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MARJORIE R. ESMAN  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

July 16, 2008

R. Chris Nevils  
Winn Parish District Attorney  
P.O. Box 1374  
Winfield, LA 71483-1374

Dear Mr. Nevils,

The American Civil Liberties Union of Louisiana writes to you concerning your office's investigation and possible prosecution in the case of the death of Baron DeAundrea Pikes. As you are aware, Mr. Pikes died on January 17, 2008 in Winn Parish while in police custody. Mr. Pikes' State of Louisiana Death Certificate states that his death occurred when he was "electro shocked X 9 while in police custody and restraint." The certified document goes on to state the cause of Mr. Pikes' death to be "Cardiac Arrest following nine 50,000 volt electroshock applications from a conductive electrical weapon."

The American Civil Liberties Union is dedicated to the principle that *all people* should be treated equally under the law. Civilians and members of law enforcement must equally obey the law and must also face equal treatment by the government when they disobey the law. Once the Louisiana State Police conclude their investigation, it is our hope that the Winn Parish District Attorney's Office will employ the same rigorous procedures in making prosecutorial decisions concerning the death of Mr. Pikes as the office employs in making prosecutorial decisions in all other parish deaths. Additionally, we hope the District Attorney's office pursues restitution in Mr. Pikes' case as aggressively as it would in any other Winn Parish death. An investigation lacking in integrity, fairness, or transparency following the tragic death of Mr. Pikes will only serve to further fracture the public's trust in the Winn Parish Criminal Justice System.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Esman  
Executive Director

cc: Colonel Michael D. Edmonson, Louisiana State Police