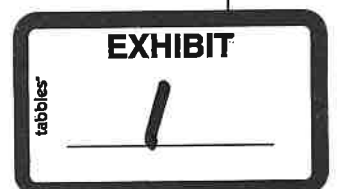


1 **Declaration of Deja Taylor**

2 I, Deja Taylor, hereby declare as follows:

- 3 1. My name is Deja Taylor. I am 31 years old and reside in Clark County,
4 Nevada. I am the daughter of Leonard Taylor, who is currently
5 incarcerated on Missouri's death row.
- 6 2. I had no contact with my natural father in my early childhood years. I was
7 told that he was sent to prison before I was born. Nonetheless, many
8 family members and friends of the family have always spoken highly
9 about my dad. I was told that my father was a stand-up person who
10 always looked out for his family and friends. My late gay uncle, Taylor
11 Perry, was frequently targeted in the community because of his lifestyle.
12 My dad protected him from being attacked in the streets.
- 13 3. The first time I had any contact with my father was on Thanksgiving
14 weekend in 2004 when I was thirteen years old. At that time, I was living
15 in Los Angeles, California, with my mother Mia Perry. My father called
16 out of the blue and made arrangements with my mother to meet at my
17 Aunt Cricket's home in Watts, California, on either the Saturday or
18 Sunday following Thanksgiving. We all spent about three hours together.
19 My Aunt Cricket has struggled with substance abuse and addiction for
20 many years and lost touch with the family. I have no means of contacting
21 her.
- 22 4. During the meeting at my aunt's house, my father called his girlfriend in
23 St. Louis to tell her that he had reconnected with me. He told me her



1 name was Angela. During the phone conversation between my father and
2 Angela, he handed me the phone and I spoke with Angela for a few
3 minutes. I also spoke briefly to one of her children although I do not
4 remember her name. The entire phone call lasted about 20 to 30 minutes.
5 Angela seemed very excited to meet me, and I was excited as well. My
6 father and Angela told me that they wanted me to come out to St. Louis to
7 meet her and her children in person. I was so happy to connect with my
8 father and his new family that I cried quite a bit that day.

9 5. After this meeting in 2004, I lost contact with my father for a few years.

10 After I learned that he was in prison in Missouri, we reconnected, and we
11 communicate regularly by letters and phone calls.

12 6. I longed to meet my dad all my life and after we finally met, just like that,
13 he was gone again. Finding out that my father was back in prison, and
14 this time on death row, was very hard for me to deal with. I did not talk
15 much about my dad's situation because no one I knew had a parent on
16 death row. When I ended calls with my dad I sometime wondered if it was
17 the last time that I would speak with him. I regularly watched the
18 television series "Lockup" and other prison shows just to see if I might see
19 my dad. Whenever I did not hear from my dad and he missed a weekly
20 call, I would become nervous until we spoke again. I live in constant fear
21 of his possible execution and have no idea what I will do without my
22 father in my life.

23

- 1 7. Although I have only met my father twice – the first time in 2004, in
2 California, and the second time this past March 2022, during a facility
3 visit in Missouri – we have developed a deep bond with one another
4 through letter writing and phone calls. My father is a constant source of
5 positive support, and he gives the best advice on a wide variety of topics.
6 When I told my father that my mother and I were not getting along and
7 not talking at one point, he told me not to cut my mother out of my life. He
8 explained that my mother had a rough life and helped me see things from
9 her perspective. He said it may not be easy to get along with her all the
10 time, but it was important for me to always show her love and keep the
11 lines of communication open. After speaking with my dad, I went ahead
12 and made up with my mom.
- 13 8. When my grandmother passed away earlier this year my dad was my
14 number one supporter. I was extremely close to my grandmother and
15 completely devastated by her death, but my dad helped me get through
16 the grieving process. He reassured me that everything was going to be
17 okay because she was in a better place and no longer suffering as she had
18 done for a longtime.
- 19 9. When I was wrongfully fired from a restaurant management position, my
20 dad spent a lot of time talking to me about the situation so that I would
21 not become discouraged. He provided me with advice on how to handle
22 the matter and encouraged me to seek legal assistance to properly address
23

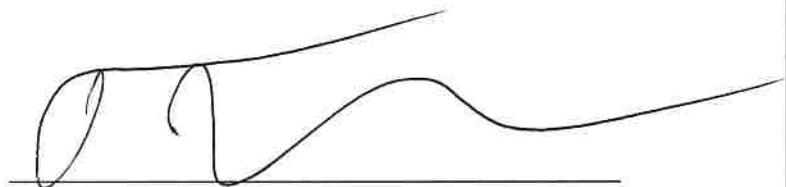
1 the matter. My dad always talks to me about my career goals in general
2 and provides me with very useful input and ideas.

3 10. I sometimes struggle with bouts of depression, and these are the times
4 when I need to hear from my dad the most. Whenever I am down, he
5 always finds a way to tell me just what I need to hear to lift my spirits.
6 He always finds a silver lining and helps me focus on the brighter side of
7 situations.

8 11. My dad knows that I worry about him, so he always tells me that he's
9 coming home soon, but I am not sure this is the case. My dad has been
10 emotionally down when I've spoken with him recently and he has not been
11 calling as regularly as he usually does.

12 12. If my father is ever executed, it will be a tremendous blow to me on many
13 levels. My dad has been my main source of support since he's come into
14 my life, and it will be hard for me to find the strength to go on without
15 him. I know that he has had his day in court and the jury found him
16 guilty, but the legal system seems blind to the impact that his death will
17 have on innocent loved ones. I feel like I am being punished for something
18 that I took no part in.

19 I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, to
20 the best of my knowledge. This declaration was executed in Clark County, Nevada,
21 on November 9th, 2022.

22 
23 _____

Deja Taylor