



Driver Who Killed Officer On Bridge Sentenced To Life Plus 13 Years

by Brian Brueggemann
January 24 2023 6:00 AM

EDWARDSVILLE — Madison County State's Attorney Tom Haine announced Monday that a driver who fatally struck Police Officer Brian Pierce Jr. on the McKinley Bridge while trying to flee from police has received a sentence of life in prison, plus 13 years.



The sentence was handed to Caleb L. Campbell, 24, of Florissant, Mo. In December, prosecutors won a conviction against Campbell for first-degree murder.

“The loss felt by the family and loved ones of Officer Pierce is unimaginable. There is no sentence that could even begin to give them a sense that justice has been adequately served. Officer Pierce and his family will remain in our prayers,” Haine said.

He added, “As I’ve stressed before in this case, fleeing from the police is always wrong and dangerous, and if an officer dies as a result of such actions, those responsible for killing the officer will face murder charges.”

Testimony and evidence presented at trial by Assistant State’s Attorney Lauren Maricle and Assistant State’s Attorney Ryan Kemper showed that Campbell was driving a red Dodge Charger at speeds up to 98 mph and attempting to elude police in the early-morning hours of Aug. 4, 2021. His car struck Officer Pierce, who was standing on the bridge after deploying a spike strip across the roadway. Campbell had a handgun in the vehicle and an active Missouri warrant for his arrest when he fled from a different Brooklyn officer who was attempting to stop the driver for traffic violations.



Dash-camera video from the pursuit showed Campbell speeding through intersections, ignoring traffic-control devices and speeding past other motorists who were stopped on the bridge. The other motorists had stopped in the westbound lane of the bridge, behind the parked patrol vehicles of Officer Pierce and a Venice Police officer.

Maricle argued Monday that a lengthy sentence was necessary in part to send a message that, if you flee from police and end up killing someone, “you’re guilty of murder, and you’ll go to prison for a long time.”

In sworn testimony at trial, a Brooklyn officer said roughly one in three attempted traffic stops in his jurisdiction results in the motorist attempting to flee across the McKinley Bridge. Associate Judge Neil Schroeder’s sentence consisted of a term of natural life for first-degree murder, 10 years in prison for failure to report an accident involving injury or death, and three years in prison for failure to stop following an accident involving injury or death.

In a victim-impact statement, Pierce's sister, Alexis Castro, said her brother's death has affected her entire family. "We all died that day," she said. Castro also offered an apology – to her brother's partner. "I am so sorry for what you had to witness," Castro said. Pierce's mother, Tammy Pierce, also gave a victim-impact statement. She directly addressed Campbell. "You murdered an innocent man to save your own butt," Tammy Pierce said. "Was it worth it?"

Tammy Pierce thanked the victim advocate from the State's Attorney's Office who has "shed so many tears with us." Tammy Pierce said that her son went to work every day with a goal of making the community safer for everyone. She looked at Campbell and said, "Today, Caleb, he won."

Haine commended Maricle and Kemper for their diligent work on the case, along with Venice Police, Illinois State Police, Brooklyn Police and other agencies that assisted in the investigation and the apprehension of Campbell.