

Shawn Douglas did what many of his fellow Rankin Countians would have done when Christopher Miln violently attacked him on December 28. Shawn and his family had been victimized by Miln's threats of violence for months. These threats were not only directed at Shawn, but at his 13-year-old baby brother. The publicly available video evidence from December 28 is clear. Shawn walked away from Miln, just like he had done several times before. For reasons known only to Miln, he finally decided to make good on his threats and he violently attacked Shawn, grabbing Shawn from behind, wrapping his arm around Shawn's neck and wrenching downward in an effort to cut off Shawn's ability to breath.

Shawn and his family had taken every available step to protect themselves from Miln over the months leading up to Miln's violent attack on Shawn. In early October, Shawn filed charges against Miln for assault in Justice Court after Miln, brandishing a shovel, threatened to attack Shawn. The case was remanded, and Miln was not prosecuted but he was ordered to have no contact with Shawn. The police had also tried to deal with Miln in the past after being called by Shawn's mother. Despite Miln's best efforts, neither Shawn nor his family ever allowed Miln to provoke them into a physical altercation. On December 28, Miln, as he had threatened, violently attacked Shawn.

Every Mississippian has both an inherent and a legal right to use deadly force to defend themselves from someone who is attempting to cause great personal injury. Shawn's actions on December 28 were reasonable under the circumstances. Even though Shawn was able to momentarily free himself from Miln's lethal grip, there was nothing preventing Miln from continuing to pursue his attempt to injure Shawn. While Miln's death is tragic, it was the legally justifiable consequence of his violent attack on Shawn and the certainty that Miln would continue to escalate his violent behavior until Shawn or a member of his family were eventually killed.

My team is working to collect evidence and interview witnesses. We intend to present the evidence to the court and the District Attorney at Shawn's bond and preliminary hearing on January 5, 2021. We are confident that once all the facts are known, everyone will agree that Shawn is not a danger to the community and that he should be released from custody while the investigation runs its course.

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