

To the members of the House State, Veterans and Military Affairs Committee member,

My name is Jessica Hanson. I reside in Houston, Texas and have lived here for the past 30 years. I have considered Colorado my second home for as long due to the fact that most of my family lives or has lived there. I am Jeanne Hanson-Colburn's youngest sister and one of Jesse James Hanson-Colburn's many aunts. I am writing to you to ask for your support (a yes vote) on SB 16-034, tampering with a deceased human body.

This bill is what I believe to be a critical and essential addition to the Colorado code of law. The current laws in Colorado do not address tampering with a deceased human body and tragically, people in Colorado are being murdered and the people responsible for taking another human life are not being held accountable for their actions and are literally getting away with murder.

The penalties for tampering with a human body need to reflect the very serious nature of the crime itself. When a person murders another and then conceals the body, destroys or alters any possible evidence that could have been discovered and collected by the police, this prevents the police and the courts from being able to determine if a murder has been committed and it makes it all but impossible to hold the guilty party accountable.

My nephew, Jesse James Hanson-Colburn was murdered on August 12, 2014 by Kevin Dale Maxwell in Pagosa Springs, Colorado. He had been reported missing by his mother Jeanne Hanson-Colburn later that same week. When my nephew's body was finally found in the San Juan river by some hikers some four days after he was murdered, the police were able to determine that my nephew Jesse was the victim of a homicide and not an accidental drowning that Maxwell attempted to stage.

During the time that my nephew Jesse was believed to be missing, Maxwell made a series, not one or two, but a series of premeditated, calculated, and intentionally cruel and heinous decisions to hide and destroy evidence and to obfuscate the truth of what he did to my beloved nephew Jesse. Maxwell showed total disregard for the safety of the 30 to 40 search and rescue volunteers, friends and loved ones of Jesse's by lying to them and the police when he was fully aware of the fact that Jesse had been dead for at least two days and that he (Maxwell) had dumped Jesse's body in the San Juan river just above the Navajo reservoir. Maxwell lied to my sister Jeanne when she called him and asked him directly if he had harmed Jesse. He spoke to Jeanne on Wednesday Aug. 13, a full day after he murdered Jesse.

I have stood by my sister and been witness to her heart breaking all over again as she was told by police, search and rescue, and the funeral home that she could not see her only child's body because it was so badly decomposed and ravaged by what was done to it. I sat with my sister as the Forensic Pathologist told her that her son Jesse's body was so badly decomposed, that he could not definitively tell her whether the rope that

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was found tied around Jesse's neck was placed there before or after he was murdered. The other end of the rope was tied to a canoe.

I sat with my sister as we read the final autopsy report of Jesse. I watched as she read in horror about how the almost four days of water and sun and other outdoor elements had so destroyed Jesse's body that he was badly bloated, his skin was darkened as if it was burned, bugs were present on him, his skin had begun to slip from his tissue, and his brain had begun to liquefy. The Forensic Pathologist was unable to do a complete examination of his brain because of the advanced decomposition.

Maxwell made no attempt to resuscitate Jesse or to call 911 or anyone else to tell them that he was dead. Maxwell showed no remorse when he took my nephew's body, wrapped him in a tarp, dumped him in the back of a box truck on his property and hid his body there for more than 24 hours. Maxwell had repeatedly denied to the police during the investigation that he had hidden my nephew Jesse's body on his property. Maxwell has continued to lie about this aspect of the murder of my nephew Jesse to this day. No remorse was shown by Maxwell when he drove what we believe to be the same box truck to a court hearing on this case on Oct. 21, 2014 and parked it out in front of the courthouse on Main Street for all, including my sister to see.

My nephew was a human being, not an inanimate object to be discarded and desecrated. If Maxwell had not done all of these deliberate and heinous acts to my nephew's body as well as repeatedly lying to law enforcement, destroying the original crime scene and attempting to stage another accident scene, we might have had an opportunity to have a proper investigation and possibly a trial. Because of Maxwell's deceptions and deliberate actions he made, and whoever might have helped him, we did not have that opportunity.

In closing, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Mr. Joe Cannata, founder of Voices of Victims and the Colorado Victims for Justice Organization for their dedicated and tireless efforts to see that victims of crime do have a voice as well as an avenue to seek justice. We must continue to evolve as a society with laws that are fair, just and are created to hold those accountable who choose to operate outside of the law. This proposed bill is a much needed first step on the path of justice. No other families should have to endure the nightmare and sorrow of having to stand by and helplessly watch as their loved one's murderer or murderers are rewarded with a trivial sentence for such a despicable and heinous crime as homicide by tampering with a deceased human body.

Thank you,

Jessica Hanson

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