

Board of Parole
Ms. Jennifer Shaffer
San Quentin Prison
Re: Third Parole Consideration Hearing of Raul Higgins, CDC P29949

June 19, 2019

Dear Ms. Jennifer Shaffer,

My name is Melissa Bolger, the oldest daughter of Carolyn Bolger murdered by Raul Higgins cdc# P29949. I am writing to voice my concerns about how the panel perceived Raul Higgins and how they conducted themselves at this parole hearing on May 30, 2019. First off, we were greeted by Commissioner Labahn who said and I am paraphrasing, "I can't offer you much but I can offer you a view". This was a precursor for what was to come.

Throughout the entirety of the hearing Commissioner Labahn and Starr seemed to be helping Raul Higgins finish his sentences. Higgins would attempt to answer the question then the commissioners would explain what they thought he was trying to say in their own articulation and ask Higgins to agree. This seemed like a cake walk for Raul. He didn't have to dig very deep nor did he say very much. On page 14, Commissioner Labahn is questioning Higgins about why he lied in 2014. Raul states that it was because he had not forgiven himself. And then Labahn says that his "behavior that day, if we set the severity aside, wasn't all that different from behavior in his previous relationships." This is absolutely appalling. How dare Labahn minimize the situation. He's basically saying that the only thing that was different in this relationship is that it ended in murder. Wow! This man planned to kill my mom in cold blood. Higgins stated in the last hearing that he wanted my mom dead. Labahn seems to be deflecting the serious issues that haunt Higgins.

In psychologist Dr. Mc. Manus's report Labahn has read that his doctor said that he was on pain medication during the murder. Then Higgins says that is a mistake and says it was anti-anxiety drugs. So did Raul lie to the doctor? Higgins just saw him in January 2019! Labahn just ignores this and moves on. It seemed like Labahn was just going through the motion of this hearing with "program talk" as he would call it.

When it was my family's time to read out statements, the commissioners were either looking at their computer, typing, looking at papers, or closing their eyes! Attorney Rummel gave us her undivided attention the whole time with concern and guilt on her face. There was very little, if any, eye contact from the commissioners as we poured our hearts out with the pain that we are forever dealt because of Raul Higgins. When I read my statement I brought three pictures of my mom Carolyn which I took just three days before she died. Commissioner Labahn looked at them as I held them up for them to see. Commissioner Labahn's reaction was off-putting and seemed condescending by smiling and saying Ahhhhhh. He may have looked over at me a couple of other times while I was reading but most of the time had his nose buried in his papers and computer. Commissioner Starr had a blank stare on her face while she looked back and

forth at me and then to her computer. I did see her with her eyes closed when my other siblings were reading their statements. This was a complete shock! I was in complete disbelief and lost my focus due to Commissioner Starr tactless presence. Looking back it seemed as if their decision was already made before anyone spoke. For example, when we got up to break after we all read our statements, the commissioner was up out of his chair in the halls with us as if he had nothing to discuss with Commissioner Starr who only has 17 pages of interaction with the inmate during the whole hearing.

On page 39, Starr says, "So in other words you wanted the freedom to do what you wanted when you wanted." Raul says yes. But this was not just some relationship he was having. He was completely obsessed with my mom! He was stalking her!!!!!! These commissioners have no idea what the history is! Commissioner Starr thought that Raul was married to my mom! Their relationship was short lived. Barely two years. And this is the number of years Raul Higgins told the panel he would wait to tell a woman that he was dating that he killed another woman, a mother of five! This is so dreadful.

On page 50, Raul states that a transitional facility is perfect for him because of a, b, and c and Labahn says, "It sounds just like prison". Seems Higgins is talking "program talk". Saying what he has to say. Not only is this disturbing but the fact that he wants to be located in my home vicinity is down right scary. Higgins says that he plans to live in San Francisco at Geo Reentry, Health Right 360 or Options Recovery. As I said in my statement, I work in San Francisco and his release into a few neighborhoods from my work is totally unexceptable. Not only has the man affected everyday of my life but I probably would have to quit my job knowing that I could run into my mother's murderer. When we were done with the hearing I asked Commissioner Labahn off record, "What am I supposed to do when I see my mother's murderer on the streets?" He just held up his hands and shrugged shaking his head "I don't know."

I am completely demoralized and horrified by this hearing. The way the panel handled themselves is unacceptable. This family deserves better. This is a disgrace and so dehumanizing, pathetic and heart wrenching for all of Carloyn's children and family. Raul Higgins is a cold blooded murderer who left my mom dying on her floor by using his hands to strangle her while he knew that she would be found by her children coming home from school. It is unacceptable that all he has to do is say that he had control issues. It is unacceptable that he would be released because he is 60 yrs old, a model prisoner and in the one percentile of never reoffending. Raul Higgins is a careful liar and it is clear that the panel has overlooked the danger of his "stigma."

I stand with Craig Omura and what he said about Higgins not being suitable for release. What he has done in prison is not enough to mitigate the risk when he gets out into the outside world with real life problems and real life stressors and real life romantic triggers. He has NOT done everything he can to show how good his heart is. He has barely shown anything! Like Omura said, "What he needs to do is make himself a better person so that he will not ever be in the same position he was on November 20th, 1998." Craig Omura then says Raul Higgins wrote me

a letter of apology? He wrote letters to all of us? We have never read, seen or heard of these letters. But Omura is troubled by these letters and calls them out for what they probably are, "program talk".

It is clear the panel doesn't care if he hasn't focused on domestic violence, victim awareness and victim empathy for the last five years which was requested by the last panel. Commissioner Labahn and Commissioner Starr barely touched on these issues. Maybe the board should not schedule three hearings in one day.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this important and urgent matter.

Sincerely,
Melissa Bolger