

DA's fight against innocence claim may have left dangerous gunman on street

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Last October, a Philadelphia judge [ordered a new trial](#) for Eugene Gilyard and Lance Felder after the pair presented [evidence that they were wrongfully convicted](#) in the 1995 murder of North Philadelphia businessman Thomas Keal. Gilyard and Felder were then released after spending 15 years behind bars.

But the Philadelphia District Attorney's office vigorously opposed their petitions for review of their convictions at every turn — even after evidence was presented that two other men had committed the murder. Yesterday, Gilyard's lawyers at the **Pennsylvania Innocence Project** revealed in court that one of the two men identified as having possibly committed Keal's murder, Timothy Gooden, had been arrested and charged in a December 2013 kidnapping and attempted murder.

District Attorney spokesperson Tasha Jamerson says that the kidnapping and attempted murder case is the subject of an Indicting Grand Jury because it involves witness intimidation, and so only limited information can be shared.

"The victim was abducted outside of SugarHouse casino," she said. "Through the course of the night he was shot several times, the defendants demanded money from his family and ultimately dumped the victim outside a local high school."

The description of that case matches one of a man who was shot on the 4900 block of Springfield Avenue and then left lying behind Northeast High School. At the time, police [told The Inquirer](#) that initial reports that the man had been followed from SugarHouse Casino were false and concocted by the victim to cover up his involvement in a drug deal gone wrong.

In court filings on Feb. 3, 2012, Gilyard's lawyers [first identified](#) 36-year old Timothy Tyler, aka Timothy Gooden, as the possible true identity of one of the men involved in killing Keal. People present in the neighborhood the night of the murder had identified him only by the nickname "Tizz."

Jamerson will not say whether the District Attorney has ever investigated Gooden's possible involvement in Keal's murder even though it has been two years since Gilyard's lawyers named him.

Putting the wrong person behind bars, exoneration advocates point out, not only robs an innocent person of his freedom but also leaves the true perpetrators on the street.

"This information is not new, these claims have been brought up several times before during a previous PCRA [Post Conviction Relief Act] hearing," says Jamerson. "As we have stated on several occasions, this case is under review by our PCRA unit, and has been for over a year now."

The Pennsylvania Innocence Project declined to comment.

This week, District Attorney Seth Williams [announced](#) the creation of a conviction integrity unit to review possible wrongful conditions. The move won praise from exoneration advocates who have accused Williams of aggressively fighting compelling cases of wrongful convictions.

Also charged in the kidnapping case, alongside Gooden, are Kylieff Brown, Kareem Cooley, and Raheem Turner.