

# ESSEX COUNTY PROSECUTORS OFFICE

## PRESS RELEASE



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**Subject: Seattle Man Sentenced to Life in Prison Under New Jersey's Terrorism Statute for Murder of College Student**

**Date: May 03, 2018**

**Category: Carjacking, Homicide, Shooting, Weapons**

**Defendant(s): Ali Muhammad Brown**

May 1, 2018

Seattle Man Sentenced to Life in Prison Under New Jersey's Terrorism Statute for Murder of College Student

Newark – Acting Essex County Prosecutor Robert D. Laurino announced today that Ali Muhammad Brown, 33, of Seattle was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole by the Honorable Ronald D. Wigler, Judge of the Superior Court, for the murder of 19-year-old University of Richmond student Brendan Tevlin of Livingston.

Tevlin was killed in West Orange on June 25, 2014.

Acting Prosecutor Laurino said, "We hope the resolution of the legal case will give the Tevlin family some solace. Their strength through this tragedy has inspired us."

In March, just as jury selection was underway, Brown entered a guilty plea to all charges arising from the murder of Tevlin, including first degree murder, first degree terrorism, first-degree felony murder, first-degree carjacking, first-degree robbery, unlawful possession of a handgun, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose.

Today, Judge Wigler imposed a mandatory life sentence without the possibility of parole on Brown who is the first defendant to be convicted under New Jersey's terrorism statute in connection with a homicide. That count alone carried a mandatory life sentence.

Assistant Prosecutor Jamel Semper, who handled the case with Assistant Prosecutor Purva Desphande, called the murder "senseless, shameless violence, premeditated and unnecessary." He urged the judge to impose three consecutive life sentences for the terrorism, murder and carjacking to deter not only Brown but others who might consider committing similar acts.

When he entered his guilty plea, Brown said the killings were a part of what he called a "Jihad."

Shortly before midnight on June 25, 2014, Brown fatally shot Tevlin when he stopped the Jeep Liberty he was driving at a traffic light at the intersection of Northfield Avenue and Walker Road in West Orange. Tevlin had just finished his freshman year at the University of Richmond and was coming home after meeting up with friends.

Describing how Brown targeted Tevlin then shot him 16 times, Assistant Prosecutor Semper said Brown, "took up arms against the country, against defenseless, unsuspecting citizens." Brown is already serving a 35-year sentence in New Jersey State Prison for an armed robbery he committed in West Orange prior to killing Tevlin. Brown is scheduled to be sentenced on another robbery in Ocean County on May 11 and faces three counts of murder in Washington State.

In addition to the West Orange armed robbery, Brown was previously convicted by federal authorities of bank fraud in 2005. In Washington State, he was convicted of sexual contact and aggravated assault. He had one arrest as a juvenile and 19 adult arrests.

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