

WE WILL NOT WALK AWAY

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Written By Don Williams:

The events that surrounded and followed my son Eric's murder by an inmate at USP Canaan in 2013 have led me and my wife down a path neither of us ever wanted to walk down. But the events I speak of left us no real choice. Here is an overview of the issues our family has had to deal with because of this tragedy.

1. **ALONE:** Eric was working alone in a housing unit of 125 High Security inmates when he was killed. Our family has fought for proper staffing for 11 years without success. We will continue and not let go of this until the BOP does something.
2. **UNARMED:** Eric was unarmed and had no means of protecting himself. As a direct result of his death, the Corrections Officers now have pepper spray. This commonsense bill took several congresses to finally get passed.
3. **FAILED SURVEILLANCE:** The whole attack went on for over eight minutes, and Eric lay there bleeding out for another 20 minutes before being discovered. This, in a high security penitentiary. Never have we received an explanation from the BOP that clearly explained this. Sadly, this whole issue resulted in another officer taking his own life.
4. **LACK OF CONSEQUENCES:** At the time he murdered Eric, inmate Jesse should have been in the SHU for violations. It appears pressure was being applied from certain political factions at that time to do away with the SHU or limit its use. This problem is a "sleeping tiger" and I will not let go of it.
5. **MORE LACK OF CONSEQUENCES:** A fellow inmate stepped up and brought Jesse a drink during the process of murdering Eric. Our family was told he did not commit a crime. Really? Complicity?
6. **LACK OF HONESTY:** Representatives from the BOP came to our house and told us that Jesse was a model prisoner and they were shocked at this behavior. That was a blatant lie. Jesse had a rap sheet a mile long of infractions. Yes, I will pursue transparency and accountability on the part of the BOP. To have blatantly lied to a family whose son was just murdered is not easy to forgive. Trust went out the window with that one.
7. **TRIAL DELAYED AND KILLER GOT A SECOND LIFE SENTENCE:** Our family experienced one delay after the next, were subject to all sorts of limitations as to what we could say in court, and it all resulted the killer, who was doing life, getting life. We were clearly revictimized in this process. My family will continue to fight for Victim's Rights because they are tossed aside in favor of the perpetrator of the crime.

It has been eleven years, I am up in age, but until this is fixed, WE WILL NOT WALK AWAY.

Don and Jean Williams, Eric's Parents