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**JULY 2020 FATAL STABBING IN ELKTON
DETERMINED SELF DEFENSE AFTER INVESTIGATION**

ELKTON – After reviewing the complete investigation performed by the Maryland State Police into the death of Glenn Arthur Culley, the Office of the State's Attorney has concluded that there is no probable cause that a crime was committed and declined to present the case to the Grand Jury.

On July 21, 2020 Glenn Arthur Culley was fatally stabbed by Robert Dale Little Jr. after Culley attacked Little outside a home on Cherry Hill Road in Elkton. Troopers from the Maryland State Police were dispatched to 163 Cherry Hill Road for the report of a domestic disturbance. Law enforcement officer's arrived on scene and immediately detained Little, who was cooperative in surrendering himself. Paramedics arrived on scene and pronounced Culley deceased. He was ultimately found to have one puncture (stab) wound on his chest. The Medical Examiner ruled this single wound to be the cause of death from sharp-force trauma. Toxicology showed Culley had a blood alcohol concentration of .34 at the time of his death. A second knife was located at the scene and is believed to have belonged to Culley.

The investigation by Maryland State Police Homicide Detectives determined the following: On the date of the incident, Little had spent the night before at a female resident's house and was there throughout the day in question. Culley had come to the house on three separate occasions that day, the first occasion being sometime between eight and ten o'clock in the morning. Culley had showed up again later that afternoon sometime between 12:30 and one o'clock p.m. demanding the female pay him money she owed him. Culley had made verbal threats toward Little at that time but left after the female paid him the money. The third and final time was later that same day, after dark, when Culley pulled his vehicle up on the lawn and was shouting verbal threats towards Little. Witnesses state that at that time, Culley was verbally threatening to kill Little, demanding Little come outside to fight him, and was attempting to gain entry into the female resident's home by pulling on doors and windows. Culley then got back in his truck, moved the truck from the yard into the driveway, at which point Little exited the home because he anticipated

Culley was going to damage Little's vehicle. When Little exited the home, Culley then charged and tackled him to the ground. Little's injuries to his back and elbows, as well as muddy clothes, corroborate this version of events. Independent eyewitnesses (neighbors) likewise corroborate these events. It was at this time that Little retrieved the folding knife from his waist area and used it against Culley, inflicting one (1) serious/fatal injury. Little was then able to get up from the ground, and immediately stated to the female that he believed he had killed Culley. The female resident and a neighbor witness confirmed this, along with the female resident's 911 recording. The female resident attempted to render aid to Culley and placed a blanket over his body and law enforcement officers arrived on the scene momentarily afterwards. Little was interviewed after the incident and made statements that he feared for his life while Culley had him pinned on his back, and stabbed Culley in self-defense.

The Office of the State's Attorney reviewed all information from the investigation conducted by members of the Maryland State Police, 911 recordings, and all witness interviews. There are no facts that are in dispute in this case. Robert Dale Little, Jr. acted in self-defense. We then must analyze the events with regard to the decision to use force, and the type and nature of the force employed. This determination is made by evaluating whether the force employed was due to self-defense or in an effort to defend others.

The law regarding self-defense and defense of others is well-settled in Maryland. A person may defend himself or others when there exists an honest and reasonable belief that harm is imminent and immediate. *Stouffie v. State*, 50 Md. App. 547 (1982). When one possesses a reasonable belief that an aggressor's force was or could be deadly, then use of deadly force may then be considered reasonable. The applicable case law has been summarized and reduced in writing to a four-step analysis in the Maryland Criminal Pattern Jury Instruction on self-defense, which requires that 1) the suspect was not the aggressor, 2) the suspect actually believed that he was in immediate or imminent danger of bodily harm, 3) the suspect's belief was reasonable, and 4) the suspect used no more force that was reasonably necessary to defend himself in light of the threatened or actual harm.

Upon applying the previously referenced four-step analysis regarding the law of self-defense, and noting that there are no facts that are in dispute in this matter, the Office of the State's Attorney finds no probable cause that Robert Dale Little, Jr., committed a crime and that he reasonably and lawfully acted in self-defense. Taking into account the standard self-defense analysis, Little was clearly not the aggressor, he actually believed that he was in imminent danger of bodily harm, his belief was reasonable, and he used no more force than was reasonably necessary, inflicting a single serious wound, to stop the attack. Once the threat was over, he discontinued the use of any force. Under Maryland law, a person is required to make a reasonable effort to retreat before using deadly force. This analysis does not take into account the "Castle" doctrine, which states that there is no duty to retreat when inside one's home. Whether or not this doctrine applied to Little as he was at another person's home is irrelevant when considering retreat was impossible once he was on the ground with Culley on top of him, and he was technically outside the home. In this situation, Little was on the ground when he chose to use his knife to defend himself. Maryland law cites an example of how one must "retreat to the

wall” before using deadly force—in this case, Little’s back was figuratively to the wall, as he was literally on his back on the ground. Little had no avenue of retreat at that point and was legally justified in using deadly force. See *Sydnor v. State*, 133 Md. App. 173 (2000), *aff’d*.

Based on the foregoing, there exists no probable cause to charge Robert Dale Little, Jr., with a crime. The State’s Attorney is obligated to decline prosecution in light of this lack of probable cause. *Walker v. State*, 373 Md. 360 (2003).

