

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA**

United States )  
 )  
v. ) 1:19-cr-00063  
 )  
Joseph Cecil Vandevere )  
 )

**Declaration of Victim Losses and/or Victim Impact**

I, Qasim Rashid, am victim in the above-referenced case and I  
Name of Victim  
believe that I am entitled to restitution in the total amount of \$ \$224.60.

       My specific losses as a result of this offense are summarized in the following pages.

       I have been compensated by insurance and/or another source with respect to all or a portion of our losses in the amount of \$ n/a. The name and address of my insurance company(s) and claim number(s) for this loss is listed in the following pages.

       I have included comments on how this offense has affected my life and that of my family in the following pages.

I declare under penalty of law that the information included in this Declaration is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Date 1/22/20 Signature 



List **miscellaneous expenses** (type and amount). Include such items as child care during court appearances, transportation costs during the investigation, etc.

Type of Expense	Amount of Expense
Trial Expenses: food, car fare	\$ <u>224.60</u>
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____

**SUMMARY OF EXPENSES (THOSE NOT PAID BY INSURANCE) AS LISTED ABOVE FOR PRIMARY VICTIM:**

Total Direct Monetary Loss	\$ _____
Total Amount Paid by Victim for Medical Expenses	\$ _____
Total Lost Income or Wages	\$ _____
Total Unreimbursed Property Loss	\$ _____
Total Miscellaneous Expenses	\$ <u>224.60</u>

**TOTAL UNREIMBURSED FINANCIAL LOSS FOR PRIMARY VICTIM: \$ 224.60**

**SUMMARY OF EXPENSES PAID BY SECONDARY VICTIM(S) (INSURANCE OR OTHER ENTITY) AS LISTED ABOVE:**

Total Amount Paid by Insurance or other Entity for Medical Expenses	\$ _____
Total Amount Paid by Insurance for Property Loss	\$ _____

**IN THE EVENT THAT RESTITUTION IS AWARDED BY THE COURT, PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION FOR DISBURSEMENTS OF PAYMENTS:**

Name:	<u>Qasim Rashid</u>
Address:	<u>43 Shepherd's Hook Way</u>
City:	<u>Stafford</u> State: <u>VA</u>
Zip Code:	<u>22554</u> Country: <u>USA</u>
Telephone No:	<u>(630) 709-8040</u>
Email:	<u>qasim.rashid@gmail.com</u>



**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA  
ASHEVILLE DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	)	DOCKET NO. 1:19CR63
	)	
v.	)	
	)	
JOSEPH CECIL VANDEVERE	)	
	)	

**QR VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT**

1. My name is Qasim Rashid and I am a father, a husband, a son, a Virginian, and a politician, who is working to create a more just and equal America. I am also an American Muslim. More specifically, I am an Ahamdiyya Muslim. We are a sect within the larger Muslim community, yet in Pakistan, where my family comes from, we are a persecuted minority. To escape that persecution, my family immigrated to the United States over 30 years ago, following its beacon of religious tolerance, believing that here, in the land of the free, we would be safe.

2. To this day, I believe strongly that the United States stands for universal religious tolerance and is a safe haven for religious communities around the world.

3. But when my life was threatened by Mr. Vandevere, I was thrown back to the violence and extremism from which my family had fled. On March 13, 2018, Mr. Vandevere Tweeted at me a horrifying image of the lynching of Leo Frank, a Jewish man who was abducted and lynched by a Georgia mob fueled by anti-Semitism in 1915. On my computer screen glowed a black and white specter of our not-so-distant past, which Mr. Vandevere had captioned with slurs against the Prophet Muhammad, commanding me to meet Mr. Vandevere and “VIEW YOUR DESTINY.”

4. Initially, I was stunned. I remember staring at the image and Mr. Vandevere's message and thinking there had been a mistake or that I was misinterpreting the Tweet, that it could not mean what it so obviously meant. Slowly the reality crystallized: Mr. Vandevere had threatened me with violent death for no reason except for my faith. It may seem foolish, but my next thought was: *Did I say something to provoke him?* But of course, I hadn't. And immediately, I felt fear, fear that he was close to my family, to me. I wondered where my wife and young children were and whether they were safe from this man who had threatened to lynch me.

5. Mr. Vandevere may not have known it, but his threat resonated with dark particularity with my soul. Mr. Vandevere's threat against me, here in the United States, evoked the experiences of the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan, including members of my own family. Not even twenty years ago, my cousin, my own flesh and blood, was lynched, dragged through the streets in Pakistan, his neck broken and his life taken because of his faith. As he was murdered under the bright sun, his neighbors watched and the police stood still.

6. Seeing Mr. Vandevere's threat, I felt found, thousands of miles away, by that same generational pain of violent religious persecution that my family had fled.

7. Mr. Vandevere's threat continues to haunt me and my family to this day, carrying echoes of our past into our present. His threatened violence changed our behavior, it changed my relationships, and it changed how I engage with the world. Now, I tell my wife where I am at all times, so if I don't come home or if she doesn't hear from me in time, she'll know that something has happened to me and sound the necessary alarms. Constant check-ins are crucial for us, because we now know that communication could be a matter of life or death.

8. Even with these efforts, I know my wife fears for me constantly. She is unable to sleep, she is afraid when I leave the home, and she's afraid if I'm late. In the middle of the night,

she gasps awake from nightmares, tears on her cheeks, having dreamt that I'm dead or that I have been stabbed or shot. And because I know how deeply her fears for me affect her, there are things I can't share with her.

9. Mr. Vandevere's threat has also transformed how I present myself publicly. I don't post photos of my wife or children on social media, because I don't want someone who hates me or hates Muslims to be able to recognize them. I don't share my location nor do I post photos that could reveal where I am at any given time until I have left, because I don't want someone to be able to find me and hurt me. When I speak at events, friends who are concerned for my safety have volunteered to act as security, ready to defend me in case someone tries to attack me. And my wife and I keep our home stocked with food out of fear that a time may come when we can't leave our home for a month, believing that it may be safer at some point to stay out of sight and not leave.

10. I am forced to act now, in many ways, like someone who is hunted.

11. My parents are frustrated. They're angry that the promise for which they left their homeland, this vaunted American religious tolerance, has been torn away from them and that they now have to fear for the security of their son as they feared for the safety of their family members in Pakistan.

12. Above all, the most difficult part of this experience is how it impacts my children and my relationship with them. My oldest son is 11, which is old enough to know that *something* is not right in his home and with his parents. While, as a rule, my wife and I don't shelter our kids, I don't want my son to know that someone wanted to murder his father. Hiding the truth from him is painful, but it's also painful to realize that one day, he *will* find out that someone wanted to kill his father because of his religion. And so, that intergenerational pain of religious persecution and violence will have found him here, too.

13. This is what Mr. Vandevere did to me, did to my family, did to my loved ones.

14. And here is what I want to happen to him:

15. I want Mr. Vandevere to experience reform. I want him to feel remorse. I want him to recognize his wrongdoing and feel that he is accountable for it.

16. My belief that the right path is one aimed at reform comes from Islam, where the foremost goal of punishment is not to inflict pain, but to rehabilitate, to make the person understand his wrongdoing and feel true remorse so that he is no longer a danger to himself or society.

17. I do not believe that the best avenue for that kind of transformation is necessarily prison. At the same time, I do not want to make light of Mr. Vandevere's offense and the lasting harm that it has inflicted on me and my family. I want him to feel that his violence had serious consequences. To that end, he needs to experience more than a slap on the wrist. As my family's history in Pakistan shows, when the government tolerates violence against minorities, it all but guarantees the escalation of such violence to deeper, more scarring and bloody harms. Accordingly, I believe that serious monetary restitution, hitting Mr. Vandevere in his pocketbook, teaching him that bigotry and violence are not cost-free, is the path to reform. I hope that this response to Mr. Vandevere not only teaches him a lesson, but also instructs others, who may carry similar hatred in their hearts, of the real and serious consequences of holding and acting upon such hatred.

18. Accordingly, I seek that this Court fine Mr. Vandevere to the maximum extent the law permits for his offense: \$250,000.

19. In my own heart, I do not hold any bitterness or vindictiveness against Mr. Vandevere. Mr. Vandevere hated me—perhaps he still hates me—because I am Muslim, but it is

my Islamic faith that mandates that I be compassionate to him, that I push for the reform and rehabilitation of Mr. Vandevere's soul rather than the punishment of his body.

20. What happened to me and what happens to Mr. Vandevere is in only small part about myself and my family. It also speaks to a bigger question about the country we want to live in. If we don't stop this bigoted violence, if we don't convey a strong message about the consequences of such violence, we stand poised to normalize it.

21. Ultimately, I want accountability for Mr. Vandevere. I want a strong, unquestionable message that this country will not tolerate violence against religious minorities and that this is a nation that will protect people regardless of how they worship. I want no one else—regardless of their faith—to undergo what my family and I have undergone and I hope that by speaking out, I am taking a step towards ensuring that future.



Qasim Rashid

**1/22/20**  
Date