

Contact: Gloria Allred  
(323) 653-6530  
E-mail: [gallred@amglaw.com](mailto:gallred@amglaw.com)

We are here today to react to the Army's apology to the alleged victim of a rape of a minor, 15 year old Jaymee, because of the escape of Private Daniel Brazelton who had been arrested on the rape of a minor charges, but escaped while in the custody of the Army.

On February 24, 2011, Brigadier General Jeffrey Phillips, acting Senior Commander of Fort Stewart - Hunter Army Airfield issued the following statement:

"As the acting senior commander at Fort Stewart, I apologize to the community and to the alleged victim for Pvt. Daniel Brazelton's escape from military custody.

All aspects of Pvt. Brazelton's escape, including any potential assistance he may have received, will be thoroughly explored by a U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command independent investigation now underway. Because of that investigation, many details cannot be shared at this time. CID has been actively involved since this case began, immediately launching its investigation, together with local and federal agencies, to find and apprehend Pvt. Brazelton.

Fort Stewart-Hunter Army Airfield has a policy dictating how Soldiers in custody are transported. We are determining the quality of that policy's implementation in this case. So far we have identified some deficiencies which we are correcting. We have clarified with local law enforcement agencies that all future prisoner transport requests will be coordinated through our law enforcement officials and will only involve military police in the actual transport. In the case of Pvt. Brazelton, he was incorrectly transported by Soldiers from his unit without coordination through appropriate military police authorities.

I reiterate how sorry we are to the community and the alleged victim who has suffered so much. We will do everything possible to prevent such avoidable incidents in the future."

Jeffrey E. Phillips

Brig. Gen. US Army

We are very appreciative of the Army's quick response which came only a few days after we held a news conference on February 21, 2011 in which we explained how Jaymee and her family were forced to live in fear because of Brazelton's escape and after we sent letters to Senator Boxer, Senator Feinstein and U.S. Army Secretary John McHugh asking for an investigation and seeking

answers to the Army's handling of this matter.

The Army has conceded deficiencies in the transport of Brazelton who was taken out of Liberty County Jail in Georgia by "soldiers from his unit" to go to the doctor and then was being transported back to the jail by these soldiers when he escaped. Brigadier General Phillips admits this transport was incorrect and that in the future only military police will be involved in transports of soldiers in these situations.

We are very pleased that the Army is providing assurance that this policy will be implemented in the future. This policy is important to assure the safety of the suspect, the alleged victim and the community.

Also, today we want to express our appreciation to Melanie Craft who is here with us today and who had an important role in the ultimate capture of fugitive Brazelton.

Ms. Craft has flown here from Georgia at my request. She has provided details to law enforcement, which we hope will help to achieve justice in this matter. Because she may be called to testify, she cannot make those details public

today.

However, we will disclose one fact because of its importance to public safety.

It appears to be the policy of Fort Stewart to allow any person on the base at Fort Stewart. According to Ms. Craft who lives near the base, any member of the public can enter the base simply by showing identification and evidence of registration of their vehicle and insurance. They do not need an appointment and no effort is made to confirm whether they have appropriate business on the base.

Ms. Craft has reason to believe that after Brazelton's escape, he was able to return to the base by hiding in the car of a member of the public who entered Fort Stewart. That person had no business reason to be on the base.

We point this out because we are concerned that terrorists might gain access to that base by concealing themselves in vehicles of members of the public who have no lawful business there. This could place the lives of our soldiers and other civilians at the base at great risk.

For this reason, we are speaking out about this today with the hope that this policy and practice of easy access for the public to Fort Stewart will also be reviewed in order to protect those who are working so hard for our country on this base.

We thank Melanie Craft for the important information she has provided. She is a true hero in this case. She has shown enormous courage in coming forward, but she was willing to take the risks involved so that the truth will be known.

We still have many unanswered questions. On that issue we are happy to announce that today Senator Feinstein and Senator Boxer have informed me that they are working on this issue and are in contact with the Army to find out more about what happened and assure that it never happens again. We look forward to the Army's response.

Gloria Allred  
Attorney at Law  
representing Jaymee, Donna Doza and Larry Doza  
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