

February 3, 2025

Written Statement of Kyler Wallgren

Honorable Commissioners,

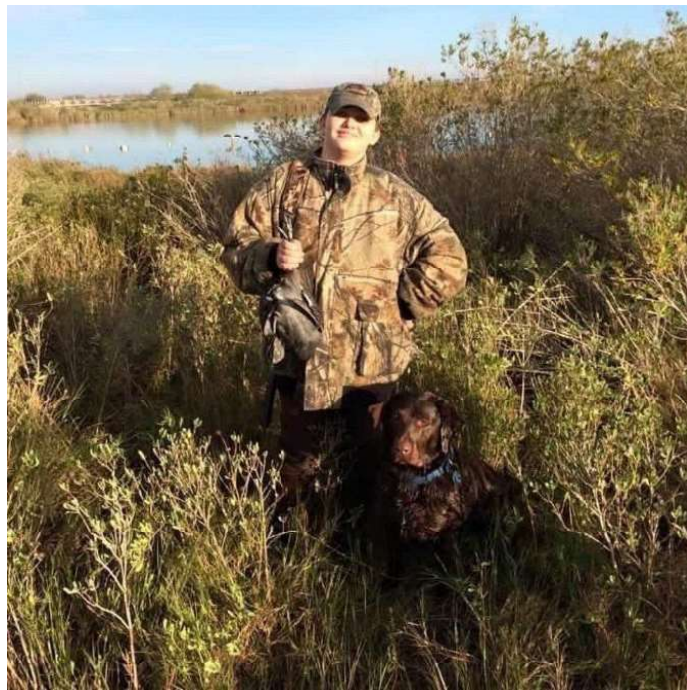
My name is Kyler Wallgren, and I am 23 years old. Thank you for inviting me to tell my story.

To understand how my case has impacted me, you need to understand where I come from. I grew up in Alice, Texas, outside of Corpus Christi. My first memories are of me when I was two or three years old, on my babysitter Ms. Laurie's ranch.

By the time I was six or seven years old, my favorite thing to do was shoot pellet guns. Once I finished my homework after school, me and my dad would sit out on the back porch and shoot pellet guns almost every day. I grew up hunting. Everyone in my family owns a gun, so I was taught gun safety at a really young age and shooting pellet guns helped me practice gun safety. I spent years learning how to hold a gun, control the trigger, and how to aim and shoot humanely. As soon as I learned how to use a gun safely, I was on the ranch, helping my family. By the time I was nine years old, I'd shot my first deer.

I spent most of my time on a ranch where my family worked as ranch hands. The ranch sold cows to the community and was a good 15 minutes from where we lived. We'd take care of the animals

and the grounds, and in exchange we were allowed to hunt on the ranch to put food on the table. Being on the ranch taught me respect and work ethic. I learned how to care for the livestock and respect nature. Part of caring for the livestock, was



Me and my dog Crocket, the first time I shot a duck

learning how to protect them from predators, by safely firing a shotgun. We'd also hunt to feed ourselves. We'd hunt rabbits, hogs, snakes, and once-a-year, we were allowed to hunt a deer. Nothing went to waste. One rabbit could feed me for two days and feed my family for dinner.

When I was a kid, my mom had a custom-made shotgun that was passed down to her from my grandpa. It was a family heirloom, and it was priceless so after I dropped it, I wasn't allowed to touch it again. When I wasn't using my mom's heirloom shotgun, I used an old shotgun that would only shoot lead shots (I couldn't shoot ducks or turkeys with that gun). When I was about 14 years old, my dad bought me a Maverick 22-gauge pump shotgun for me to use, that became mine when I turned 18. Some of my best memories are the weekends spent with my dad out on the ranch, hunting to help feed my family.



Me and my dog, Dude

In 2023, when I was charged in federal court, I could barely make ends meet and not for lack of trying. I was working every day, full-time, first at a meat factory, then for the shipyard where I work now. I was just 21 years old, but had my own place, and bills I couldn't pay. I was living in Corpus Christi, about an hour away from my family and the ranches I'd grown up on, and I was trying to build a community of my own. I got mixed up with the wrong crowd and got talked into taking a job to make \$100 that I really needed, to deliver Glock switches to a buyer I didn't know, for a seller I hardly knew. It was the worst decision I've made in my life and I'm going to live with the consequences of that decision for the rest of my life.

Like lots of people, I've been through trauma. Even when I got arrested, I was scared, but knew I'd get through it, just like I've gotten through everything else. But because I grew up hunting, knowing I will never be able to hunt again is heartbreaking. I won't be able to hunt to put food on the table for my family by using a skill they spent my entire childhood developing. And I won't be able to help my family in the same way I used to on the ranch anymore. So, even though I wasn't sent to prison, every day I regret what I did, and feel remorse.

My judge gave me a sentence of probation, not because there was anything special about my case, but because Congress and the Guidelines Manual told her she could. I was 21 years old when I was arrested, and I'd never been in trouble before in my life. I had and still have my whole life ahead of me, and no plans to get into trouble again. Having a felony on my record, I can't vote, and finding good work will be harder, but I believe I can succeed. I'm grateful that Judge Ramos also believed that I could do better and be better with support, and every day I work to try to be a better version of myself.



Me on my bike.

Today, I'm no longer mixed up with the wrong crowd. Now, I'm a member of the Band of Brothers Motorcycle Club. I know some bike clubs have a bad reputation, but this club isn't one of those. It's a true social club where my club members are a second family. I've been a member for about a year. I pay my club dues, I ride, and I volunteer.

I'm grateful to my probation officers for the support they've given me since the day I was released on pretrial release. Since my sentence, I've done everything my probation officer has told me to—I've done the evaluations and the treatment. It's harder for me to find a job with a record, so I've tried my best to keep my job and plan to do community service with the Gulf Coast Humane Society. As much as I would like to be in DC in person, I won't be able to because I have to work, but I am grateful to have the chance to tell my story.

If you do what you are proposing to do, instead of a sentence that allowed me to keep working, care for my dog Dude, keep paying my bills, and turn the page on the worst mistake of my life, I would have been looking at *years* in prison. I would have lost my transportation, my apartment, and everything I owned, on top of losing my way of life. But because Judge Ramos believed in me and gave me probation, I kept my job, my bike, my dog, and I found a new community. I took advantage of probation's services and will soon have my monitor removed. I have a different way of life than I did before, and I didn't need years in prison to get here, I just needed support.