

# MOTHER ARRAIGNED IN NEWBORN'S DEATH

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MAYS LANDING- The mother who allegedly left her newborn baby to die in an Atlantic City trash can on the fourth of July, made her first appearance in court today. Some say this terrible tragedy could've been avoided.

"You have the continuing right to remain silent..." As 23 year-old Ashley Ray Eberson stands before the judge, more than 30 family members and friends stand behind her in support.

Authorities say Eberson is the mother of the the newborn baby boy that was found dead in a trashcan outside a South Texas Avenue home in Atlantic City on July fourth. It's alleged she delivered the baby that afternoon at her boyfriend's home, and placed the baby in a plastic trash bag before leaving it in a trashcan in the back alley.

Eberson's since been charged with aggravated manslaughter, unlawful disposal of human remains, and tampering with evidence. "The maximum available sentence is 30 years in prison," said Murray Talasnik, first assistant prosecutor.

Also present during today's proceedings was Susan Ferrier, of the Baby Blue Foundation, which she and her husband started after their own personal experience of finding an unwanted newborn on a Ventnor beach. "It's about bringing dignity to this baby's tragic life," said Ferrier, "it's also about the mother as well, you know, we want to prevent this from happening."

Ferrier says more needs to be done to let pregnant women know about the Safe Haven Act, which allows someone to give up unwanted infants to any hospital emergency room or police station without fear of prosecution, no questions asked. "These children are not disposable," said Ferrier.

Eberson's family declined to comment today, but "be strong Ashley, we love you," could be heard as she was lead out of the courtroom.

Eberson will attend a bail reduction hearing on Thursday. She is currently being held in the Atlantic County jail on \$500,000 cash or bond bail.