

Charles E. Kinzel  
12426 Bussa Rd.  
Rapid City, MI 49676

February 27, 2016

Dear Members of the Legislature,

I am writing to you in regards to the Raised Bill No. 213, "An act concerning the inheritance rights of a beneficiary or survivor who is found not guilty by reason of mental disease or defect". This bill is very important to me because my family has seen firsthand what can happen because there is no such law in place. My cousin Heather Messenger was brutally killed by her husband David Messenger January 3, 1998. I wish that this was the most traumatic thing that could have happened, but I was wrong. We waited three years for the killer to go to trial and could not believe that he was found "Not Guilty by Reason of Mental Disease or Defect". There was never any doubt that Messenger killed his pregnant wife, in front of their five year old son. How could the laws of Connecticut allow the man to be found not guilty? That was one of my first questions.

I remember hearing back about 2001 that our family could not sue Messenger for wrongful death because he was found not guilty. Perhaps this was incorrect information, but it was told to Heather's father before he passed away and we never made any attempt to proceed. Never in my wildest dreams did I know that was the beginning of many injustices our family would be subjected to. When I learned Messenger hired an attorney that proceeded, on behalf of my deceased cousin's estate, to sue the home owner policy for wrongful death I was appalled. Not only that an attorney would be so cold and callous to take such a case when there were surviving members of my cousin's family, but that the State of Connecticut had no laws prohibiting this amoral act. Imagine the injustice the surviving family felt when we learned the estate sued, won and that the beneficiary of the Messenger estate was the murderer himself! Heather had a son that should have inherited anything and everything of his mother's estate. Heather probably can not rest in peace knowing her husband not only killed her, but has profited from her death. She would be outraged to know he was actually rewarded for his evil crime.

There are other instances that have happened in Connecticut that the insanity plea would have applied to. The Sandy Hook tragedy, if Adam Lanza had not died, he would have inherited his mother's estate. Our family prays no other family will have to endure the heartache and injustice we have because there is no law preventing a killer from profiting from insane actions.

Please pass this bill so that no future family shall have to endure a similar travesty.

Thank you for your time and hopefully, your vote to make this happen.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Kinzel