Mr. Art Bauereiss

District Attorney

Angelina County District Attorney’s Office

P. O. Box 908

Lufkin, Texas 75902-0908

**RE Murder of Ms. Elisha Henson and Prosecution of Justin Welch**

Dear Mr. Bauereiss:

As individuals and families living with or affected by HIV in the greater Houston area, we are deeply saddened by the senseless and brutal killing of Ms. Elisha Henson. We view Ms. Henson’s murder as a case of violence against women and a hate crime against persons who are HIV positive. Ms. Henson was a victim of the unnecessary violence and stigma that can occur as a result of ignorance and fear. Although there has been progress over the last three decades, there is still a lot of misunderstanding when it comes to HIV.

We recognize that Ms. Henson was a mother, daughter and valued member of the community. We grieve with her family for their loss. We are even more saddened by the fact that with proper education on how HIV is actually transmitted, Ms. Henson’s untimely death would have never occurred.

We are intensely grateful for the hard work of the Texas Rangers for the successful capture of Justin Welch. Now that Mr. Welch has been arrested, we realize that it is now time for your Office to investigate the facts and obtain justice for Ms. Henson and her family.

We support you in your efforts to bring everyone responsible or involved in this murder to justice and we will be following your Office’s investigation very closely. We fully expect these individuals to be prosecuted to the full extent allowed by law. We will also continue to advocate for increased awareness and education surrounding HIV.

Again, congratulations on the successful capture of Mr. Welch. We look forward to the swift and just prosecution of all involved in Ms. Henson’s murder. If you wish, we can be reached at JusticeForElisha@gmail.com

Sincerely,