



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**D.A. Becton's Statement on the Charging Decision of Ronald Benjamin Jackson, III**

The family, friends, and loved ones of James Williams are understandably devastated by the shocking news of his death in a gun battle at the Chevron station in Antioch on November 26<sup>th</sup> — where he worked as a store clerk. Our sympathies and condolences go out to those closest to him.

The Contra Costa County District Attorney's Office declined to file murder charges in this case solely on a legal and factual determination — and not an elective, optional, or discretionary one. It was based upon an established law that clearly states a person cannot pursue another to retrieve stolen property once the threat of bodily injury or harm to the victim has subsided.

The video evidence of the incident clearly shows Ronald Benjamin Jackson, III, and another suspect exiting the Chevron station convenience store after the robbery and running from the scene. Mr. Williams is also seen in the video footage leaving the Chevron station store with a firearm while running after the robbers. Mr. Williams then fired upon Mr. Jackson, hitting him in the leg while he was fleeing and causing him to fall to the ground. Mr. Williams continued to approach Mr. Jackson with his firearm pointing at him when Mr. Jackson fired shots at Williams hitting him twice. Once in the chest and in the leg.

In the eyes of the law, Mr. Williams' actions ceased to be self-defense when Mr. Williams pursued Mr. Jackson and the other suspect with a firearm — and continued to pursue Mr. Jackson after he shot him.

The legal distinction is clear: when your property and life are being threatened, an individual is legally justified in using deadly force in self-defense. However, once the threat of harm has dissipated, the victim of a property crime cannot then use deadly force to reclaim stolen property.

However, the reality of Mr. Williams' tragic death will be a substantial factor in the DA's position in asking for greater penalties in the sentencing of the defendants.

Diana Becton, District Attorney of Contra Costa County