

2 April 2014

Honorable Douglas Wilkins
Lawrence Superior Court
Lawrence, Massachusetts

Dear Judge Wilkins,

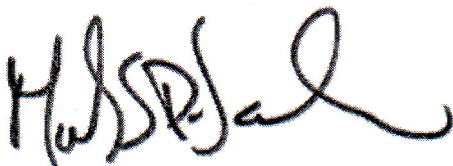
I must confess I did not believe Leonard Degnan to be guilty of anything other than committing politics. The jury says otherwise and it is important to respect that. Our justice system places a burden on its fellow citizens and I am sure it was a wrenching experience to sit in judgment of another human being.

Your Honor, another huge burden is placed upon you. I ask you to weigh the evidence and use your discretion to be something that the jury cannot necessarily be. Their decision is binary – guilty or not guilty. Your judgment is dynamic. I ask that you measure this man fully and show mercy to Lenny. He is a bluster of a man who has a warm and giving heart. He is gruff - and kind. He spurned creature comfort and chose the lifelong practice of serving his community, perhaps too enthusiastically. No one has ever accused him of enriching himself. This case itself proves that. As mere teenagers, we once ran against each other for local School Committee – and chose to become friends. It is more than sadly poignant that a desire to serve has placed him before you. You alone can provide equity in this tragic matter. I do not envy your obligation. No matter the decision made, thank you for your service to our Commonwealth.

Others, I believe, will write to you about his family circumstance. I will only offer that his son, especially this son, needs his father. This very day, while Lenny is in jail awaiting sentencing, his son was in a varsity track meet for the first time. More difficult than the current travail and trial is that this father, who attends every meet, scrimmage and event, will have missed his son at this milestone as he throws the shot put. Lenny's own father died before he could see his son fulfil all the errors and triumphs of every teens early and adult years. I do know every child needs a father. I pray you show mercy upon Lenny and his son and allow appropriate punishment, somehow, that the father's sin can be more productively atoned than sitting behind bars.

It is odd to say that one convicted of crime may be a good man – but he is. He made a grievous error. I pray it can be redressed without visiting another upon him with deleterious consequence beyond the man himself. There will be life for all beyond. Perhaps you can make it a bit easier for his family and offer the tempered justice that is deserved. I know you will not regret such mercy.

Appreciatively,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark S. DiSalvo', with a stylized, flowing script.

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