleans, LA 70119  
SectionA@criminalcourt.org

Re: Victims' Request for Reduction of Tashonty Toney's Sentence

Dear Judge White,

We want to share our sincere thanks for your careful, victim-centered handling of the Tashonty Toney case. It was clear and affirming in your concluding remarks that you heard us; that you understood the exquisite beauty and promise of the lives that we lost--David Hynes and Sharree Walls--and the gravity of the lasting physical and emotional damage resulting from Mr. Toney's horrific actions. However, we write to you today to offer insight into the impact that the 90-year sentence has had on us--a number of the victims in this case--and to respectfully entreat you to reduce the number of years that Mr. Toney will serve behind bars.

We anticipated some level of closure with the conclusion of the trial and sentencing. It is, therefore, with regret that we share that the maximum sentence given to Mr. Toney has had the opposite effect on us. Since the sentence was rendered, rather than enabling us to move forward and set this chapter behind us, we have felt a pang in our stomachs and sense of apprehension for what we feel is an excessive sentence in light of several mitigating factors: Mr. Toney's decision to plead guilty, his demonstration of remorse, his commitment to his family, and our belief that without a driver's license, Mr. Toney does not pose a lasting threat to society.

We do not wish to continue thinking about this man who has caused us untold pain. Yet this feeling of involuntary pity, the weight of having had a hand in denying this man any possibility of future freedom, and the terrible sense of obligation to now come to his aid is salt on already open wounds. While we respect that sentencing is at your discretion, we want you to know that we, victims of Mr. Toney's actions, want his sentence to be reduced, so we might move forward with clear spirits and attempt to never think of this man again.