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Page: 1 of 4 05/1/2016 04:18 PM TO:18037345167 FROM: Chandra Beasley PHONE #8033619313

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Sent on: Sunday, May 1 2016 at 7:17 PM EDT

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Re: Lexington County Injustice concerning Candice Beasley

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It is with great pain that I am writing to you on behalf of Candice Beasley. First, let me give you some background information of what has transpired. Candi as we call her, has been friends with a woman for 16 years, this friendship started when they met in church as young pre-teens. The young woman later entered the military, got married, and had a son. The only person she could imagine naming the God-Mother was Candi. Candi has been in the mom and child's life since the beginning. She was at his Christening, was there for the mom and child when the mom went through a divorce and the child's father was sent to prison. He and his mom have had to move in with her twice after being homeless. Candi has provided clothing for him, given Christmas gifts when he had none, Birthday gifts when he had none, and has watched him on several occasions while his mom had to go to mandatory drill for the military.

March 2014 Candi received a phone call from her friend who at the time was living in Candice hometown of Kansas City, MO. She stated that her PTSD was very severe after serving 2 tours in Iraq and that she had been physically, mentally, and verbally abusive to her son and that she felt like she wanted to hurt her son and could not care for him any longer. Candi who is 29, single, with no kids, and had recently moved to South Carolina for a new start frantically decided to step in to save her God Son. So without hesitation, Candi paid for the child a plane ticket to get him to South Carolina as fast as possible.

Candice sought for and was granted temporary custody of the child in September and he was able to enroll into school where his social issues with kids came out. From the beginning of daycare in April to mid-August he had over 10 writes ups. When kindergarten started from August to Oct. 13th he had more than 21 write ups and 8 in school suspensions

On Monday October 13th, the child got in trouble at before and after school care for hitting a little girl in the face. On Tuesday around 11am. Candi got a call from SC DSS stating she needed to meet them at the house. She got to the house and they told her that the child had spilled syrup on his clothes that morning and a male gym teacher had taken him to the bathroom BY HIMSELF and CHANGED HIS CLOTHES, (he is 5 and can change his own clothes) and noticed marks on his body and called DSS who in return called the Lexington County Sheriff's department. They said they spoke to the child who said "God Mommy Candice beat him every day after school with a rope, and even went as far as to say that her sister beat him, his mom beat him, and his dad (who Candi explained to no avail has been in prison since the child was 8 months old and just recently got out and started back up phone communication)". DSS took a statement took a jump rope out of the house as "evidence". The next day around 5pm, Candi was hauled off to jail. I was told her bond hearing would be the next day and she was being charged with 4 felony counts of child abuse because the child said the abuse happened at home and at school. That Wednesday Candi (who had no previous criminal record) had a bond hearing where she was denied bond.

Candi stayed in jail for 22 days until a second bond hearing on Nov. 4th, where the judge released her on a \$50,000 bond. During this bond hearing the judge asked about how the child got here. The DSS workers did not have the correct information about the circumstances of him coming, the timing and date of him coming, nor that was Candi the one who financially paid for him to come. This is interesting because once her attorney received the evidence they had against her (after many requests I may add) it was clear that the documentation from the supposed

psycho therapist that interviewed the child had been falsified. She stated that DSS had given her information regarding the background of how the child got here, the document was dated October 6th. Let me remind you on Nov. 4th...the DSS workers did not have that information until it came out in bond court.

During the trial which took place August 10th and was quickly concluded on August 12th, several interesting facts came out about the investigation or lack thereof and can be validated in the court transcripts.

* The "expert physician on child abuse" was actually an ER doctor at Lexington County ER. He admitted on the stand that he is not a child abuse specialist and that there were several other places in the area that were more qualified for the child to be taken to. He did nothing but a "physical" exam, but no blood work up to detect for diseases, blood disorders, congenital skin diseases or defects of any kind. He stated there was no need for x-rays, and no need to prescribe any salve, pain meds, etc. for the bruises he observed. He could not explain the bruises and could not with confidence say they came from a jump rope nor the timeline of the bruises.

*The investigators did not look at his past medical records, interview any other witnesses such as teachers (not until right before the trial), my other sister, did not get in touch with the parents who would have told them the child has accused others falsely of abuse before such as a past daycare, nor did they look at any of the child's prior behavioral patterns which includes lying and manipulation. All they wanted was an escape goat to make up for the past mistakes that SC DFS and Lexington County Sheriff's Department has made. The judge also did not allow any of this evidence into the trial.

*The child's only visit to the doctor while in DSS custody was the initial visit to the ER physician. They never took him back for any follow-ups.

*Candi was never read her Miranda rights, the officer and DSS worker lied and said they gave them to her verbally, yet there is no documentation of her ever given a statement, nor a signed Miranda rights form. Yet there is a signed form where Candi volunteered for the officer to take the rope.

*The child at first stated he was whipped and beaten naked, yet on the stand twice he stated he was fully clothed when spanked.

*No pictures were taken of the supposed "crime scene", no D.N.A. testing was done on the jump rope, the clothes that the child had on the day he went to school are now missing?

*His teachers who had never reported any signs of abuse as mandatory reporters got on the stand and stated "in their opinion as teachers children that acted out by demonstrating aggressive behavior were more than likely exhibiting learned behavior at home." These teachers are not experts, yet their testimony and opinions were allowed by the judge.

*The full DSS file was not turned over to Candi's defense attorney until two days before the trial. In it there were notes that showed that the child since being in DSS Custody had been written up several more times, and suspended from school. The child also told his foster mother "he would have her put in jail, just like he did his God Mommy", solicited sex on two separate occasions from other children in the foster home, and was eventually relocated from the foster home. None of this was allowed into evidence by the judge.

*On the stand the child started answering questions BEFORE they were even being asked. This led Candi's attorney to believe the child was coached.

*The motion to request a psych evaluation for the child was denied.

* The state gave custody of the child back to his mom about 3 weeks before the trial. His mom suffers from not only PTSD, but has a history of schizophrenia and bi-polar disorder in her family. His mom later revealed that she was told they would withhold custody unless she agreed to have the child testify against Candi. The child has been subject to going to so called "counseling" with the DSS coworker. It was also revealed that the state has been paying the moms rent, and giving her food, gas, and clothing stipends.

*After the trial the judge took less than 10 min to go ahead with the sentencing phase. He gave a long speech about having 2 grandsons, called Candi cold and calculated, congratulated the sheriff's department on a job well done, and said he was going to give her a 10 year sentence because she did not apologize. Candi has always expressed her innocence, she has no criminal background, she has held a steady job all of her life, and she is only 29.

Candi is a loving, caring, person who took in a child when no one else was willing and now she is in prison for something she did not do. There was a case against a former DSS supervisor in Union, SC where they found the foster child chained to the porch. She was charged with the same charges they gave Candi and she pleaded guilty and was given a 16 month time served sentence and her husband was given 2 years.

The post-trial motion hearing was Nov. 3rd and the judge advised that he wanted to look at the transcripts from the trial before he made a ruling. There has been no ruling since then. The mother of this child has since relocated again with the child because she is on the run from Kansas City warrants and the trial records offered public access to her Columbia address. We ask that you please have someone to look into the injustice of how this case was handled, the lack of evidence, and the prejudice of this case due to the recent media coverage of the scrutiny of SC DSS with the handling of the Timothy Jones case.

Warmest Regards,

Friends and Family of Candice Beasley