

June 7, 2016

Governor Nikki R. Haley
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Governor Haley,

First I want to extend my thanks for your kind letter concerning my Officer of the Year award. It is a great honor to be chosen amongst a cast of outstanding coworkers and to work for an amazing department.

Unfortunately my letter is for a completely different reason. I'm writing to you as a last resort plea on my husband's behalf to have his law enforcement certification returned to him. My husband, Jon, worked for the Lexington County Sheriff's Department from October 2011 to January 2015. He was fired from LCSD for misconduct by Interim Sheriff McCarty. The internal affairs division stated that he was untruthful in an internal affairs investigation. I won't go into specific details but Jon had gone to internal affairs to report an assault on him by his immediate supervisor. The criminal investigation was not turned over to SLED as proper protocol dictates. Instead they investigated whether Jon threw a ticket book at a fleeing vehicle that nearly struck several officers during a check point which occurred directly prior to the assault. They coerced him to take a polygraph on that incident and told him he had failed the polygraph thus justifying the firing. It was later revealed that he did not pass or fail the polygraph; it was returned as inconclusive. The above supervisor quietly left LCSD during this melee and is now employed at the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy. When Jon was terminated, he was told that his certification would remain intact. He was hired by Saluda Police Department and this should have been the end of the story. Jon, though not happy, was planning on working at Saluda Police Department and leaving the whole unfortunate incident at LCSD behind him.

Two weeks later Jon was informed that LCSD had his certification revoked through the SCCJA. He requested a hearing on the matter and continued to work at Saluda Police Department. When the hearing arrived at the SCCJA, Jon discovered that several statements were omitted from LCSD's original investigation that painted him in a favorable light. This is when he also found out that he did not fail the polygraph. The polygraph was entered as evidence even though it can not be used in any court of law. LCSD sent a representative to argue their case that had absolutely no knowledge of the incidents or the investigation that followed. SCCJA took three months to decide that they would not reinstate Jon's certification. In these three months, SCCJA lost their head attorney who was actually one of the SCCJA representatives to hear Jon's case,

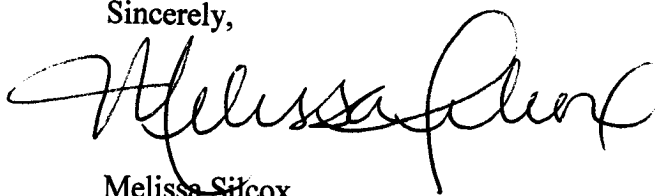
the favorable statements of other officers that Jon's entered as evidence during the hearing were omitted once again, and SCCJA appointed a gentleman who had no authority to make a decision on the case brief the Training Counsel who makes the final decision.

Jon appealed the case again to the administrative courts as one last effort to get this certification back. He retained John O'Leary as his attorney. Since August 2015, the SCCJA and Mr. O'Leary have been trading briefs and submitting them to the judge in this matter, John D. McLeod. This was supposed to be the last stop on this train. My husband had received word that the administrative judge kicked this case back down to SCCJA because of several mistakes. I don't understand why it wasn't ruled in his favor if the SCCJA made mistakes during this legal battle. My concern is it will go back to the SCCJA and they will vote to uphold the revocation of the certification. I find it impossible to believe that the Training Counsel will be able to be unbiased enough to look at the facts of the case instead of being annoyed that this case is brought before them again. Not to mention, the supervisor he reported for the assault is employed by the SCCJA. Bottom line is this was supposed to be the end and now we are stuck in an endless loop of limbo.

Jon filed a complaint with the Human Affairs Commission and after a thorough investigation; they even concluded that this was a case of retaliation. They requested back pay, annual leave pay and Jon's certification be reinstated and LCSD refused to cooperate. According to the investigator, LCSD refused to send requested documents. They are in the process of providing Jon with a "Right to Sue" letter. This has gotten ridiculous.

I write this letter to you as one wife to another, one mother to another. I can't go through this for another 6 months to a year while LCSD and SCCJA jerk my husband around. He has applied to numerous civilian jobs in the meanwhile and is being blackballed. As soon as a company calls LCSD to verify employment, they cut contact with Jon. I have continued to work during this time and make a decent salary but it is still not enough to cover all the bills. I was pregnant during most of this escapade with my son who was just born in September. I've had to make ends meet with credit cards and now that debt is out of hand. I make too much to qualify for any government assistance and quite frankly, I don't want to have use government assistance. We are not looking for a hand out by any means or for those involved to be punished. All I am asking is on behalf of my husband, my children, and myself, is for Jon to be able to work again as a law enforcement officer in this state. I'm asking for my husband to be able to make a living again to be able to contribute to our family. I'm not sure if you can do anything at all but I really don't know where else to turn to. We have exhausted all our options. It would be a shame for him to have wasted 19 years in this field in both Virginia and South Carolina for it to end because of a handful of vindictive people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Melissa Silcox". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Melissa" being more prominent than the last name "Silcox".

~~Melissa Silcox~~