

**Mayor's column for  
The Enterprise  
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I was stunned to read in Tuesday morning's Everett Herald that a superior court judge in Everett had agreed to release Noel Evan Caldellis, 19, from jail to go home for the holidays and be with his family.

You probably don't recognize the name, but those of us at Edmonds City Hall know it well. He is the young man accused of the shooting death of Jay Clements last September 3. Jay was the son of the City's Finance Director Dan Clements.

Caldellis has been held in the Snohomish County jail on \$1,000,000 bail since his arrest. Last Monday the judge reduced bail to \$250,000 and approved a plan that would restrict Caldellis to his parents' home and to be electronically monitored. The suspect's relatives put their homes up as collateral to pay the bail. He can have no visitors or phone calls and must surrender his passport and driver's license.

The Prosecutor's Office offered serious concerns about the plan, saying that Caldellis demonstrated a propensity for violence and bad decisions. The judge apparently felt otherwise, even though witnesses have said that the suspect fired into a crowd of about 50 youths outside a home in Brier on that fateful September night, killing Clements. By the way, he got up the next morning and went to work, serving coffee to folks who had no idea what he had been involved in the night before.

Caldellis' mother claims he will be found innocent in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary. That attitude alone would be enough for me to worry that if he were set free to his mother, his risk of flight would increase dramatically. I'm appalled by the process that allows bail to be reduced by 75 percent, that allows a suspect to go "home for the holidays," and gives him the opportunity, with or without family help, to flee the country and escape trial. I hope my concern is unjustified.

Meanwhile, the family of Jay Clements watches our legal system at work. And we watch the anguish that they face every day without their son. I'd like the judge and the Caldellis family to know that those of us here in Edmonds watching the process would be glad to pony up \$250,000 so that Jay Clements can be "home for the holidays" as well.