

Esther Baird
480 W Broad St. Unit 213
Columbus, OH 43215

November 3, 2023

Honorable Judge Daniel T. Hogan
Madison County Court of Common Pleas
59 North Main Street
London, OH 43140

FILED
In The Court of Common Pleas
Madison County, Ohio

NOV 06 2023

Erin Bauer
CLERK OF COURTS

Re: Plea Hearing, CRI 20220091, State of Ohio v. Joel T. Cutler

Dear Honorable Judge Hogan,

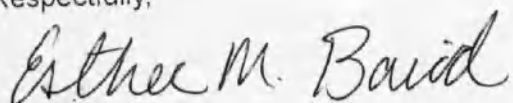
My name is Esther (Essie) Baird, the victim in the above referenced case. I have been informed of a proposed plea agreement in which the Defendant, Mr. Cutler, pleads guilty to one count of Child Endangering. The Defendant was indicted on two counts of F1 Rape, four counts of F3 Sexual Battery, and three counts of F3 Sexual Misconduct with a Minor. I am writing in vehement opposition and request the Court reject the proposed plea agreement.

To describe the entire emotional impact Mr. Cutler's abuse has had on me and my family would take more words than this letter can accommodate. Mr. Cutler began mentally, emotionally, and sexually abusing me when I was 12 years old and, until recently, I lived in a traumatized state. The result of this trauma has been a lifetime of depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, inability to trust others, inability to trust myself, shame and, possibly worst of all, blame. Blaming myself and shouldering the fault of everything bad that ever happened to me - including what Mr. Cutler did to me for so many years. Participating in an investigation and fighting for justice was not an easy choice. After several years of therapy, saying it out loud to one mental health professional after another, and finally to a trusted mentor, I gained the courage to expose this horrendous abuse and fight for myself, my family, and most importantly, the safety of other children. The pain I've suffered through the loss of my adolescence and the loss of the person I could have become, because of Mr. Cutler's choice to sexually abuse me, will never be recovered. This is why I am writing to you. The proposed plea agreement, made without my knowledge, falls well below the mark of justice given the facts of the case. To accept the proposed agreement would be an insult to me, my family, the Detectives that worked tirelessly on this case for over two years, all former students, athletes, and families who trusted Mr. Cutler for so many years.

I want to be clear that I am not writing to solicit the maximum penalty, which must be reserved for the most heinous offenders. However, the proposed agreement of five-years community control and no requirement to register as a sexual offender, is not a proportional punishment for a teacher that spent years sexually exploiting a student. While a term of incarceration would certainly be justified, any sentence that excludes sex offender registration would fall severely short of reasonable justice.

I understand, as the victim, I do not have the right to veto a decision to plea bargain. I would also like to express that I am not opposed to resolving this case with a plea agreement. But a plea agreement that does not require sex offender registry is excessively lenient given the charged offenses. Mr. Cutler used his occupation and position of trust to inflict serious harm over the course of years. I respectfully request that the Court reject the proposed plea agreement.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Esther M. Baird". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Esther Baird