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Statement of Christine Chopurian Regarding Bret Phillips

My name is Christine Chopurian. I am here today to talk about what the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department did to my constant companion Bret Phillips when Bret was held in the county jail.

Deputies, who have since been indicted, put Bret in handcuffs and waist restraints, making him defenseless. They then beat, stomped, kicked, and pepper sprayed him until he lost consciousness.

Fortunately for Bret, there was a courageous eyewitness to the beating, a chaplain named father Paulino Juarez. Father Juarez was visiting prisoners that day, and saw the beating while it was still ongoing. When the deputies became aware of Father Paulino's presence, they stopped beating Bret. I truly believe that if Father Paulino had not been visiting the jail that day, Bret might have died.

After the beating was over, the deputies were still not done torturing Bret. They falsely accused him of attacking them. Fortunately, Father Paulino reported what he saw and followed up on his report.

The deputies picked the perfect victim for an unjustified beating and a false story. Bret has paranoid schizophrenia and is bipolar.

When Bret was released from custody after the beating, he had stitches above his left eyebrow. By then, he was so terrified and paranoid that he refused to go to a doctor. As a result, I had to remove the stitches myself.

Since the beating, Bret has enormous difficulty sleeping. He loses sleep most nights and suffers from frequent nightmares about what happened. I have also noticed night tremors, seizures and night sweats that he had never had before the beating. Doctors have increased Bret's medication a great deal, but that has not brought him back to where he was before the beating.

Bret's life has definitely had a turn for the worse since the beating. The beating has affected his physical, emotional & mental health. Since the beating, Bret has not been able to socialize, eat properly or sleep properly. Based on the severity of what I have seen for such a long time, I fear he will never be the same again.

There is no excuse for what the deputies did to Bret, or to any other helpless person who is restrained and compliant. We will seek justice and hope that this never happens again to anyone serving their debt to society.