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Assistant District Attorney Leila Kermani and Hon. Daniel P. Fitzgerald:

Please retry Joseph Petcka, the one-time minor league pitcher and aspiring actor who brutally killed his girlfriend's cat Norman on March 27, 2007. Even though Manhattan jurors deadlocked 11-1 at Petcka's recent aggravated animal cruelty trial, the public demands justice for this senseless act of violence.

As you know, jealous rage drove Petcka to fatally batter and kick former girlfriend Lisa Altobelli's 8-pound orange and white tabby. Claiming "You love Norman more than me!" Petcka was later overheard wooing the cat with "Norman, Norman, Norman." Altobelli was asleep when Petcka reportedly grasped her neck, kneed her side, and said Norman had bitten him.

Altobelli told a Manhattan Supreme Court jury she fled, believing that Norman was directly behind her. Instead, she later discovered her cat's mutilated body beneath a bedside table. According to an ASPCA investigator, Norman suffered smashed ribs and teeth. His internal injuries were so severe, he died as his lungs filled with blood.

If this case results in a retrial for Petcka, please seek maximum penalties allowed by law, including incarceration and fines. Petcka ought to undergo psychological evaluation and intensive anger management counseling. He should be barred from contact with animals.

Petcka had vented rage on Norman in the past. Altobelli told jurors she'd found her frightened cat drenched in water. "He was hissing [at Petcka]," Altobelli testified. "Obviously, that was a huge red flag." But the flag wasn't red enough to convince all jurors. Similar "blind rage" once stirred Petcka to slam a door on another ex-girlfriend, severing her fingertip (although this incident was banned from the trial).

Violence against animals is a well-known precursor to violence against humans. Randall Lockwood, Ph.D., a consultant to cruelty investigators, law enforcers, and mental health professionals, assesses an offender's style of abuse. Lockwood describes violence against non-threatening creatures unlikely to retaliate as a precursor to assaulting children, the elderly or disabled.

In fact, animal cruelty investigations often uncover domestic violence or other signs of a troubled family, P. Arkow notes in *Breaking the cycles of violence: A guide to multi-disciplinary interventions*.

Violence rarely occurs in a vacuum. Please do not let Joseph Petcka harm another living being. Thank you for your pursuit of justice in this disturbing case.

Sincerely,