

Tim Parsons

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... sentence could be appealed



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At the conclusion of ... trial the defendant and his attorney wanted to make two points. ... wanted to thank his supporters and attorney William Routsis told the Tahoe Daily Tribune he intended to appeal the sentence.

Acquitted on a manslaughter charge in the death of Edward Ortega, ... was convicted Friday of two misdemeanor counts of moving a body and failing to immediately notify the coroner of a death. Judge Eddie Keller ruled both misdemeanors were the same act so he could only sentence

to one of them. was given a 90 day sentence. He would have to physically serve two-thirds of the time, or 60 days, in El Dorado County Jail. He was released on his own recognizance.

"The jurors understand what happened on that mountain," Routsis said. "I was very disappointed in the sentence of 90 days in jail. I think it was an abuse of discretion. It was inconsistent with the findings of the jurors. The jury found that he defended himself lawfully, legally."

Routsis said his interaction was quite "heated" with the judge, who he said was retiring after the trial.

"Probation is the only reasonable interpretation of this case," Routsis said. "The judge abused his discretion. The mitigation was so overwhelming with a man with no criminal record, to give him jail time on this case I feel (it's) abuse of discretion. There was no articulated factors in aggravation."

Moreover, Routsis has a problem with how the district attorney's office investigated and handled the case. He intends to make an appeal within 30 days.

"The way Placerville prosecuted this case has to be looked at by independent judicial eyes outside the county of Placerville," he said.

, who appeared emotionally drained, said rather than be finished with the whole ordeal he supports an appeal because otherwise "all of the events that have happened in the last five years would disappear."

The former owner of the South Lake Tahoe business Rodney's Import Auto felt newspaper coverage of the trial was unfair and he wanted come to the Tahoe Daily Tribune to comment to its readers. statement included praise for his lawyer.

"At this point I don't look at William as an attorney," said. "I look at him as an honest man who happens to be an attorney. His ethics and compassion and leaving no stone unturned over the last five years has been really remarkable.

"During this ordeal I've had a lot of support from friends, and I want to thank them all for believing in me and standing behind me and writing me letters. All of those people are welcome to my campfire anytime."