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Dear District Attorney Porter,

Still reeling from Michael Vick's dogfighting case, the global public is shocked to learn another (far less publicized) Atlanta Falcons player faces animal cruelty charges.

In February 2007, defensive tackle Jonathan Babineaux allegedly smashed the head of his girlfriend Blair Anderson's pit bull mix, Kilo, following an argument. The dog succumbed to severe head trauma. Babineaux said the "accidental" death resulted from a dog trainer's recommendation to swing Kilo by his leash to subdue aggressive behavior.

Criminologists agree the intensity of vicious behavior — regardless of a victim's identity — is a forerunner to more violence. Babineaux "unintentionally" slammed a dog's head into a wall. Clearly, Kilo endured a brutal death at the hands of Babineaux. What other aggressive acts is this man capable of?

If Babineaux is convicted, please advocate the maximum five years incarceration and \$15,000 in fines for felony animal cruelty charges. He ought to undergo psychological counseling and be barred from possessing or living with animals. I urge you to forego any plea bargains that reduce the crime to a misdemeanor with lenient penalties.

When the justice system excuses blatant cruelty because victims are deemed undeserving of our mercy, our society is capable of great bloodshed. We can never close our hearts to the suffering of others. Furthermore, men prosecuted for animal cruelty are five times as likely to be arrested for other violent crimes, according to Utah State University professor Frank Ascione's extensive research.

Randall Lockwood, Ph.D. — regularly enlisted to aid cruelty investigators, law enforcers, court officials and mental health professionals — identifies perpetrators who view themselves as victims and/or project blame onto others ("I followed the trainer's advice; It was the dog's fault for bad behavior.") as "repeat offenders...resistant to intervention."

Even the FBI red flags animal abuse when profiling homicidal criminals and their potential for recurring violence.

Jonathan Babineaux poses a risk to other animals and humans. Thank you for recognizing the gravity of this crime and punishing him to the fullest degree.

Sincerely,