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Judge William J. Haynes, Jr.
U.S. District Judge
649 U.S. Courthouse
Nashville, TN 37203

Re: Bernard H. Ellis, Jr., MS, MPH

Honorable Judge William J. Haynes, Jr.,

Please consider this document as a letter of very strong support for Bernie as he confronts his legal challenges. I have had the honor of working with Bernie for the last 5 years, and it is impossible to measure the impact Bernie has had on the State of Wyoming, the community of Fremont County, and the towns of Riverton, Lander and Dubois, and most significantly, the Wind River Reservation, the home of the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho Tribes.

As is evident from Bernie's resume, his influence has been in community development, human development, and sexual and reproductive health. My experience with Bernie has been as a participant in his initiatives in community and human development. As will be described below, Bernie is actively involved in community development. His areas of expertise are in substance abuse and related mental health and employment issues. He has undertaken community-wide initiatives in these areas as a response to several epidemiological studies for the State of Wyoming and the Wind River Reservation in West Central Wyoming.

- A. As a result of his varied studies, Bernie has been well known in Wyoming for almost five (5) years, and I have known and worked with him on various community activities in Fremont County for two (2) years.
- B. The question notes the recognition of leadership characteristics: effective, dedicated, committed, strategic, energetic, creative, visionary, inclusive, inspiring, and problem solver. These words describe Bernie and what he has done not only for Wyoming, Fremont County and the Wind River Reservation, but for other communities as well. His

research is quoted in studies at every level, and his **effectiveness** demonstrated at every level. In Wyoming, as in Fremont County and the Wind River Reservation, he has used the results of his substance abuse studies and **dedicated** and **committed** his energy to develop **effective** programs to address the needs of communities exhibiting the highest incidence substance abuse in the State, which also represent the highest incidence in the nation.

Bernie was **creative** and **visionary** in coming to Fremont County, writing grants that included the entire community and the Reservation in developing **inspiring programs**, which are noticeably helping to **solve** the substance abuse **problems** impacting the community.

The above statement is a play on words, but is very accurate in describing this leader. He is unconditionally devoted to the projects he has assisted in creating to address substance abuse and related mental health and economic issues. Besides procuring funds to initiate the projects, he actively administers three of the projects that were stuck because of various administrative roadblocks. These administrative responsibilities involve no remuneration, and require twelve to fourteen hour days, seven days per week. As will be described in the next section, Bernie demonstrates the leadership characteristics noted above on a daily basis.

- C. Bernie's accomplishments are vast and are outlined in attached resume. He has:
- Directed several studies on substance abuse in the State of Wyoming and especially for Fremont County and the Wind River Reservation;
 - Wrote the grant to support and is a founding member of the Abate Substance Abuse Project Fremont County and Wind River Reservation. This project is composed of interested and involved members of the community and reservation and addresses the most severe substance abuse problems in the U.S.. This project led to several programs to educate the community and alcohol businesses relative to their responsibility to address substance abuse issues. A juvenile intensive outpatient substance abuse program, Kick It, was started by this project. The initial grant for this project was \$100,000; he has also procured a continuation grant for 2001.
 - Bernie wrote three grants to develop Substance Abuse Courts for the community and reservation. An adult court was approved for the Wind River Reservation, and a juvenile development grant has been approved for the County. Additionally, Bernie wrote a grant, combined with these grants, to develop a comprehensive Substance Abuse Court for the entire County including the Reservation. This undertaking has involved resolutions from the Fremont County Commissioners and the Joint Tribal Councils of the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho Tribes supporting the combining these courts under one entity. This is a very unique achievement; the total of these grants is close to \$2,000,000.
 - As part to the entire community effort to address substance abuse, Bernie obtained a three-year grant of \$1.7 million from CSAT for a Detox Center (Fremont County Detox Center) to serve Fremont County and the Reservation. There were major barriers to getting the project started, including locating and remodeling a site. When the funds were at risk because of an inability to initiate the project, Bernie organized the community, convinced the city to donate building to for the project and hustled an additional \$130,000 to remodel the building. This project opened in October 2000

- and is serving up to 28 individuals on a daily basis. Its impact has been to decrease public intoxication arrests by 85% over the same time period in the previous year.
- Bernie, with community collaboration, selected and trained the staff the Crisis Center. Under his direction, the program has developed a no reject policy and provides services or finds alternatives for 99% of the people who come to the Center. In just three months, the effect on, and acceptance by the entire community has been astounding. Consumers of these critical services are from diverse areas and economic levels. Their comfort and freedom in utilizing these services are the recognized strengths of the program. The consumers share the caring and acceptance they feel from both staff and residents.
 - Additionally, Fremont County built a new detention center, and had no money to provide treatment in the jail. Through community collaboration Bernie was able to procure \$200,000 to initiate a jail-based treatment program that will be conducted with utilizing current community services and coordinated with the new staff hired from these funds in collaboration with the Substance Abuse Courts mentioned above.
 - Finally, Bernie has spearheaded the developed of Therapeutic Communities on the Reservation and in the two cities in the County. The Eastern Shoshone has donated a 21-apartment complex to be used for this purpose.

D. As noted above, everything Bernie has done is the result of active, continuous commitment to community collaboration. He developed the ASAP (Abate Substance Abuse Project) as a community collaboration board. This group is designated as the coordinating agency to monitor and administer all of the grants and programs noted above. His use of the media is a model for keeping the community informed and involved. The US Senator and Governor of Wyoming have both visited the projects and publicly voiced their strong support.

These points outlined above were what Bernie had done through 2001, and were part of a leadership application I wrote recommending him. He has continued to serve the community even when he resigned and moved back to Tennessee. In the last year, Bernie stepped to the plate and wrote a comprehensive report on the Crisis Center and was able to generate funding sources that allowed us to keep the facility open, and he did this single handedly. He receives no fiscal remuneration for all of this work. Bernie Ellis has done more in Wyoming for Substance Abuse than anyone in the history of the State.

I am on the Board of Directors for the Crisis Center and I know it exists for one reason, and that reason is Bernie Ellis. He started it, he supplied funds when cash flow was limited, and he is solely responsible for keeping it open at this time. He has placed in a situation where we should be able to sustain the project through associations and arrangements he developed with the State, City and County.

I do not know the entire story related to what Bernie has been charged with, and I do not know the outcome as far as his guilt or innocence. A little of my history, I have worked in the field of corrections and community mental health since I was 17 years of age and I am now 61. I was the first Psychologist in Wyoming Corrections, and I have also been a teacher, Director of Juvenile facility, Superintendent and Warden of prisons in both Wyoming and Montana, and I have been the Director of Corrections in two States. I currently am a consultant in System of Care/Wraparound Process

Under this belief I write this letter in support of Mr. Ellis receiving the consideration that is deserved by someone who has done what Bernie has done, it could be considered "Reversed Community Service". Because of my experience in adult corrections, I know I would love to have someone such as Bernie in my system. I would have him create the best evaluation of the correctional system, and in particular the facility where he could be placed, and you and I both know that we would find out that what prisons are proposed for does not work.

If a "deal" is required, I would strongly recommend that Bernie be assigned to community service in a community that can use his help, please do not waste Bernie's talent, or the systems' funding to place a man of his talents and "heart" in prison because of his crime.

We continue to place people in prison for punishment, and unfortunately this a costly process and we loose many good people to wasted life. Please give Bernie serious consideration for Probation and extensive Community Service. He could be so valuable to any community that he was encouraged to assist.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, I have seen the number of people this man has helped, and it was be such a travesty of justice to have this man not be allowed and encouraged to provide the services to other who benefit from his talent and skills.

Thank you for your serious consideration of this recommendation of Bernard H. Ellis, Jr., please give him every opportunity to practice restorative justice as he has done most of his life.

Sincerely,

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