

Struggle wins partial victory for Renardo Lewis

written by Lizz Toledo
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Renardo Lewis

Marietta, Ga., May 2 — The courtroom was packed! There were barely any seating spaces left empty. It appeared as if both sides had the same amount of supporters, but when Renardo Lewis' lawyer asked for his supporters to stand up, everyone in the courtroom on both sides stood up in support of this African-American man who was unjustly arrested at an IHOP restaurant and kept in jail for 32 days without bond.

The state started their case by going all the way back to a 2001 arrest. Under this racist criminal justice system, it doesn't matter that Mr. Lewis pled guilty and paid his debt in full. This almost 20-year-old conviction could be used by the state to pile in more charges under an oppressive repeat offender law that disproportionately affects poor people and people of color.

It was downhill after that. The state presented witnesses that appeared to lie on the stand, including a police officer who claimed that Mr. Lewis grabbed her by the throat, something that has already been proven to be false by the viral video recorded by this writer, an Atlanta People's Power Assembly activist.

Many community members testified as to the true character of Mr. Lewis, that of a mentor and a hard-working husband and father. Judge Kell reviewed the documents and granted Mr. Lewis a \$50,000 bond. That's only a partial victory because he is not allowed to go to his own restaurant, where he works, as he is under house arrest.

The struggle continues!

