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Fifth Judicial Circuit of Florida

Serving Marion, Lake, Citrus, Sumter, Hernando Counties

June 26, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**State Attorney Announces the Filing of Criminal Charges
for the Shooting Death of Ajike Owens**

OCALA, FL - State Attorney, William "Bill" Gladson, announces the filing of criminal charges against Susan Lorincz for the death of Ajike Owens and makes the following statement. Lorincz has been charged with one count of manslaughter with a firearm and one count of assault. Lorincz faces up to 30 years in prison on the charges.

Lorincz is accused of shooting Ajike Owens through a door on June 2nd, 2023, killing Owens. The Marion County Sheriff's Office investigated the case and arrested the defendant, leading to the filing of these criminal charges. Lorincz is currently being held at the Marion County Jail.

In making the filing decision on this case, my office carefully examined the viability of both second degree murder and manslaughter with a firearm, both first degree felonies. In order to prove the crime of second degree murder, the State must prove beyond and to the exclusion of every reasonable doubt, the existence of a depraved mind toward the victim at the time of the killing. Depraved mind requires evidence of hatred, spite, ill will or evil intent toward the victim at the time of the killing. As deplorable as the defendant's actions were in this case, there is insufficient evidence to prove this specific and required element of second degree murder.

As is always true in criminal cases, failure to prove beyond a reasonable doubt even one element of a crime will result in a not guilty verdict. Given the facts in this case, aiming a firearm at the door, and pulling the trigger is legally insufficient to prove depraved mind. Case law has consistently held that extreme recklessness or impulsive overreactions are, in and of themselves, insufficient to prove second degree murder. One count of misdemeanor assault, one count of misdemeanor culpable negligence, and one count of misdemeanor battery were not filed. Sworn testimony provided by the victim's son after the arrest, indicated that the skate thrown by the defendant did not strike the child, a necessary element of the charge of battery. Sworn testimony was also provided by another child, as it relates to one of the accounts of assault, that he was not in fear which is a required element of assault. Accordingly, the legal requirements to establish the crimes of battery and assault cannot be met and those charges cannot be filed. The crime of misdemeanor culpable negligence was not filed because there is no evidence to establish that the defendant knew the child was with his mother when she shot the victim in this case.

I am aware of the desire of the family, and some community members, that the defendant be charged with second degree murder. My obligation as State Attorney is to follow the law in each

case that I prosecute. I did so in this case, and while some may not agree with that decision, I can assure you that the decision was thoughtful and made without consideration of any factors other than the specific facts of this terrible crime. Simply stated, my obligation is to follow the law. Understandably, emotions run high, particularly with senseless, violent crimes. However, I cannot allow any decision to be influenced by public sentiment, angry phone calls or further threats of violence, as I have received in this case. To allow that to happen would also be improper and a violation of my oath as a prosecutor and as a lawyer.

Since the night of the defendant's arrest in this case, I have indicated that I would be transparent in my decision-making process. Prior to making this decision, my office consulted with the victim's family, and their attorney. The defendant will be prosecuted for the offense of manslaughter with a firearm, a first degree felony punishable by up to 30 years in prison. My office will do all it can to seek justice for Ms. Owens and her family.

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