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Twinsburg Man Sentenced to 15 to Life for Murder

AKRON, Ohio (Wednesday, September 19, 2018) – Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh announced today that Robert Hanford (29), of Darrow Rd. in Twinsburg, was found guilty after a five day jury trial for the stabbing death of Mark Bates in their home last fall.

Summit County Common Pleas Court Judge Tammy O'Brien immediately sentenced Hanford to 15 years to Life in prison.

After deliberating only one hour, the jury found Hanford guilty of the following charges:

- Two counts of Murder – special felonies
- One count of Felonious Assault – a felony of the second degree

The defendant and the victim were longtime friends living together in a home owned by the victim's mother's boyfriend.

On October 1, 2017 at about 10:30 a.m., Hanford called 911 and said his roommate had been stabbed in their Darrow Rd. home. The victim, Mark Bates, Jr., was found on the floor in the living room between the couch and a broken glass table with four stab wounds to his body. One stab wound penetrated his heart causing his death. After interviewing neighbors, Robert Hanford and reviewing the crime scene, it was determined that Hanford stabbed the victim at about 2:00 a.m. the night before. Hanford later confessed to the murder but claimed self-defense. The jury who heard the case determined Hanford's claim of self-defense was not credible based on the autopsy, forensic evidence and other evidence at the scene.