



Elliot Kolkovich

Summit County Prosecutor

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Akron Man Sentenced to LIFE IN PRISON for Murder

AKRON, Ohio (Tuesday, April 2, 2024) – Summit County Prosecutor Elliot Kolkovich announced today that Summit County Common Pleas Court Judge Tammy O’Brien sentenced Luther Easter, 34, of Akron to LIFE IN PRISON for the murder of 34-year-old Dartanian Howard in September 2022.

Easter will be eligible for parole after serving 28 years of his sentence.

On March 14, 2024, a Summit County jury found Easter guilty of the following charges:

- Aggravated Murder – a Special Felony
- Murder – a Special Felony
- Kidnapping – a Felony of the 1st Degree
- Tampering With Evidence – a Felony of the 3rd Degree

“I am pleased to know the community is safer with Mr. Easter behind bars for a significant amount of time. Today’s sentencing is one small step in getting justice for the Howard family,” said Prosecutor Kolkovich.

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On September 18, 2022, Akron Police responded to the area of Flower Court and North Howard Street, just north of the “Y” Bridge, for a report of a body lying in the street. Investigators discovered 34-year-old Dartanian Howard, who had been shot several times. DNA recovered from the scene matched 32-year-old Laurelin Flanagan. Investigators determined Flanagan lured Dartanian Howard to the scene where Luther Easter and an unnamed accomplice killed him.

On September 12, 2023, Flanagan pled guilty to the following charges:

- Voluntary Manslaughter with a Gun Specification – a Felony of the 1st Degree
- Tampering With Evidence – a Felony of the 3rd Degree

Judge O’Brien sentenced Flanagan to 13-to-18 years in prison.