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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nov. 8, 2023

**Judge grants Haine request to dismiss killer's motion to withdraw guilty plea**

**Edwardsville, IL** — A judge has granted a request by Madison County State's Attorney Tom Haine to dismiss convicted killer Timothy M. Banowetz's motion to withdraw his guilty plea for the murder of attorney Randy Gori.

"We hope this ruling brings an end to this convicted murderer's absurd legal gamesmanship," Haine said. "We are going to continue make every possible effort to ensure this brutal individual serves every day of his 70-year sentence, so fully deserved, so that the family and loved ones of Randy Gori can continue to heal with a sense of closure."

In December 2021, after pleading guilty to first-degree murder and armed robbery, Banowetz was sentenced to 70 years in prison.

Circuit Judge Kyle Napp on Wednesday granted Haine's request to dismiss Banowetz's motion to withdraw his guilty plea and sentence. Banowetz's motion was received by the Circuit Clerk in December 2022 – months beyond the 30-day window allowed for withdrawing a guilty plea – but the defendant claimed his mail was held up in prison.

At a hearing Wednesday, First Assistant State's Attorney Chad Loughrey and Assistant State's Attorney Lauren Maricle presented evidence and testimony showing that Banowetz could not have mailed the motion from prison in December 2021, as he had claimed.

Randy Gori was fatally stabbed at his rural Edwardsville home in January 2020. An investigation led by the Madison County Sheriff's Office quickly resulted in the arrest of Banowetz, who was located near the scene, wearing a bloody shirt. Banowetz, now 32, was homeless at the time. The investigation revealed that Gori's murder was part of a scheme to rob him.

When police found Banowetz, a note fell from his pocket. The note mentioned restraining the family with cable-ties and duct tape, having them withdraw \$4-6 million from a bank, killing them and burning the home.