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For Immediate Release

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Court Transcript 1/3/2022:

<https://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/21177245/20220103-clinton-21-cf-396.pdf>

Official Statement by QUANADA

Judge Robert Adrian of Adams County, Illinois, unfairly reversed his own sexual assault guilty verdict

The public can fight back by filing complaints
with the judicial inquiry board

Quincy Area Network Against Domestic Abuse (QUANADA) in Quincy, Illinois, is outraged that Adams County Judge Robert Adrian took the highly unusual action to reverse his own October conviction of Drew Clinton on felony sexual assault charges involving a local female high school student.

Clearly, Adrian's sympathies ultimately fell with the adult rapist, not the victim, a 16-year old high school student. She had attended a graduation party last May, fell asleep on a friend's couch, and awoke to find a pillow over her face and 18-year-old Clinton raping her.

At a January 3 sentencing, after hearing arguments on two post-trial motions, Judge Adrian reversed course and declared Clinton "not guilty." Clinton had faced a mandatory minimum prison sentence of four years but instead walked free with just five months of jail time served.

According to transcripts, Adrian acknowledged that, by law, the court was required to sentence Clinton to the Department of Corrections for four years. Since this was

a bench trial rather than a jury trial, Adrian simply reconsidered his verdict, ruled that the prosecution failed to prove their case, and found the defendant not guilty.

Adrian's dangerous and highly atypical conclusion to a sexual assault case demonstrates to assailants that they are above the law — even after they are convicted in a fair trial. Anita Rodriguez, the prosecutor in the case, said she had never seen such a ruling in her 40-year career.

This judgment further reinforces the fact that standards for women have always been impossibly high while they are impossibly low for men. This is exactly why so many survivors don't feel safe to tell their stories or fight for justice.

Adrian's actions in recent days have further eroded the community's confidence in his judgment and impartiality. On January 12, Adrian told a prosecutor to leave his courtroom because the attorney had "liked" a Facebook post by QUANADA expressing outrage about Adrian's decision to reverse the ruling. "I can't be fair with you," Adrian told the prosecutor. "Get out." These are alarming comments from a judge who has sworn an oath to be fair.

Adrian sends a chilling message to other rape victims that their behavior — not the rapists' — will be judged. His approach is: shame the victims, free the rapists.

One message is clear: If you are raped, avoid Judge Adrian's courtroom.

QUANADA believes Adrian should be removed from office, the conviction previously rendered through a fair trial should be restored with the appropriate sentence, and Adams County judges must be appropriately trained to handle sexual assault and domestic violence cases.

We encourage those who agree and want to fight back against Judge Adrian's "shame the victims, free the rapists" mentality, to call Chief Judge Frank McCartney of the Eighth Judicial Circuit Court and file complaints with the judicial inquiry board; visit www.illinois.gov/jib.

About QUANADA

QUANADA provides emotional, physical and crisis support to victims of domestic and sexual violence in west-central Illinois. Services include free and confidential counseling, legal/medical advocacy, emergency shelter, and transitional housing. QUANADA is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to anyone of any age who has been battered or abused.

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