

TESTIMONY BEFORE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE 4/4/23

AGAINST 23-H-5149 – ABOLISH LIFE W/O PAROLE

THE CASE OF JEANNE GIRARD ROBINSON

Mr. Chairman & members of this committee.

My name is Lance Chappell and I am testifying against 23-H-5149.

Back in September of 1999, Jeanne Girard Robinson, a member of my high school class of 1967 from East Providence was attending the marriage of her daughter. At that time Jeanne had a turbulent three-year relationship, fraught with conflict with a Mr. Edwin B. Edwards III.

After the wedding was concluded, Jeanne was exhausted and wished to go home and retire for the day. Mr. Edwards had other plans, intending to spend the evening with her. When she asked him to leave he charged at her and got her into a choke hold. When she was able to break free, while attempting to flee, Mr. Edwards assaulted her with a flashlight causing head trauma and bleeding. Jeanne was able to escape outside screaming for help from the neighbors. While going down the driveway, Mr. Edwards got back into his vehicle and proceeded to back down and ran over Jeanne. Laying stunned in the street, Mr. Edwards then again drove over her body, crushing her skull then left the area. He attempted to commit suicide by jumping off the Newport Bridge but failed – the coward's path.

Judge Savage in January of 2001, found Edwards guilty of murder employing torture and aggravated battery which resulted in life in prison without the possibility of parole. Mr. Edwards appealed to the RI Supreme Court but lost in a unanimous decision.

Capital murder inmates are not candidates for rehabilitation. They are cold blooded killers and deserve the sentence they received by their peers.

Mr Edwards had no respect for human life when he murdered Jeanne Girard Robinson. He had no respect for himself or society for that matter.

This bill 23-H-5149 will only cause further trauma for the families of murder victims. Why should we be giving these convicted felons a glimmer of hope by cracking the door on their jail cell?

If the intent of this bill is to deal with some extenuating situation with a particular felon, let him petition to the governor for clemency.

We do not need to lower the bar and release highly dangerous capital murderers on the street to re-offend.

If this law is repealed, the blood is on your hands.

Please kill this bill!

Thank You

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gordon McPherson". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a dark ink on a white background.

Superior Court Case # P1/99-4284A

Supreme Court - # 2001-389-C.A.