

Commonwealth of Virginia

COUNTY OF FAIRFAX

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STEVE DESCANO
COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY

10/14/21

COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY STEVE DESCANO'S STATEMENT ON CONVICTION OF MICHAEL HETLE

Hetle was found guilty of murder in the first degree and the use of a firearm in commission of a felony

(Fairfax County, VA) – Fairfax County Commonwealth's Attorney Steve Descano issued the following statement on the conviction of Michael Hetle:

"Today, a jury of Fairfax County residents convicted Michael Hetle for the March 2020 murder of his neighbor, Javon Prather. Mr. Prather was executed on Mr. Hetle's doorstep in the Springfield neighborhood in which they both lived in broad daylight. Evidence submitted during the trial revealed that racial animus was a contributing factor in Mr. Hetle's actions.

Mr. Prather served in the Maryland National Guard and had a bright future ahead of him. He should be with his family and community today. While this outcome will not return him to his loved ones, my heart and thoughts are with the Prathers and I hope this conviction brings them some small measure of peace.

We in Fairfax County have no tolerance for such disregard for human life and I am committed to addressing crimes of this magnitude with the seriousness they merit. Accordingly, I plan to seek a life sentence for Mr. Hetle.

I want to thank Assistant Commonwealth's Attorneys Lyle Burnham and Joseph Martin for their exemplary prosecution of this case."

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