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July 22, 2025

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STATE V. BRUCE DUETTE – Sentencing after Jury Trial

Prosecutor Jennifer Webb-McRae announces:

On July 21, 2025, Bruce Duette, 45, of Trenton, NJ, was sentenced to Life in New Jersey State Prison for Murder by the Honorable Cristen D'Arrigo, J.S.C. Duette must serve 85% of his sentence pursuant to the No Early Release Act (NERA). Judge D'Arrigo also Ordered the life sentence to run consecutive to Duette's present sentences, which are set to end on March 8, 2030. Bruce Duette was found guilty by a Cumberland County Jury on May 29, 2025 of Murder, 1st degree.

On November 21, 2022, investigators from the Department of Corrections and the Cumberland County Prosecutor's Office responded to a homicide at Bayside State Prison in Leesburg, NJ. The victim, Martin Sanchez, was located unresponsive in his cell with severe injuries to his face. He was pronounced deceased while still at the facility. A joint investigation was conducted by NJ Department of Corrections investigators and the detectives from the Cumberland County Prosecutor's Office. The medical examiner determined the manner of death to be homicide, with the cause of death determined to be blunt force head injuries and neck compression. Bruce Duette was developed as a suspect and charged after his DNA was located on the inside of a sneaker, sock and under the victim's fingernails. The victim, Martin Sanchez, was set to be released from Bayside State Prison on the following day, November 22, 2022.

At the time Duette committed the murder at Bayside State Prison, he was serving separate sentences out of Mercer County for Conspiracy to Commit Murder, 1st degree (sentenced in 2013 to 20 years New Jersey State Prison No Early Release Act [NERA]) and Aggravated Manslaughter, 1st degree (sentenced in 2009 to 15 years New Jersey State Prison No Early Release Act [NERA]). Duette was also pending trial on an Aggravated Assault on another inmate at Bayside State Prison

****If this press release involves the charging, accusation or indictment of a criminal defendant, same is merely an accusation. The defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.***

that occurred in November 2020. Duette plead guilty in Cumberland County Superior Court to Aggravated Assault (serious bodily injury), 2nd degree wherein he admitted to stabbing the other inmate in the neck. He was sentenced to 5 years New Jersey State Prison (NERA) concurrent to his Mercer County sentences in September 2024. Once these sentences are completed on March 8, 2030, Duette will begin serving his life sentence.

The State was represented by Assistant Prosecutors Cathryn Wilson and Jeffrey Krachun. The defendant, Bruce Duette, was represented by Emily Bell, Esquire.