

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **STATEMENT FROM ATTORNEY KATHARINE LEILL AND HER CLIENT VAUHXX BOOKER**

Vauhxx Booker is a victim of an attempted lynching and violent prejudice fueled attack.

We listened as you did to the press conference which was held by the attorney's for Caroline McCord and Sean Purdy and the other people in the group who on July 4<sup>th</sup>, Independence Day pinned Vauhxx Booker against a tree and shouted vile racist epithets at him.

Sean Purdy and Caroline McCord did not speak to the press. Why not? They did not apologize for the way they treated Vauhxx Booker as can be seen on the video tape.

Mr. Booker did not instigate this encounter; he did not provoke anyone to hold him against his will. He did not yell or shout or lose his temper. He doesn't need to take a polygraph test. Look at the video. There are witnesses who saw Sean Purdy's aggression and who heard the racist slurs of his friends. You cannot provoke racism.

It's Vauhxx Booker who called 911 after he was attacked.

This is what repeatedly happens.... the victim gets blamed and shamed. He gets re-victimized. Vauhxx Booker is the victim. Black people across the nation have been the victims.

This afternoon while attorney's for the suspects in the attack on Mr. Booker were meeting with the press, Vauhxx Booker was meeting with the FBI who have officially opened a hate crime investigation.

On one thing we agree. It is time for arrests. It is time for the Monroe County Prosecutor to file charges against the offenders who threatened to lynch Mr. Booker. It is time these offenders, who pulled out pieces of Vauhxx Booker's hair and who gave him a concussion, are held accountable by the law.

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7/13/2020