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Sheriff Michael L. Chapman
Loudoun County Sheriff's Office
803 Sycolin Rd. SE
Leesburg, VA 20175

May 28, 2026

IN RE: Officer Involved Incident Regarding Conner James Peltzer

Dear Sheriff Chapman:

The Commonwealth's Attorney for Loudoun County has had the opportunity to evaluate the circumstances surrounding the death of Connor James Peltzer on January 6, 2026. The materials reviewed in the evaluation of this matter are reports from the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) Forensic Services Section, the Digital Forensic Services Section, Patrol Reports, and a briefing presented by LCSO Criminal Investigations Division. Also reviewed were medical reports from INOVA Loudoun, EMS/Loudoun County Fire and Rescue notes, body worn camera footage, vehicle camera footage, and cell phone records, among other evidence.

As stated within the reports, Mr. Peltzer had been identified as the suspect in an attempted bank robbery with the threatened use of an incendiary device that had occurred on January 5, 2026, less than 24 hours before the incident. Mr. Peltzer's family had reported to law enforcement that he was missing, possibly depressed, and known to possess a firearm. Law enforcement located Mr. Peltzer's vehicle in the Walmart parking lot, at 19360 Compass Creek Parkway, Leesburg, Virginia on the morning of January 6, 2026. The driver inside the vehicle matched the description of the owner of the vehicle, Conner Peltzer. Because of the report from the family regarding the firearm, and the attempted bank robbery with a bomb, there was credible concern that Mr. Peltzer was armed and a threat to the community when he was found in a public parking lot.

The law enforcement units arrived at the scene at approximately 11:36 AM. They announced their presence, addressed Mr. Peltzer by name, and issued verbal commands 18 times within approximately two minutes for him to keep his hands where they could be seen and to remain in the vehicle. He failed to comply.

Rather than remaining in the vehicle, Mr. Peltzer opened the door and moved to step out. Law enforcement first deployed the Less Lethal Impact Munition. Seemingly undeterred, Mr. Peltzer stepped out of his vehicle and aimed a pistol at the law enforcement officers. He held what was later found to be an airsoft replica of a Glock 9mm pistol in a shooting stance, using both hands, with his arms fully extended and pointing in the direction of the law enforcement officers and the K9 unit. The officers discharged their weapons, striking Mr. Peltzer multiple times within 2.5 seconds, and ceased fire as soon as he fell to the ground.

Immediately upon ensuring that there was no further risk to their safety or the safety of any civilians in the Walmart parking lot, the law enforcement officers rendered aid until EMS arrived. EMS took over the life saving efforts and transported Mr. Peltzer to the hospital where he later succumbed to his injuries.

When determining whether a shooting is justified, the Commonwealth compares the standard for self-defense with the evidence presented. According to the standard, the use of force is justified if a person reasonably believes that force is necessary to protect himself or others from an imminent threat to life or bodily harm, even if it later turns out that the belief was wrong. The test of reasonableness is based on the circumstances as they reasonably appeared to the person in danger. *See generally Fortune v. Commonwealth*, 133 Va. 669 (1922). The issue is whether the actual belief of the person in danger was reasonable in light of the circumstances as he perceived them. *Harper v. Commonwealth*, 196 Va. 723 (1955).

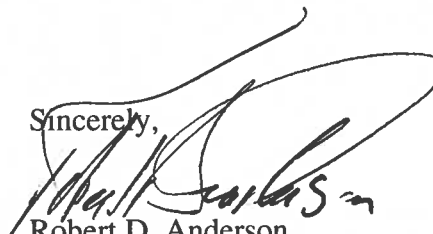
The evidence presented supports the conclusion that the use of force was justified.

In Virginia, the use of deadly force is justified if the imminent possible harm reasonably perceived is equal to the amount of force used in the defense of self or others. In this case, Mr. Peltzer stepped out of his vehicle and presented a black pistol in a shooting stance, holding it with both hands and with arms fully extended, pointing in the direction of the law enforcement officers. The officers reasonably believed that it was a fully functioning firearm, capable of killing, and an imminent threat to their lives and the lives of any civilian in the parking lot that day. There is no requirement that a law enforcement officer use all feasible alternatives to avoid a situation where deadly force may be required (*Plakas v. Drinski*, 19F.3rd1143, 1148 (7TH Cir. 1994)); however, the officers in this case attempted first to dissuade Mr. Peltzer from a deadly course of action by deploying the Less Lethal Impact Munition. Furthermore, there is no duty imposed on an officer to use deadly force in a less-than-lethal manner. Once a person is justified in using deadly force in the defense of self or others, there is no obligation to attempt to disable the subject short of killing them.

The evidence presented supports the conclusion that use of deadly force was justified.

Therefore, the Commonwealth finds that the actions of the deputies involved, and their response to the threat that the subject posed, were without fault and were lacking in any violation of criminal statutes. Their actions were lawful and justified.

Sincerely,



Robert D. Anderson
Commonwealth's Attorney