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We are here today to ask for an investigation into why and how U.S. Army Rifleman Daniel Brazelton, age 20, who had been arrested for the alleged rape of a minor and was facing extradition to California on that charge, was able to escape from the custody of Army personnel and elude capture for a week.

I represent Brazelton's alleged victim, Jaymee, who is 15 years old and her grandparents, Donna and Larry Doza, who are her legal guardians. They are all so concerned about the Army's mishandling of this matter that they have decided to waive their rights of privacy in order to speak out today.

On February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011, U.S. Army Private Daniel Brazelton of Palmdale, CA, who was on active duty in the U.S. Army, was arrested in Georgia, on the charge of rape of a minor. He was taken to Liberty County Jail in Georgia and on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2011 before a magistrate waived extradition to California.

On February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011, he was removed by Army personnel from that jail and was taken to Fort Stewart in Georgia allegedly for medical reasons. While in

the custody of the Army that day, he was able to use a cell phone to send a message at 7:55am to his Facebook page which stated, “Out of liberty county jail for a sec getting my back looked at it was nice meeting all the people I have in Ga. and atl jc, megs y’all r good friends I’m gettin ready to get expedited back out to Cali to go to prison wish u all the best of luck and may the lord b with u all.” [Feb. 11 at 7:55am via MobileWeb]

Shortly after sending the message he was also able to send another to his Facebook page that stated “Hey sweetheart I’m headed to Cali to go to prison: it was such a big pleasure meeting you and being able to know you as a friend. I get expedited next week. Hope all goes well and tell the fam I said hi n bye” [Feb. 11 at 8:10am]

Later that day, as suspect Brazelton was being transported by the Army, and was being returned to Liberty County jail, he escaped from the Army transport van reportedly while “other soldiers in the unit were transporting him and that they were detained in traffic.”<sup>1</sup>

The escape occurred on Airport Road in Hinesville, Georgia. Reports also

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<sup>1</sup> Military Community Examiner, Feb. 12, 2011

indicated that it was not known if he was wearing handcuffs at the time of his escape.

A Special Bulletin published by the L.A. County Sheriff's Dept., who had been planning to escort suspect Brazelton back to L.A. County for arraignment indicated that, "Brazelton is believed to be traveling to California, possibly to the Palmdale or Lancaster areas. Suspect Should Be Considered Armed And Dangerous."

L.A. County Sheriff also contacted the victim and her family regarding Brazelton's escape. Jaymee and her family were very frightened and concerned about their safety particularly because they were aware that Brazelton was an expert marksman, he had posted a photo of his gun on his Facebook page on Dec. 26, 2010 calling it "my springfield xd40" and he had also bragged on his Facebook page "gettin my silencer next week hopefully" Jan. 27, 2011 at 2:43pm.

Jaymee and her grandmother will describe the traumatic impact of Daniel's escape on their lives.

At this point, however, we are very relieved that after a week of Jaymee and her grandparents living in fear while Brazelton was a fugitive from justice, that he was finally captured on Friday in Daytona Beach, Florida and was taken to the Volusia County Branch jail.

We are speaking out today because the victim and her grandparents never want any other family to have to suffer what they did because of the U.S. Army's mishandling of one of its soldiers who has been arrested on a charge of rape of a minor.

Given the facts as reported, we believe that there should be an investigation both by the U.S. Army and the U.S. Congress into how Brazelton was able to escape. Did he receive any assistance from others in his unit or the U.S. Army? Did he have handcuffs on while he was in the custody of the U.S. Army? If so, how was it that he was able to use a cell phone to send at least 2 messages to his Facebook page? Why was he permitted to use a cell phone while he was in the Army's custody and under arrest? Why was he believed to be armed while a fugitive? Was he permitted to have his weapon on him while being transported? Was he able to grab a weapon from those transporting him or was he given one by

anyone who aided him in his escape? Was the door to the van unlocked while he was being transported? Why and how was he able to exit the van? Did the U.S. Army ever issue a wanted poster? If not, why not? Why did the U.S. Army never contact the victim herself to notify her and her family of the escape and explain what happened?

All of these questions are very serious, especially in light of recent justifiable criticism of the U.S. Armed Forces inadequate response to complaints of sexual assaults of women in the armed forces.

We are sending a letter today to U.S. Senators Barbara Boxer and Diane Feinstein and U.S. Army Secretary, The Honorable John McHugh, asking for an investigation and answers to these questions because neither Jaymee nor her grandparents ever want any other family to suffer what they have been forced to suffer for the past week. We look forward to a response.

Gloria Allred  
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representing Jaymee, Donna Doza and Larry Doza  
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