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Statement of Melissa Cann

First, I want to begin by thanking the District Attorney and his office, the detectives, the FBI, NYS police, and the entire task force. For years, they never stopped. They carried this case with determination and heart, and our family will forever be grateful. We are forever thankful for the work that led us here. Finally, a sense of relief. This guilty plea brings solace, and I thank everyone who had a part in that fight for justice. Thank you to our lawyer Gloria Allred. I also want to thank the media for continuing to keep this case in the public eye.

Today is not about the person responsible. Today is about the women whose lives were stolen. It is about their voices, their futures, their families, and the love that still surrounds them. They are the reason why we are here.

19 years, I have lived in a space between heartbreak and hope. Throughout these years, I searched for answers, for truth, for justice. There were moments when the weight felt unbearable, but I never gave up. Maureen was never forgotten. Not for a single moment. From the day she went missing until today, she has been carried in every breath, every memory, every fight for answers. This has been a long journey of hope, hope that one day we would stand here and say her name with justice beside it. Today, that long and painful journey brings us to this moment, our mission- our promise to Maureen is finally met with accountability.

For Melissa's, Megan's, Amber's, Jessica's, Valerie's, Sandra's, and Karen's families. I stand with you in deep love and understanding. No one should ever have to walk this path, yet here we all are. Connected by loss, by strength, and by the unbreakable bond of our loved ones. The bond some of us have created has been one that is unique in a sense that it did not form from a friendship or blood, it was created by trying to pick up the pieces of our world that had shattered in tragedy. I am so grateful for us.

To every family out there still searching, still waiting, still holding on. Please don't give up hope. Even when it feels impossible, even when the years pass and

the silence grows heavy - keep going. Your loved ones matter. They are not forgotten. And one day, the answer can come.

Finally, to Maureen,

The promise I made to you so long ago was simple: I would never stop searching for justice for you. Through every year, every setback, every unanswered question. I carried you with me and kept that promise.

And today, it has been done!

Justice has finally found its way to you. Your voice was never silenced, your story never forgotten, and your life will always mean more than the tragedy that took you. This moment is not the end, but a reminder that love endures, truth prevails and hope never fades because even in the darkest moments, justice will find its way.

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Represented by Attorney Gloria Allred

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