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JONESBORO, AR – A Jonesboro man pleaded guilty Friday to Murder II charges in the March 2018 slaying of his girlfriend, Craighead County Prosecuting Attorney Scott Ellington announced.

Terrance Bernard Taylor, 40, entered his plea Friday morning in Craighead County Circuit Court. Circuit Judge Cindy Thyer sentenced Taylor to 30 years in the Arkansas Department of Correction with an additional 10 years suspended imposition of sentence, DeProw said.

Taylor pleaded guilty to killing Shonda Gonzalez, 37, of Jonesboro, on March 17, 2018. Medical personnel were called to Gonzalez' Gilbert Street home on a call of a woman not breathing. When they arrived, they found Gonzalez' body inside the house.

Taylor told police Gonzalez suffered a medical condition and may have had a fatal heart attack. Medical examiners later determined Gonzalez died of strangulation and asphyxiation and suffered a blunt force trauma.

Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Tiarra Tanner said she talked with family members about negotiating a plea rather than going to trial. Taylor was scheduled to be tried on Sept. 16.

“With this plea today, we were able to bring justice for Shonda Gonzalez’ untimely death,” Tanner said. “This gives the family some closure and gives them time to heal,” Tanner said of the plea. “This spares the children from the emotions of a trial. We proceeded with the plea with the family’s blessing.”

Gonzalez had four children; each prepared a victim impact statement presented to the court.

Because Taylor was considered a habitual offender, he is not eligible for parole and will serve the full 30 years in prison, Tanner said. Taylor had been convicted of battery in 2000, discharging a firearm from a car in 2002, delivery of a controlled substance in 2009 and two charges of aggravated assault in 2007 and 2014.