

**NEW JERSEY CRIME VICTIMS LAW CENTER  
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STATE OF NEW JERSEY,

Plaintiff

v.

PETER HENRIQUES,

Defendant.

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SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY  
LAW DIVISION-CRIMINAL PART  
CUMBERLAND COUNTY  
INDICTMENT NO. 98-01-92-I/A

CRIMINAL ACTION

**CERTIFICATION OF  
KATHRYN MASON  
MOTHER OF MURDER VICTIM**

KATHRYN MASON certifies as follows:

1. I am the mother of Nielsa Mason. My daughter was murdered April 28, 1997. In 1999 Peter Henriques was convicted of Nielsa's murder. The conviction has been overturned by an appellate court, and I have been advised that the retrial will take place within the next few months.
2. During the first trial, the crime scene photos were shown to the jury during the trial. To this day I still feel the anguish of having seen these pictures of my daughter at the trial. I know these photos had the same effect on my husband Daniel, my son Phillip and Nielsa's two grandparents.

3. After Peter Henriques was convicted of murder, I requested permission to show a picture of Nielsa to the judge at sentencing. The judge denied the request. With the sentencing a few days away, an immediate appeal was taken; however the appellate court would not hear the case. A further appeal was taken to the Supreme Court of New Jersey. Several weeks after the Supreme Court denied our petition for certification. I was told that our claim was “moot” because the judge had already sentenced my daughter’s killer.
4. At the sentencing I stood before the judge and delivered my victim impact statement. Nearby was my daughter’s photograph, hidden in a paper bag.
5. At the time I questioned: “This case is about my daughter’s murder but her beautiful face has never been allowed in the courtroom. How can Nielsa’s picture hurt anyone?’ On December 23, 1999 “Nielsa’s Law” took effect. The law permitted a homicide survivor to display to the sentencing judge a photo of the victim when she was alive.
6. It is now 10 years since my daughter’s death. Once again we will be required to sit quietly through this terrible slow motion replay of the murder of our child. We will be there because we must be there for our daughter.
7. It is so important to my family and me that during this public trial Nielsa’s face be in the courtroom; not her beaten face, but the beautiful face that keeps her spirit alive in all those who knew and loved her.
8. And I ask once again; “How can Nielsa’s picture hurt anyone?’
9. I request the opportunity to have myself, my husband, my son and possibly Nielsa’s two grandparents wear a small button on our chest with Nielsa’s photo on it. It is a small photo of her face, with no words, no graphics; just Nielsa’s face. I have furnished a copy

of the button to the prosecutor and to my attorney. The prosecutor is attaching it to her brief in its actual size.

10. As with the first trial, the jury will know who the spectators at trial are. They know who are the members the defendant's family, and they know who are the members of the victim's family. I do not want to convey any message to the jury of the defendant's guilt. The evidence will speak for itself. I understand that the defendant must receive a fair trial. I accept and support this. However, as a matter of fairness and respect to Nielsa, out of compassion for those of us who are Nielsa's survivors, I request permission have my daughter's beautiful face be present during the upcoming trial.

I certify that the foregoing statements made by me are true. I am aware that if any of the foregoing statements made by me are willfully false, I am subject to punishment.

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KATHRYN MASON

Dated: May 7, 2007

Pursuant to R. 1:4-4, I hereby certify that the affiant acknowledged the genuineness of the above signature, and this document or a copy with an original signature affixed will be filed if requested by the court or a party.

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RICHARD D. POMPELIO  
ATTORNEY FOR VICTIMS

Dated: May 7, 2007