

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
VICTIMS OF CRIME COMPENSATION BOARD  
RICHARD D. POMPELIO, ESQ.  
50 PARK PLACE  
NEWARK, NJ 07102  
973-877-1436  
*AMICUS CURIAE***

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STATE OF NEW JERSEY,

Plaintiff

v.

CHARLES CULLEN,

Defendant.

SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY  
LAW DIVISION-CRIMINAL PART  
SOMERSET COUNTY

CRIMINAL ACTION

**CERTIFICATION OF  
MARY STRENKO,  
MOTHER OF MURDER  
VICTIM  
MICHAEL STRENKO**

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**MARY STRENKO** certifies as follows:

1. I am the mother of Michael Strenko. My son was murdered on May 15, 2003 by defendant Charles Cullen.
2. The defendant has entered a plea of guilty in Somerset County to the murder of my son and twelve other innocent victims. He has also plead guilty to the attempted murder of two other individuals. His sentencing date before the court has not been scheduled as yet.
3. On the day of sentencing, Michael's dad, Tom and I intend to present to the court an in person victim impact statement.
4. This certification is made in support of the motions of the State of New Jersey Victims of

Crime Compensation Board and the New Jersey Crime Victims' Law Center to compel the defendant to be present on the day of sentencing when my husband and I, along with other victims, appear before the court and give our in person victim impact statement.

5. In a news article in the Star Ledger dated October 17, 2004 entitled "Cullen to avoid victims' relatives -Serial killer elects to skip sentencings" the following wording appears:

"Serial killer Charles Cullen has decided he won't appear for sentencings in New Jersey courts, according to his attorney, thereby avoiding the face-to-face wrath of his victim's relatives.

"It's Charlie's call and he has been of the mind to have as few court appearances as possible," Deputy Public Defender Johnnie Mask said. "If at the time of any sentence proceeding he's still of that mind, he might just choose to waive his appearance."

6. My husband and I have been informed that in fact the defendant does not intend to be present at the sentencing when we and his other victims will present our victim impact statements.
7. I have been advised that Judge Paul Armstrong will preside over the sentencing of Charles Cullen. I respectfully state to the court that Cullen's appearance in court at the time of sentencing is not "Charlie's call". It is the calling of the justice system. It is the decision of Judge Armstrong.
8. Along with so many other innocent victims, Charles Cullen took control of the life of our son Michael in his hands. As an individual who held himself out as a nurse, a healer, he looked into our eyes, as we looked to him for help and compassion. He saw our pain; he saw our anguish. Then, he turned away, and committed one murder after another.

9. My husband Tom and I ask this court tell Charles Cullen that he is no longer in control.

When he took our son from us, he shattered every fiber of our being. It is as important to me as breathing air to have Charles Cullen once again look into my eyes to personally see and to hear of the anguish he has caused. He never gave my son Michael a chance to speak but with an arrogance and hatred inside of him that I cannot fathom, Cullen sought to snuff out the life of this beautiful young man.

10. But Cullen cannot snuff out the lives or the wills of the survivors he has left behind. I

believe in my heart that although he has refused to give justice, he will nevertheless, be required to observe justice. He will be forced to accept that he no longer has control over anyone; not even himself. And I pray that this justice will be mandated when he is compelled to look into our faces and hear our voices and realize that despite his crimes, our lived ones will continue to live on. I respectfully thank the court for this opportunity.

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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MARY STRENKO

Dated: December 20, 2004

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 *AMICUS CURIAE*

Dated: December 20, 2004

**JOHN MICHAEL SHANAGHER** certifies as follows:

11. I am the son of John Shanagher. Defendant Charles Cullen murdered my father on March 11, 2003.
12. On April 29, 2004 defendant Charles Cullen entered pleas of guilty in the Superior Court, Somerset County to 13 counts of first degree murder and two counts of attempted murder. One of the counts related to the murder of my dad.
13. The sentencing for Cullen has not been scheduled as yet. When he is sentenced, I will be in court to give a victim impact statement on behalf of my family.

14. It is very important to me and to my family to have defendant Cullen present in court when I speak on behalf of my family and my dad. I submit his certification in support of the motions of the State of New Jersey Victims of Crime Compensation Board and the New Jersey Crime Victims' Law Center to compel the defendant to be present on the day of sentencing when I appear before the court and give my in person victim impact statement.
15. Defendant Cullen has indicated through his attorney that he will not be present at the time of sentencing. I am sure that he does not want to face me and the many other murder victims he created through his evil acts. I respectfully state that such a decision should not be within his discretion. He should not be able to control these proceedings.
16. My father was 83 years old when Cullen killed him. He was known by all as "Jack". My dad was a hard working, honest and generous man who always put his family first. He treasured each day of his life and the lives of his loved ones. My mom should not have become a victim at the age of 80, but she did. Jack's children, grandchildren and great grandchildren should not have been forced to become crime victims for the rest of our lives, but we have. Charles Cullen gave us no fairness, no compassion and no respect. Now he seeks to add further insult to injury by declaring that if he does not have the courage to face us and hear our words, then we have to once again accept his arrogance.
17. My dad was a very direct man. If he had something to say to you, he wanted to look you in the eye and tell you the truth about how he felt. When I speak before the court and

give the impact statement on behalf of my family, I truly believe that my father will be

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right there with me. Many of my words will be his words. And Cullen must be there to look at my face and hear these words.

18. There is no way to describe the anguish that Charles Cullen has caused to my family and to so many others. It will be very difficult for me to stand in court and speak about my father's death. I do not want to see Cullen, but I truly have no choice. For me, for my family and for my dad Cullen must be present. There must be recognition that, along with the many other victims, we have value and meaning in the justice system. And Charles Cullen should have no further opportunity to negate the worth of innocent people.

19. On behalf of my family I thank this court for considering my request.

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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**JOHN MICHAEL SHANAGHER**

Dated: December 20, 2004

