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To: Members of the Media

From: DA Jason Smith

Re: Wilmington Man Convicted of Second-Degree Murder of Larry Brown and Possession of Firearm by Felon

**Derrick Jones**, 28, of Wilmington, North Carolina plead guilty ON Friday in New Hanover County Superior Court to second-degree murder and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. Judge Quintin McGee of Brunswick County sentenced Jones to a total minimum term of 240 months and a total maximum term of 300 months in the North Carolina Department of Adult Corrections.

The evidence presented in court and other evidence shows that on December 26, 2023 at around 1:59 AM, deputies from the New Hanover County Sheriff's Office responded to 1930 Castle Hayne Road regarding a shooting outside of the Anointed Creations Event Space where a party had occurred. When they arrived, they found a large group of people surrounding the victim Larry Demaro Brown, age 24, who was lying face down in the parking lot after being shot once in the back. He was initially responsive but after being rushed to the hospital, it was discovered the gunshot wound to Mr. Brown had damaged both his spinal cord and aorta. He was taken to surgery but was pronounced dead at 4:52 AM that morning. Detectives quickly discovered surveillance footage which depicted the events leading up to the shooting. In that footage, detectives were able to determine that just prior to the shooting, the victim got into an altercation with a man that detectives were able to identify as this defendant Derrick Jones. The footage appeared to show the defendant grab the victim, shove him towards the parking lot, and then after a brief tussle between the parties a gunshot could be heard on one of the videos gathered. Later, detectives obtained information that the motive for the murder was a personal feud that had recently emerged between the victim and the defendant, who had previously been friends. The defendant was prohibited from possessing firearms based on a previous felony conviction for possession with intent to sell and deliver a Schedule 1 controlled substance.

"My heart goes out to the family of Mr. Brown, his friends, and all those who in our community who have been affected by gun violence. We must continue to do everything we can to combat the problems presented by the unlawful use and possession of firearms," Assistant District Attorney Brad Matthews said. "Senseless gun violence, such as this, will not be tolerated in this community. This case was particularly troubling because it occurred in the midst of a crowded party, thus endangering the lives of many of others," District Attorney Jason Smith said.

Detectives with the New Hanover County Sheriff's Office investigated this case. The State was represented by Assistant District Attorneys Brad Matthews and Amy White, and the defendant was represented by the Public Defender for the Sixth Judicial District, Bud Woodrum.

