

MESSAGE FROM PROSECUTOR SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

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Ross sentenced to maximum of 31 to Life

(February 19, 2009, Akron) ... Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh announced today that "John Ross, II, was sentenced to 31 years to Life in Prison, the maximum possible sentence, by Judge Patricia Cosgrove. In court this morning, prosecutors asked for the maximum sentence."

Prosecutor Walsh said, "We are pleased with the sentence and believe that it is more than appropriate given the tragic murder of Ross's 11-week-old baby. I will never understand how something so senseless can happen to a helpless baby. I want to thank the Jury and everyone who worked on this case, from Akron Police Detectives, to the medical examiner, and of course Assistant Prosecutors Greg Peacock and Brian Stano."

Walsh continued, "On February 13, 2009, Ross was found guilty by a jury of Murder, an unspecified felony, Felonious Assault, a felony of the second degree, Endangering Children, a felony of the second degree, and Reckless Homicide, a felony of the third degree. Ross was found Not Guilty of Aggravated Murder.

"On July 7, 2008, the mother of 11-week-old John Ross, III left her seven children with her live-in boyfriend and the father of the baby, John Ross, II, while she went to work at a restaurant in Barberton. Around 11:30 a.m. Defendant Ross called 9-1-1 from a pay phone down the street from the house on Newton Street in Akron. Defendant called saying that his son was not breathing.

"Akron Detectives and paramedics arrived at the scene and baby Ross was lying on the wood floor in the living room where the Defendant left him when he left the house to call 9-1-1. There was no phone in the house and all the cell phones were smashed. The baby had been dead for a while. EMS did not take the baby to the hospital.

"Ross made a statement to the police that the child would not stop crying so he threw the child onto the couch, covered him with blankets and placed the child's car seat on top of him. He further stated that he pushed the car seat down for over a minute until the baby stopped crying. Ross then returned to playing video games.

"The autopsy found fresh and old broken ribs in the baby and also a pattern on the face that was consistent with suffocation."