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**KIMBERLY KESSLER FOUND GUILTY OF MURDERING  
NASSAU COUNTY MOTHER JOLEEN CUMMINGS**

State Attorney Melissa Nelson announces that Kimberly Kessler (also known as Jennifer Sybert) was found guilty by a Nassau County jury of First-Degree Murder in the killing of Joleen Cummings. A jury also found Kessler guilty of Grand Theft Auto. She now faces a mandatory sentence of life in Florida State Prison. The Honorable James Daniel will conduct a sentencing hearing for Kessler on Jan. 27, 2022.

On May 14, 2018, the Nassau County Sheriff's Office was contacted by Joleen Cummings' mother to report her missing. Cummings, a hair stylist at a local salon, had failed to meet her ex-husband the previous evening to pick up her children for Mother's Day. Investigation revealed Cummings' SUV in the parking lot of a nearby home improvement store. Surveillance footage from the early morning hours of May 13, 2018, shows Kessler exiting Cummings' SUV and walk toward a nearby convenience store, where she talked to an attendant and purchased a bottle of water, all of which was captured on the business' surveillance system.

Investigative efforts at the salon uncovered blood throughout the business, as well as evidence of an extensive clean-up effort. Further DNA tests revealed the blood belonged to Cummings. Law enforcement then began a search effort for Kessler — a stylist from the same salon — who was found sleeping in her car at a rest area in northern St. Johns County. Kessler had physical injuries to her face consistent with a struggle. Kessler was initially arrested for for stealing Cummings' car. Over the next days and weeks, investigative efforts uncovered a host of additional evidence implicating Kessler, among it: that the Jennifer Sybert name she was using was false; that she purchased a number of items — including an electric carving knife, zip ties, and garbage bags — used to clean up the crime scene and dispose of Cummings' body; that surveillance footage shows Kessler disposing of several large garbage bags into a dumpster behind

the business following the murder and clean-up; that Cummings' blood was found on Kessler's scissors and boots; and that Kessler used internet search engines to research murder- and missing-persons-related terms before and after killing Cummings, including "Joleen Cummings no body no crime."

Despite extensive efforts by law enforcement, Cummings' body has not been recovered.

Kessler was later indicted for First-Degree Murder.

"Joleen Cummings was a loving mother, devoted daughter and sister, and friend. Her murder and disappearance at the hands of Kimberly Kessler shocked every corner of Nassau County," said State Attorney Melissa Nelson. "I am grateful for the work of law enforcement and our office to achieve justice for Joleen's mother, Ann Johnson, and everyone who loved Joleen."

The case was investigated by the Nassau County Sheriff's Office, St. Johns County Sheriff's Office, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and FBI Jacksonville and prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys Donna Thurson and Ashley Young Terry.