



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ATTORNEYS CHALLENGE OPINION OF STATE'S ATTORNEY ON HOMICIDE

Attorneys reassert that evidence supports the death of Redding lawyer was a homicide

SOUTHFIELD, MICH. (June 8, 2017)—Lawyers representing the family of a young attorney who died under suspicious circumstances in Redding, Connecticut question the conclusion and public statements of Stephen J. Sedensky III, the Fairfield County State's Attorney who closed the criminal investigation into the death Tuesday. The attorneys look forward to questioning Sedensky under oath at his deposition next month.

The family of Gugsu Abraham "Abe" Dabela, an attorney who died in 2014 after suffering a gunshot wound to the head following a car accident, sued the Redding, Connecticut police department in April 2016 for allegedly conducting an improper investigation of their son's death. The suit, filed in federal court, contends that the police and medical examiner rushed to judgment in declaring Dabela's death a suicide and that the case was not thoroughly investigated because their son was black. The family is represented by Solomon Radner and Keith Altman of 1-800-LAW-FIRM.

Stephen J. Sedensky III, the Fairfield County State's Attorney, issued a statement Tuesday stating that "the evidence does not support a conclusion that Attorney Dabela's death was a homicide. Accordingly, the criminal investigation into this matter is closed." No supporting evidence was given for this conclusion.

"State's Attorney Sedensky has offered not a shred of physical evidence to support his conclusion nor evidence that his office actually did a full or independent death investigation. After having the case for more than three years, the State's Attorney only issued a half-page public statement but no official report," said Altman. "We are astonished that instead of limiting his statement to a conclusion that the evidence is insufficient for his office to establish that a homicide took place, Sedensky went beyond his role and stated that no homicide occurred. This is a statement that means no available physical evidence supports a homicide finding, which is patently false. His statement is irresponsible and not the sort of statement prosecutor's typically make and we eagerly anticipate questioning him on the record next month."

Altman further added that there *is* plenty of evidence that is supportive of a homicide finding, including that:

- Dabela was shot through the back of the head
- Dabela's DNA was not present on the bullet which the Redding Police Department claimed was the bullet that killed Dabela
- Dabela's DNA was not found on the trigger, yet the DNA of at least one other individual was found on the trigger
- neither the bullet nor the bullet casing recovered at the scene was conclusively linked to Abe's gun
- a muddy footprint was found on the back of the jacket Dabela was wearing
- there is no evidence that he was suicidal and, in fact, Dabela was at a local pub prior to his death and numerous observers said he appeared to be in excellent spirits
- Dabela's gun had at least two safety features, which would prevent an accidental discharge
- there is no record of a GSR test being run on Abe's hands, but the cuffs of his jacket tested negative for GSR

"The Redding Police Department concluded six hours after Abe's death, that Dabela took his own life before an autopsy had been performed and before any ballistic tests were conducted. Furthermore, Dabela's hands were bagged at the scene so that the medical examiner could test them for gunshot residue and inspect them for evidence. Inexplicably, the bags were removed by the medical examiner and the body was washed without a residue test being conducted and without the left hand even being photographed," said Altman.

Abe's father, Dr. Abraham Dabela, expressed continuing sadness and dissatisfaction with the handling of his son's death investigation, and the stream of prejudicial and insensitive press statements issued by the State's Attorney. He reiterated the family's plea to the public, that anyone with any information come forward with tips. More information and means to communicate tips can be found at: <http://www.justice4abe.com/reward>.

For interview and media inquiries, contact:

Keith Altman, Esq.

1-800-LAW-FIRM

kaltman@lawampmmt.com

516-456-5885

