1	IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
2	LASALLE COUNTY, ILLINOIS
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5	PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS,)
6	Plaintiff,)
7	v.) Case No. 11-CF-606
8	JOHN A. HULS,
9	Defendant.)
10	REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS had in the above-entitled cause
11	before the HONORABLE H. CHRIS RYAN, Presiding Judge of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, Criminal Justice Center, Ottawa,
12	Illinois, on July 19, 2012.
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14	APPEARANCES:
15	Mr. Brian J. Towne
16	LaSalle County State's Attorney Mr. Jeremiah Adams
17	Assistant State's Attorney
18	on behalf of the People;
19	Mr. Robert Campbell
20	Attorney at Law
21	on behalf of the Defendant.
22	REPORTED BY: Cindy M. Forth, C.S.R.
23	Official Court Reporter Ottawa, Illinois 61350
24	License #084-002530
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MR. TOWNE: Your Honor, this is People of the State of Illinois v. John Huls, 11-CF-606. The defendant is present. He is out of custody represented at this time by counsel. The matter comes on today for the defense's motion to appoint special prosecutor. Present on behalf of the State is myself and Mr. Adams.

THE COURT: Counsel, you ready for your motion then today?

MR. CAMPBELL: Yes, your Honor.

THE COURT: Just before we get started a response was filed by the State's Attorney to your motion. There's a form in here which had one of the individuals, Mr. Gillette's name on it. It's got his social security number on the application so I redacted it. So there's no need for that to be in the court file when it's a public document, okay.

MR. TOWNE: Thank you, your Honor.

THE COURT: All right, counsel, go ahead with your motion.

MR. CAMPBELL: Your Honor, as I think that we've written extensively on this matter so I'm not going to belabor every point.

THE COURT: That's fine.

MR. CAMPBELL: I would like to just make a couple general comments to start.

THE COURT: Go ahead, counsel, make your arguments.

MR. CAMPBELL: Okay. Judge, I think what we have

here is a central problem -- if I may stand -- is the State's

Attorney is a government office and they have, as a

government office, appointed their specific duties that they

are here to do. Most of those entail commencing with the

prosecution being the start of an indictment or criminal

procedure, Judge.

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Now, what we have here is that the State's Attorney of this county created a program called a police force.

Their own police force and that police force was created with one stated desire and that desire is to make money. Now, to do this, they hired ex state police officers. They instructed them to pull over cars with out-of-state plates and immediately walk drug detection dogs around.

As we know this Court's ruling, that as long as the stop is not prolonged, that's perfect legally. I believe this is a legal extension of your Honor's ruling in Cabalas. They walk around the perimeter of the car and these out-of-state cars are pulled over ostensibly for going, in many cases, two to three miles over the speed limit or simple things like not using a turn signal and they're being pulled over ostensibly for that regard.

And I think we see clearly as the place was created

to collect money and drugs as the force was that that is the real reason and I think what's interesting about these infractions, Judge, is that there's no evidence to backup these initial infractions. The infractions, the speeding. There's no radar gun reports. The turn signals. The video is never on for the actual infraction and every car pulled over has out-of-state plates, Judge.

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And, in fact, if there are no drugs or money found, there's a simple warning given and there's no accountability in that. They'll never be in front of the court. They don't have to report. They don't have to do anything. Either the police officers or the individuals pulled over. They are not actually issuing traffic citations in any of these cases.

So the sole purpose is to pull over and to search a car and basically what it looks like is being done from the information we obtained is that they're pulling over cars from California, from Colorado, from Arizona where they think will be drugs and it's simply every car that comes by they're walking the dogs around in a hope to obtain evidence, your Honor.

And then the kicker in this whole thing is not that the motivation is enough to create officers to create stops, but a conflict of interest arises and improper motivations can arise when, according to the minutes that we've received from the LaSalle County Board, that these officers do not bring in money, they do not get paid. Now, that does not sound like government work. That doesn't sound like a government office. So basically they have a high, a very high motivation to pull over any cars and do what they can to get drugs because that's where their salary is coming.

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In addition, it had been said — I believe the State's Attorney is disputing it now but it was in the paper — that they receive, when they make the stops, they receive 60 percent of the funds. Now, this raises extra issues. It shows basically what we're saying here we see by the fact that each of these cases it's basically a money grab.

Again, it's not proper for a government office. It shouldn't be the purpose of a government office. We have the legislature to say how these places are funded and funding brings other legislative issues and priorities. So by setting funding these have priority through the State. The legislature did not start this program. Only one person started this program and that's Mr. Towne.

Now, all of these factors and, again, all of the legal arguments we have, I think this thing doesn't look right, it smells wrong and, in fact, looking at the law that we presented here in this case we see that it, in fact, is wrong and unconstitutional.

So with that at this point, your Honor, that's all I have to say at this time and we would ask that — actually, let me address a conflict of interest. Because this is an illegal program, your Honor, setup improperly. The person that set it up is, in fact, the boss here and is running the prosecution. To me that's an inherent conflict of interest and we've addressed these in our motion as well so at this point in time we are asking for somebody outside the county, outside the State's Attorney's Office to prosecute this matter so that finally we'll bring some accountability to these arrests, your Honor. Thank you.

THE COURT: Mr. Towne.

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MR. TOWNE: Thank you, your Honor.

Your Honor, counsel through the course of his written responses, his motion itself and his discussions here today seem to center around and the source, apparently, of most of his complaints is a newspaper article. It's not case law. It's not anything that I even wrote. It's something that he read in the newspaper and is now taking exception with.

He has indicated all the problems that he has with drug interdiction stops. Drug interdiction stops take place in every county, in every state of this country. So the majority of his first — the part of his argument here having

problems with written warnings and the fact that there are pretextual stops being made and the fact that there's no record of the radar reports, as he put it, well, that doesn't happen anyway in any kind of case anywhere in this country. And so to suggest that that is a problem that requires a special prosecutor, it doesn't even make any sense.

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The bottom line is is he's read this newspaper article. He's indicated that because the newspaper article says that I get 60 percent of everything. First of all, I don't get anything personally. This is the State's Attorney's Office and it's the LaSalle County Fund 25 and it's a forfeiture account. These accounts are separate and apart. They are audited and the statute — the statutes of the State of Illinois are what created these funds and the statutes of the State of Illinois direct how these funds are to be used and the statutes of the State of Illinois say that these funds are to be used to enforce laws regulating controlled substance of cannabis. That's what these funds are being used for.

The State's Attorney's Office doesn't get anything extra. We've provided affidavits from Chief Sangston, who is a partner or a member of the SAFE unit. That the Court can take judicial notice of every drug fine, that fine order that comes across his desk, and knows that the SAFE unit itself

does not get any money. The Spring Valley Police Department gets money. The State's Attorney's Office gets Fund 25 money which is all pursuant to the statute. The percentages do not increase because we're the ones that are doing it.

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So the bottom line is is counsel seems to have a problem with drug interdiction as a whole. He's misrepresenting where the money is going to to try to convince this Court that there's a conflict in some way.

The case law is what declares the guidelines this

Court must use to look at for conflict and there are three

major reasons why something becomes a conflict. I understand

it's at your discretion but the case law does give you

guidelines for that and those guidelines don't apply in this

case. I'm not a named party in this matter. I'm not getting

any money in my pocket for this matter and there's no

appearance of impropriety.

Counsel not once during his argument stated what the impropriety that it appears to be here other than the fact that he claims that my sole motivation for doing it is to get money and he cites a newspaper article for that.

Well, if he read the entire newspaper article, your Honor, or if you've seen it as part of one of the exhibits, you'll see that the primary goal of the SAFE unit is to interdict drugs and to take drug dealers off the street.

As an ancillary matter that was suggested in the newspaper in addition to arresting bad guys, in addition to taking drugs off the streets, in addition to seizing vehicles and other assets that are used in the drug trade, yes, whatever portions that the statute allows my office to receive will go into funds that will enforce drug laws.

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If those funds enforcing drug laws assist my office in reducing the amount of money that the property taxpayers are submitting into my budget to my office, then that's a benefit to LaSalle County as well. It's not a benefit to Brian Towne. It's a benefit to the people of LaSalle County. It's not a conflict. It's not a problem. It's not an issue.

And with all due respect, that's what the Court has to consider so I can't tell you what to say but they seem to rely on People v. Lange and that seems to be one of the big things that they put in their response and People v. Lange says that it's a conflict because it's my employees that are doing this.

People v. Lange in their own opinion say, "In so ruling we emphasize that our holding is based on the specific facts of this case." And this case is that an Assistant State's Attorney in People v. Lange went above and beyond. He went out on a manhunt for this guy. He tracked down the evidence for this guy. He personally charged this guy and he

prosecuted this guy as an Assistant State's Attorney and that is fact -- facts specific to Lange.

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In this particular case, your Honor, the SAFE unit are special investigators. As we've presented in our response, special investigators that the statute authorizes me to appoint. That the statute says what it takes to allow them to be peace officers and then what their powers are based on those requirements and they've met those requirements and they are considered peace officers.

They are not assistant State's Attorneys. They're not paralegals. They are not secretaries. I would not have a paralegal or a secretary come down here and argue a motion to suppress in front of you. They're employees of my office but they're not lawyers. They don't present matters to the Court because that's not their job in my office. The special investigator's job in my office is to be a peace officer and to conduct investigations, to do what is needed in his particular duty or as part of his particular duties and responsibilities.

So I won't have Dan Gillette come in here and argue and litigate because that's not his role in our office. The SAFE members are a part of my office. Their specific duties are to enforce the laws. The drug laws with cannabis and controlled substance.

Based on that -- and at this point in time I guess
I would also add then that, first of all -- or wherever
counsel indicated that he got the source that they don't get
paid if they don't make cases, is completely fictional and I
don't even know where the source for that is. They're on
contracts where they are given a certain amount of money per
year and that that's if they make one case, no cases, 20
cases or a hundred cases, that is their salary.

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Much like it doesn't matter how many cases my prosecutors prosecute, they get their salary annually. That's it. There's no incentive based, you know, you get what you pay for kind-of-a-thing here. It's a situation where they have their salary and that's all there is to it. When it comes down to what they're doing, they're enforcing the laws at the direction under the statutes that allow them to do so.

Last but not least, your Honor, I would indicate, once again, of all the reasons why we would need a special prosecutor in this case, counsel has not submitted any that are applicable in this matter. They've suggested some case law. They've suggested these issues in the newspaper article but there's no appearance of impropriety here. There's not stated a specific appearance of impropriety.

Everything that is being done in the SAFE cases is

being in any other case that we've prosecuted. The Illinois State Police, for example, they make highway interdiction stops. They talk to my chief deputy on every given case. Hey, did we do this right? How are we doing with this? How did we do that? And we guide them. We assist them in law enforcement.

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The SAFE team, their cases are treated exactly the same. They go out, they investigate crime, they contact us for legal support and we provide it. There they need felony approval just like any other police agency in LaSalle County. We make charging decisions based on the law and the facts like we do in any other case in LaSalle County and as this Court is aware, there have been issues with other law enforcement agencies in LaSalle County and, therefore, we didn't just put Dan Gillette into some other unit where they've got credibility issues and concerns. We started the unit that will follow what I tell them which is the law.

So, for example, in cases with the Illinois State

Police where we have a situation where I know this Court's

opinion on obstructed view windshield and I know how the

Court feels about it and how the Court has ruled about it.

The Illinois State Police, while we've had meetings with them

about it, they'll continue to make stops that involve

obstructed view windshield. My SAFE officers understand what

your rulings are. They've been directed by me not to make stops for obstructed view windshield and they don't and you'll never see an obstructed view windshield stop by SAFE because they're under my control. They are authorized by me and they understand what I tell them.

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So while he suggests that there's no, you know, ability to separate powers or whatever, I would suggest that the SAFE unit individuals have even more access and more requirements of them than other law enforcement agencies in the county.

THE COURT: Counsel, you have anything else?

MR. CAMPBELL: Yes, briefly. Thank you, Judge.

THE COURT: Sure. Go ahead.

MR. CAMPBELL: Just to start, Mr. Towne is asking that we trust him. That usually the difference between the police officer and the State's Attorney says, I'm in control. I'm going to tell them what to do. Nobody needs to check my work. No outside agency needs to check this.

These are his employees making stops on the street and the key point here, your Honor, is he can say this is what all state police officers do but he can't say this is what all State's Attorney's offices do because there's not one example of another State's Attorney created police force making drug interdiction stops in the state and none that I

have seen anywhere. And maybe there's not a case that exactly says that the State's Attorney can't do this because it has not been done. And he is limited by the statute and the statute says they can only assist the special investigators and the State's Attorney do. Drug interdiction at the base level is not their duty and there's reasons for that.

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And where we're getting the funding information from is from what we would tender from the committee that says, one of them here, that the officers will be paid from the drug fund and forfeiture fund. So the legislature whose job it is to fund police forces, this is a police force and it's the legislature's job to fund them not the State's Attorney who created the police force and not the drug forfeiture assets that they seize.

So this is a basic problem of separation of powers. There's one man creating a police force and bypassing the legislature's intent on how to create police forces and how to fund police forces, Judge.

And the drug forfeiture law says itself in its legislative statement — again, this is in our motion — says specifically that it is not intended to be the sole provider of funds for a unit and that's what it is.

So with that, Judge, again, we've made all these

arguments here. It's not -- I'm sure you've looked at this 2 closely as I know your Honor and it's not just based on newspaper articles, which is direct quotes from Mr. Towne 3 which I never heard him retract at anytime, Judge, but it's 4 5 based on the law, it's based on the legislature and it's 6 based on the constitution so we ask you to uphold this. It's 7 a basic conflict of interest when this program is created. It's the only program created. It's a self-funding program. 8 9

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THE COURT: Mr. Towne, how are these individuals hired?

MR. TOWNE: Well, Investigator Dan Gillette and Investigator Jeff Gaither are both hired and employed by my office.

Ed Jauch, another member of the team, is employed by the Spring Valley Police Department. He's employed and hired and paid by the Spring Valley Police Department and this is a joint effort with us.

Starting in the fall we also have members of the LaSalle Police Department who are being hired by the Spring Valley Police Department. They will be our canine officers. They are employed by the Spring Valley Police Department and they are part of the team as well.

THE COURT: What jurisdiction authority is conveyed upon these other two individuals? How do they make

jurisdiction in our county?

MR. TOWNE: Under the statute I have the authorization to appoint special investigators. I have appointed even those employed by the Spring Valley Police Department as special investigators in LaSalle County. They receive their authority from statutory power and my appointment.

THE COURT: That's the -- in other words, that's the power that's in the state appellate prosecutors, right?

MR. TOWNE: Correct.

THE COURT: So they are your employees. They get their jurisdictions challenged by you, right?

MR. TOWNE: They get jurisdiction from me. Not all of them are paid by me.

THE COURT: When they're over here, they're working under your authority and auspice, right?

MR. TOWNE: Right.

THE COURT: So there's not another jurisdiction involved. It's just you, correct?

MR. TOWNE: With regard --

THE COURT: A Spring Valley police officer cannot come to LaSalle County and make an arrest, you know that, or investigate, you know that.

MR. TOWNE: Correct.

1	THE COURT: The only way they get here is through
2	you.
3	MR. TOWNE: Correct.
4	THE COURT: So that makes them your employees.
5	MR. TOWNE: Correct.
6	THE COURT: Okay. How are they paid?
7	I'm just straightening out the record here,
8	gentlemen.
9	MR. TOWNE: Again
10	THE COURT: This is going to go somewhere someday
11	and let's let the reviewing court take a look at it.
12	MR. TOWNE: Again, investigators
13	THE COURT: So they know.
14	MR. TOWNE: Investigators Gillette and Gaither are
15	paid from LaSalle County's drug fund and asset forfeiture
16	money.
17	THE COURT: And that's approved by the County
18	Board?
19	MR. TOWNE: Yes, it is.
20	THE COURT: And the check comes out of the county
21	or out of you? Your Trust 25 or does it come out of that
22	county general payroll? Or forfeiture?
23	MR. TOWNE: It comes
24	THE COURT: Or forfeiture?

1	MR. TOWNE: It comes out of the county general
2	payroll.
3	THE COURT: Okay. All right. So, in other words,
4	they get a check from the county?
5	MR. TOWNE: Correct.
6	THE COURT: Okay. These individuals had to take an
7	oath, correct?
8	MR. TOWNE: Yes.
9	THE COURT: Who administered the oath?
10	MR. TOWNE: I did.
11	THE COURT: What statutory authority do you have to
12	administer an oath?
13	MR. TOWNE: Under the rights and powers of the
14	State's Attorney.
15	THE COURT: Okay. So, in other words, you're
16	putting yourself somewhere similar to the sheriff. You
17	deputize, am I correct on that?
18	MR. TOWNE: In that regard, the statute is somewhat
19	similar, yes.
20	THE COURT: Okay. Who are the direct supervisors
21	of these particular employees that you have?
22	MR. TOWNE: Chief Deputy Brian Vescogni.
23	THE COURT: So that's one of your assistant State's
24	Attorneys.

MR. TOWNE: Correct.

THE COURT: Your office and headquarters for these individuals, where is that located?

MR. TOWNE: They have an office in my office. They also have an evidence vault and office space and all their dispatch centers with the Spring Valley Police Department.

THE COURT: With regard to any tools of their employment: uniforms, firearms and radios and cars and gas, video, anything. Who's supplying that?

MR. TOWNE: I supply some of the materials or a lot of the materials and the Spring Valley Police Department supplies the rest. Come fall the LaSalle Police Department will also be supplying some.

THE COURT: And this equipment is stored where?

MR. TOWNE: It depends. I mean most of the equipment is kept in the cars and the cars are in our lot.

THE COURT: Their job responsibilities. I'm assuming there's some kind of interdiction for drugs; would it be fair to say?

MR. TOWNE: Yes. Well, I mean that's their primary responsibility. If someone is, you know, running with -- someone is chasing someone on the interstate with a gun, they're not going to say, well, that's not our job, they're just going to just let it happen, but their primary

responsibility is drug interdiction, yes.

THE COURT: Based upon what has been represented here is it fair to say that they also enforce traffic laws?

MR. TOWNE: Yes.

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THE COURT: And violations of the traffic laws?

MR. TOWNE: Yes.

THE COURT: But to do so they would become key complaining witnesses, would they not?

MR. TOWNE: Yes.

THE COURT: All right. That's fine. All right.

First off, let's go through this. You know, it says the courts may. It doesn't say shall. It says may. The court has discretion and the courts seem to think that the appearance of the public and their trust in the legal system just and fair and impartial hearings is an overriding reason for disqualifying State's Attorneys from prosecutions. That's not absolute just because somebody says this is unjust and it's not fair and we may have some problems. It's in the court's discretion.

I have to balance any type of a complaint back against several factors. The burden it places upon a State's Attorney's Office in a particular county to have the entire office removed from the prosecution in a particular matter. The remoteness of what the potential conflict or interest the

State's Attorney's Office may have with regard to a particular matter and to what extent the public is aware of the alleged conflict of interest.

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I don't think the public's aware of much of what goes on and we know what's going on in this courtroom right now and other than the colorful little newspaper articles, which people have put in the paper, but I don't think they really pay much attention to that. It's kind of remote.

The money doesn't concern me too much. If that was the case, we'd never be able to pros -- no State's Attorney would ever be able to prosecute. I mean they all have a motivation. Sure it's there. No courts ever taken it out on that so that doesn't bother me.

The question becomes the complaining witness concept. This case or no cases with the SAFE unit, or whatever you call them, could ever been started without a police officer from the State's Attorney's Office getting on that stand. You got to get that car stopped. You just can't say, well, we just searched this car and we found nothing. You've got to do it. You have to. That makes them a key complaining witness.

The question then becomes is whether or not it's such a close conflict. I guess you have to go back and the court has to balance against the trust that must be placed in

a State's Attorney to perform his or her job function. One always has — the court always has to assume that there would be some integrity maintained. That's balanced against the just, fair and impartial hearings the public demands in the judicial system. Hopefully, we can get it done and it comes out in the course of the proceedings here in court that it would be open to the public so that the fair and impartial hearings can be had so that the society can deal with them.

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The fact that if I were to rule — there's no way the State's Attorney is ever going to be able to get that anywhere in order to get a court to decide this case because there are no cases on this because no one has ever done this before.

Your affidavits on your other State's Attorneys, they're kind of cute but they're kind of deficient as to whether or not they arm them, badge them, gun them, put them on the roads. I can understand the investigators. You have statutory authority. There's no question about that.

Absolutely you have statutory authority. You've met the criteria because you got the waiver. As long as you're doing that stuff, there's no question.

The key thing becomes the conflict as to whether or not the officer is a key complaining witness. He's your employee. He's directly in your control. Does that take you

out? Yeah, I mean if he was the victim. I mean if someone had struck him, I mean cause now he's the key complaining witness. The case cannot rise or fall without his testimony. Does that create a conflict?

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But I could see certain things coming down the road here. I mean I have to appoint special prosecutors for secretaries whose family members were victims. This one we're not giving up though and that's the State's Attorney's prerogative to ask me to do certain things. No one else has asked. You've asked me but I have to balance that against the right the statute conveys upon the State's Attorney to prosecute.

I'm going to let them do it. I'm going to let them do it. It's in my discretion. I'll let it go. I'm going to let him stay in the case on this particular matter. I'm not going to appoint a special prosecutor on it.

The issues have been framed for purposes of review. Now, another situation may come down the road. We may find out different things but right now he's staying. He's going to stay in on this. So motion to appoint special prosecutor is denied.

Counsel, you got -- put it back on the trial call for you; is that all right? And we'll set some motion hearing dates up or what do you want to do?

MR. CAMPBELL: What I would like, Judge, of course, 1 is I would like to have -- I'm going to be here next week. 2 THE COURT: Okay. 3 MR. CAMPBELL: And I would like to have a one-week 4 5 status date --THE COURT: That's fine. We can do that. 6 MR. CAMPBELL: -- and I'll file motions on that 7 8 date. THE COURT: What day are you going to be here then? 9 MR. CAMPBELL: Thursday. Next Thursday. 10 THE COURT: All right. The 26th of July, okay, 11 12 nine o'clock and we'll set Mr. Huls' case for status. All right. 13 Thank you, Judge. 14 MR. CAMPBELL: THE COURT: 15 Sure. 16 MR. TOWNE: Thank you, your Honor. 17 (Which is all of said proceeding held in said cause on said date.) 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

1	IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
2	LASALLE COUNTY, ILLINOIS
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6	<u>CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER</u>
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8	I, Cindy M. Forth, CSR #084-002530, an Official Court
9	Reporter for the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit of the State of
10	Illinois, reported in machine shorthand the proceedings had
11	on the hearing in the above-entitled cause and transcribed
12	the same which I hereby certify to be a true and accurate
13	transcript of the proceedings had in this cause.
14	
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17	Cindy M. Forth, C.S.R.
18	Official Court Reporter
19	
20	
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22	Dated this 10th day
23 24	Dated this 19th day of July, 2012.
∠4	οι σαι γ, 2012.
	l 25