

Honorable Steve Cooley, DA of Los Angeles,

This week, June 23, marks the 4th anniversary of the mysterious disappearance of my daughter,

Donna Jou www.donnajou.com

Speaking on behalf of Donna for our entire family and for the many others who so dearly loved her, our collective belief is that Donna has not received the justice she deserves as an alleged victim of such a heinous crime...

As you may recall from our private luncheon with you on January 22, 2008 and your email dated February 06, 2008, you promised to do whatever you could to bring justice for Donna and for those of us who dearly loved her. My request is simply to ask that you review the circumstances of this case and see if you draw a similar conclusion as have we---the true justice for Donna has not happened. As the head of a family that has been in a state of insufferable grief for 4 years, I am asking that your stated commitment to us that day be made manifest such that Donna finally receives the justice that she, like any other such victim, would be due.

Mr. Cooley, as you may know, John Steven Burgess, the convicted sex offender with a years of criminal record who was charged with Donna's disappearance, was sentenced to 5 years for his "stated" role in Donna's disappearance and, as alleged by Burgess, her subsequent death. After serving only 2 years in prison, this career sexual predator will soon be back on the streets and, undoubtedly, seeking out new prey. While we do not know whether Donna is dead or alive, we do know that Burgess is the custodian of that ultimate truth. As there has been neither body discovered nor anything else that would substantially support Burgess's statements, everything points to a scenario made up by Burgess to mitigate his culpability and to minimize any criminal sanctions imposed against him. Burgess's confession, what we clearly and strongly have always believed to be a "bogus confession" has resulted in Burgess being a free man soon while Donna's family and friends, after four long years, continue to cry out to the justice system for, well, justice.

Mr. Cooley, the fact that Burgess has been allowed to "con" our system of justice, allowing him to fabricate a story that would ensure his freedom in short order speaks not only to a certain cleverness on the part of a career criminal but, even more egregiously, it suggests a criminal justice system that seems totally out of whack, one that makes no sense. It speaks to a system ripe for being duped by career criminals, while simultaneously creating further casualties in the ranks of victims of crime and their loved ones. In this case, it is Donna who seemingly has been victimized twice, initially by John Steven Burgess and, then by the criminal justice system. How can this be? If I had not been a party to this, I would never have believed such a thing possible in America. Sadly, I now know differently.

Mr. Cooley, you may recall that no person has claimed to have seen my daughter dead or alive after midnight on June 23, 2007. After numerous professional search efforts conducted by different underwater expert teams, no evidence was recovered from the site where Burgess allegedly buried Donna's body. The system has recognized John Steven Burgess, the accused, as its only witness of repute. Burgess then, as the only proclaimed (and acknowledged by the court) source of information about Donna, has used his "sole source" status very smartly to avoid taking responsibility for Donna's disappearance and/or death and has used his special status to beat the criminal justice system into submission, that is submission to his lies.

It is our opinion that the system provided Burgess the opportunity to create a fictional, totally self-serving story about what happened to Donna. He likely could have created any story and the system would have accepted it. And that's exactly what happened here. Burgess will be free soon and we are all now his victims, including the criminal justice system that, in this case, fostered and maybe even encouraged such abuse from these shameless criminals. We feel let down by a criminal justice system that literally invites the accused to manipulate the system in a way that mocks it as being unfair and, most certainly, unjust.

Mr. Cooley, the only facts that back up the story Burgess has maintained about Donna are the "facts" he and his advisors decided to present to the court. There is not a shred of evidence to support the story Burgess relied upon which he knew would make him a free man in short order, that now being the case.

As a father of a beloved daughter whose fate is still unknown, it is impossible to watch this scenario played out in real life without asking the question - How can such a perversity of our justice system be allowed to stand? I know our system is better than this. It has to be if other Donna Jous are to be kept safe in the future from criminals such as Burgess. I don't know if you are a father but, regardless, I hope you have some sense of the outrage and frustration my family and I continue to feel and how strongly we plead to you today to find a way to bring true justice for Donna, a young woman who deserved the best but who, so far, has received the worst---first from a conscience-devoid felon then from a system that favors the accused over the abused.

Mr. Cooley, we appreciate everything you and your staff have done for us and for Donna and this letter in no way is meant to disregard or disrespect all the time and effort you and your department, specially Mr. Walgren have dedicated to Donna's case. We however feel that nothing has been surfaced in the criminal investigation or proceedings that would allow even the most casual observer of the case to think this case should have been closed. I have tried to present a justification as to why this case deserves further inquiry and investigation. I would respectfully ask that your department review this case once again and to formally reopen it so we can find out what really happened to my wonderful, precious 19 year-old daughter who continues to cry out to be heard.

Thank you so much for your time and your attention. Please contact me after your review and decision. Thank you again for everything you have done for Donna and our family.

Kind Regards,
Reza Jou

Respectfully,
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