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**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Commonwealth v. Lamont Johnson

Jury Recommends 25 Years and 6 Months in Prison in Murder without Body Case

Virginia Beach, Va. – Colin D. Stolle, Commonwealth's Attorney for the city of Virginia Beach, announced that Lamont Johnson, age 45, formerly of the 2100 block of Carrene Drive in Virginia Beach, Virginia, was found guilty by a jury on charges of Second Degree Murder and Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor (2 counts). The jury fixed his punishment at 25 years and six (6) months in prison. Circuit Court Judge James C. Lewis, who presided over the four-day trial, will formally sentence Johnson on August 2, 2022.

The Commonwealth's evidence proved that on July 1, 2018, Lamont Johnson lived in a townhome with Bellamy Gamboa, who was the mother of their twin 20-month-old children. They had an argument regarding the logistics of paying their rent. With one of the twins in his arms, Johnson shoved Gamboa down a flight of stairs, then he and the baby tripped and fell down after her. Gamboa attempted to call police and told Johnson he was going to jail for assaulting her. Johnson put the baby in a pack-n-play then shoved Gamboa to the ground. He choked Gamboa to her death, while the twins looked on, screaming and crying.

Johnson wrapped Gamboa's body in a comforter, put trash bags around her feet and head, and tied her with a computer cord. He left the twins alone and went to buy cigarettes, a drink, and put gas in his car. He then stuffed Gamboa's body in his trunk and placed her in a dumpster in Chesapeake. The children were left alone in the home again when he disposed of her body. Johnson then gathered up some of Gamboa's belongings and left her car next to a dumpster in the Lake Edward neighborhood of Virginia Beach. He took her phone with him on this trip but destroyed it and tossed it into the dumpster. He then returned home and went to sleep.

Multiple people contacted the Virginia Beach Police Department when Gamboa did not show up for work or her teenage son's baseball game the next day. The police department and members of the community searched for Gamboa for countless hours over the month of July. Johnson never assisted in the search for Gamboa.

Detectives questioned Johnson several times in the days and weeks following her disappearance. On July 28, 2018, Johnson was arrested on charges of Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor for leaving the twins home alone. During a lengthy interview with detectives, Johnson finally confessed to killing Gamboa and disposing of her body in a dumpster off South Military Highway in Chesapeake. Johnson took detectives to the dumpster where he discarded Gamboa's body. Investigators determined that the contents of that dumpster were taken to a trash site in Portsmouth on July 3, 2018, and they were shredded into very small pieces and incinerated.

Police searched Johnson's phone and determined he searched for dumpster trash sites and other incriminating information. On July 29, 2018, Johnson was charged with Gamboa's murder. Gamboa's body was never recovered.

Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney Janeé D. Joslin and Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney Katharine D. Aicher prosecuted this case. Please contact Macie Allen if additional information is desired.

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