

Your Honor,

I want to thank you for this opportunity to speak. It is the first time in an entire year that I've been given the chance to tell my side of the events that led me down this terrible path this year.

Your Honor, if one were to believe the media reports about me and my participation on January 6th, or even the limited statement of facts presented in this case, one would be presented with a hyperbolically frightening portrayal of a monster and a madman. The media has labeled me a domestic terrorist, an insurrectionist, a violent rioter, and equally egregiously they wish to portray me as anti-law enforcement.

Your Honor, as part of my plea agreement, I signed a document called the statement of facts. I believe that one could easily interpret the picture that this document creates to be that I went to Washington DC and ultimately the Capitol building on January 6th with the intention to break the law and do harm to others. I would like to present to you, Your Honor, additional facts that didn't make it into that document.

My decision to go to Washington DC on January 6th was a last minute one. I had spent the entire month of December and early January assembling thousands of volunteers to make phone calls and knock on doors for Senate candidates David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler before the January 5th Georgia Senate runoff elections. I had publicly stated on cable news that I was volunteering to be a poll watcher in Georgia on January 5th. For the past 4 years, involving myself in civics has become a passion.

Around the 1st of January, I began getting messages from activists I know stating that many of us were being asked to speak at the Capitol on January 6th. President Trump had already announced on Twitter that this event was happening, which legitimized for me that this event was truly taking place. Truth be told, I did not want to go. By this point, none of the calls for investigation into election fraud were going well, and I had already accepted that a forensic audit of the 2020 election was a lost cause and that it was time to move on. However, after consulting with many people I trust, the sentiment was conveyed to me that hundreds of thousands of people would be going to DC on January 6th for what would surely be a monumental and historic event, and that I should really consider the offer I'd been given to speak, as it

was a great honor. So, tragically, I changed my plans to stay in Georgia for the runoff election and decided to go to DC to speak at the Capitol.

From the very beginning I was told that the format of the event was that President Trump would be speaking at the Ellipse, then there would be a march to the Capitol, and then dozens of people (including myself) would be speaking at the Capitol. I was told that organizers had permits for the Capitol event. And I was asked to share on social media a link to a website called MarchToSaveAmerica.com, which was connected to the White House's website, and I was given access to graphics with the speaker's names and pictures to promote the event. For the next several days I posted the graphic with my face and my name on it on social media which clearly stated that I was a scheduled speaker at the Capitol on January 6th.

The morning of January 6th, I sat in the front row at the Ellipse and listened to the President of the United States speak. He concluded by telling the crowd that we were all now going to march "peacefully" to the Capitol. Everything felt perfectly normal and exactly in accordance with the schedule of events for that day. I then walked to the DC Metro

and got on the train to head to the Capitol for my speaking engagement.

On the way to the Capitol, I began getting text messages from people I knew who were at home watching the news on television indicating that people were going inside the Capitol building. Shortly after, I started getting numerous messages from the other scheduled speakers, some asking if our event was still happening, if it was now cancelled- it was total confusion. I was of 2 minds at this point. Either,

#1) The event is still happening and I'm still speaking, and that's what I came all the way to DC to do.

Or

#2) The event may no longer be happening, but SOMETHING is going on at the Capitol right now, and I want to be there to capture footage of whatever it is that's going on.

Your honor, in the past 4 years I have garnered a following of over a million people on social media. I have attended dozens of rallies, protests, and public events of all political persuasions where I show up and do street interviews with the people there and capture footage of the events for my audience. In addition to that, I am a regular commentator on



multiple cable news networks. I've appeared on cable news more than 200 times in the last 4 years to discuss every topic you can imagine, from the Supreme Court, to abortion rights, to immigration, election integrity issues, civil rights, and rallies and protests in American culture. The interviews I do and the footage I capture has routinely been featured on national and international news outlets.

In all of my on the scene reporting, I can honestly say I have never witnessed a right wing protest get out of hand. Typically, the crowds are mostly comprised of older people, and the energy at the events is very subdued. What I was being told via text messages from people watching news footage of January 6th from at home sounded completely and totally unlike anything I had ever seen at a right wing rally before.

So when I exited the DC metro and headed toward the Capitol on foot, I knew instinctively that I had better begin filming footage as early as possible, because there could be newsworthy activity happening well beyond Capitol grounds. I took out my camera and began shooting footage from approximately 3 blocks away from the Capitol Building and shot one long continuous video for about 12 minutes.

Your honor, I approached the Capitol from the EAST SIDE and arrived at approximately 2:40pm on Capitol grounds according to the time stamps on the video I shot. According to the timelines of the January 6th riot, a group of people began to push past barricades and overwhelm police on the WEST SIDE of the Capitol at 12:53pm when I was 1.7 miles away from the Capitol building. Over the course of the next hour and a half, while I was exiting the event at the Ellipse and underground in transit to the Capitol, the mob on the West side of the Capitol violently pushed past police, smashed windows, scaled walls, and engaged in horrifying and 100% unacceptable behavior, ultimately breaching the West side of the Capitol building.

Your honor, as I approached the Capitol on the opposite side of these events, the east side, I **did not witness the destructive activities occurring on the West side**. If I had seen any of those things take place, I would have turned around and left as quickly as possible.

Instead, I walked on to the Capitol grounds on the East side. My entire experience is documented on the video that I shot. When I approached I saw a large crowd of people, I would estimate to be several

thousand, many were milling around the grounds. The largest group were assembled in the courtyard area on the East side of the building. They were facing AWAY from the building, many of them holding signs and some were even singing songs. I saw what appeared to be a more concentrated crowd at the top of the Capitol steps on the East side, and I assumed that this must be where the people were going inside that I was hearing about from people at home watching the news. I quickly walked up the steps and as I did, a man was standing at the top of the stairs with his hat in his hand shouting, "We're going in! They've opened the doors! The doors are open!". When I got to the top of the stairs I saw two large metal doors were fully open, and a large crowd of people were jammed together facing the open doors. Some were pushing to try to make their way inside.

For the next 8 minutes, I stood outside the Capitol with my camera in both of my hands, and my hands fully extended above my head pointing the camera down toward the door as it was impossible to see everything that was happening because many in the crowd in front of me were much taller than I am, and many were carrying large flags on poles that were hanging down into my face. My goal was to get my

camera to “see” as much as possible, even if I couldn’t see it myself.

In stepping up onto the Capitol steps, I broke the law. It was never my intention to become a part of an unruly mob or to do harm to anybody.

Another fact, Your Honor, which was not stated, is that after approximately 8 minutes of me standing on the steps shooting footage, a man is seen on my video coming outside the Capitol and getting on a bullhorn. He tells the crowd, in some rather distasteful language, that Congress had cleared and everybody went home. He tells the crowd, “Let’s move out, let’s move out!” gesturing to the crowd to walk away from the Capitol. Despite the fact that I could have stayed and made the choice to walk inside at that point, I immediately turned around and shouted, “Everyone needs to go this way!”, pointing away from the Capitol and I walked down the stairs and away from the Capitol.

At that point, I walked to the outer grounds of the Capitol and shot 13 videos interviewing attendees about why they were there and what they saw and experienced.

Shortly after, I got on social media and made some very, very stupid comments. The comments I made understandably gave a clear implication that I supported what had happened at the Capitol that day. It wasn't until hours after I posted these comments that I was back at my hotel room and started seeing the footage on the news of the insanity and violence that had taken place earlier that day outside of my view. I felt shock and horror when I saw those images, and I immediately realized that the situation at the Capitol was much bigger and much more complicated than that which I had witnessed with my own eyes. I immediately took my comments down because I was embarrassed and ashamed to think that anybody might interpret these comments to mean that I supported the horrific things that happened at the Capitol that day.

The next day, January 7th, I made a live video on YouTube in which I clearly state exactly what I just told you. The very next day I told all of my followers that I had made some very irresponsible comments about the Capitol riot without knowing all the facts and that I regretted making those comments and was embarrassed to think anybody might read them and think I supported any of the violence or vandalism that we were now seeing.

To be clear, Your Honor, I think January 6th is nothing more than an incredibly shameful day that had absolutely no positive attributes whatsoever. Nothing positive was accomplished. If I had just made the choice to stick with my plan of poll watching in Georgia, my life would be completely different today. Instead, I got swept into a horror show that has turned my life upside down and caused unspeakable destruction.

Your Honor, while anti-police riots were sweeping the nation throughout 2020, I created what were called Rescue America rallies that I led in 18 cities all across the United States. At these rallies, I led hundreds and sometimes thousands of attendees and volunteers as we cheered on America's law enforcement. We marched all across America chanting that We Back the Blue. I also hosted livestreamed online panel discussions and debate events with the purpose of sharing factual information about the low incidences of law enforcement violence as anti-police protestors were demonizing police officers with inaccurate statistics and misinformation to perpetuate the false narrative that police officers are violent and can not be trusted. Now, after the events of January 6th, I am being labeled as "anti-police" and as "supporting violence against officers". Please allow me to state

clearly and unequivocally for the court, “I have always stood with America’s law enforcement officers. I will always stand with America’s law enforcement officers. I have nothing but the absolute utmost respect for all officers who put their lives on the line every day to protect me and my fellow American citizens, and I will ALWAYS back the blue- just as I always have, every single day of my life.”

Due to the media coverage of my arrest, and the now dozens and dozens of headlines referring to me as a “deadly insurrectionist”, “domestic terrorist”, “violent rioter”, and much more, I was served with a notice to vacate my apartment within 30 days just days after I got out of jail. I have been permanently banned from using mainstream business financial platforms like PayPal, Venmo, and Stripe, because I am now considered a threat by these platforms who have forbidden me to send or receive money because I’m labeled a dangerous terrorist. I had to cancel all of my events and paid speaking engagements this year, and was permanently banned from one of my online financial support revenue streams when Patreon closed my account, citing that I used my funds to commit violence. A week after getting out of jail I received a letter in the mail telling me that my TSA PreCheck status was revoked because I’m no longer considered a low risk



traveler. Then, when I attempted to fly for the first time I discovered that the US government has placed me on a terrorism watch list. I now have an SSSS, or quad S, designation when I go to the airport. I was told by TSA that this is the highest level terrorism watchlist a person can be on while still being allowed to fly. I now have to go through hours of screening at the airport by a dedicated team of usually around 8 to 10 TSA agents. They swap every single item in my bag and test it for explosives. They put their hands down my pants and repeatedly grab and touch my genitals in front of everybody at the security checkpoint. They take pictures of my boarding passes and my ID. And then, when I pass security inspection, they follow me around the airport and follow me to the gate, where they set up a perimeter around me until the plane begins to board. They bring a machine to the gate, and after scanning my boarding pass, I once again have to have every item in my bag swabbed and tested, this time in front of the terrified passengers whom I'm about to share a flight with. When I land for my connecting flight, they do it all again in front of the passengers before I board the next plane.

I was permanently banned from using all the fundraising portals my organizations used for fundraising for my business. I was permanently



banned from using my email platform to email my subscribers.

The media even misreported a comment made at my plea hearing, in which it was indicated that I had (past tense) cooperated with the Prosecution by turning over my email and social media passwords, etc. I was promised that any terms of cooperation would be sealed and confidential for my own protection. Instead, the media who was listening on the phone in my plea hearing reported that you said that I WOULD BE cooperating with the prosecution in the future. They began running stories saying that I was becoming a snitch and would be turning people over to investigators. And from that I've received an onslaught of messages implying threats to my safety and wellbeing over something that wasn't even true in the first place.

In addition to the extreme and permanent damage to my character that the stockpile of media misreportings on my case have done, there have been several attempts by the media to actually interfere with my case to do maximum damage to my ability to have a fair shot in the legal system. One such example is when USA Today employed their "extremism" department, this is a department within

the news outlet that creates stories about dangerous conservative individuals, but does not cover any violent or dangerous left wing individuals, groups, riots, or acts of terrorism. USA Today's extremism department ran a story about me having a legal defense fund that people could support. Within 48 hours, USA Today SUCCESSFULLY got my legal defense fund shut down, without me having been able to say a single word in court to state my side of the story. But the most vicious and relentless media attacks and sickening false reporting I've received has sadly come from my own community, the LGBT community, who hate me for leaving the Democratic Party. Dozens of disgusting articles have been written about me obsessively this year to demonize me. Just one example was a story that came out from Gay City News the month of my arrest in which they wrote, "In the days after thousands of right wingers breached the Capitol building and killed four of their peers and an officer in the Capitol police force, Facebook and other social media companies shut down tens of thousands of accounts, including a political organization that was founded to encourage Democrats to leave that party". The article was celebrating my bans on social media while also directly implying that I was involved with KILLING four people and a police officer. Numerous other articles from the LGBT media have

encouraged their readers to counter any positive character letters written in my defense by having these readers write letters of contempt for me. I sincerely hope that you, Your Honor, were not subject to being harassed in any way by these people in their crusade to punish me for the crime of choosing to be a gay Republican.

I've lost dear friendships and family relationships over this case that will never be fixed. After being released from jail following an FBI SWAT team coming into my house, taking my things, putting me in handcuffs and sending me to a concrete cell with a metal door shared with a 4 time repeat offender in 23 hour a day lock down (Neither of those 2 days did I receive my 1 hour of rec time), I spent 4 months suffering from severe PTSD that prevented me from sleeping at night, jumping and even running out of rooms to hide when I would hear a bang or a loud noise or a knock at my door.

7 years ago, Your Honor, I made a decision, completely of my own volition, to join a 12 step program and get clean from drugs and alcohol. I have maintained continual, uninterrupted, sobriety for the past 7 years- though admittedly the hatred and suffering I've experienced this year has challenged me far beyond anything else I've had to

endure in my sobriety. I lost my sponsor who I loved and admired more than anything over my support for Donald Trump. It's been a challenge to find people in the program who are able to overcome their own political antipathy for others who don't agree with them, and so I've found myself mostly leaning on other sober people in the program whom I've met in the #WalkAway movement.

My philosophy my whole life has been to find the positive in every situation. Even this entire year, as piece by piece my life has been chipped apart, and article after article has been written about me insinuating that I am a dangerous individual who shouldn't be allowed to function in society anymore- I have sought the silver lining and opportunities to transform toxicity into creation, positive growth, and renewal of perspective, faith, and spirituality. My philosophy is simply- every situation life gives you, even the most damaging and destructive, has an opportunity to win. Find the win in every situation.

In my work with my organization, the #WalkAway movement, these past 4 years, we've cleaned up neighborhoods in cities that are run down. We've done outreach for in need minority communities across the country. We've stood up for America's police and law enforcement. Everything we do is in

an effort to make the world a more loving, peaceful, unified, safer, and more civil and tolerant place to live. I've dedicated my life to this work and have been devastated by having to step back this entire past year and let this case play out. I just want to get back to work and move on with my life.

I had a really good life before January 6th. I can honestly say that that life was completely leveled and destroyed.

All I'm asking, Your Honor, is that you please be willing to sentence me only on the grounds of what I was actually a part of- **and NOT based on the depiction of January 6th that we've all seen on television. I'm taking ownership for my own wrong behavior.**

I think January 6th was horrifying and disgusting. But I never went beyond the grounds of the East side of the Capitol, Your Honor, and I had limited knowledge of what had taken place in other areas before I got there.

I should not have gone on the steps that day. And I absolutely should not have said many of the words I said that day, mostly because I recklessly spoke

without full knowledge of the full scope of the events of that day.

I'm sincerely sorry to all the people of America, even the ones who absolutely hated my guts long before January 6th. I'm sorry that I was present in any way at an event that led people to feel afraid, that caused shame and embarrassment on our country, and that served absolutely no purpose other than to further tear away at the already heartbreaking divide in this country.

I want to apologize to all members of the Capitol Police whose safety was put in danger by the unruly mobs. In particular, the police officer who is seen in my video whose shield was being taken by the crowd. No protest should ever get out of hand to the point of becoming a riot, and no police officer should ever have to feel that their life or their safety is in jeopardy while trying to keep the peace at a public demonstration.

And I want to apologize to every member of Congress, regardless of political affiliation or background. I'm deeply sorry and ashamed for being present at an event that sent members of Congress running in fear to evacuate a building. I can sincerely say that I would never intend for such a thing to

happen, but nonetheless, it did. And I was there. And I'm truly sorry for that.

Your honor, every year my organization, the #WalkAway Foundation, engages in a holiday season initiative to give back to the community. This year, our initiative is called REFUND the Police, a fundraising drive to donate money to police departments around the country who need it most as their budgets for equipment, resources, and staffing have been slashed. As of today we have raised nearly \$18,000 for our pro-law enforcement initiative. The work my movement typically engages in is to go into minority communities bringing a message of encouragement for people to see themselves as empowered individuals, and not as a collectivist victim class. I believe the #WalkAway events are the most unifying, diverse, and spiritually powerful events happening in today's terribly divided culture. I have spent an entire year staying almost entirely off of social media, not doing any events, and remaining a hidden figure as my case has been worked through. Not working at the capacity that I'm used to has been torture for me. I desperately want to get back to work and back to doing positive things for my country and my community unencumbered by the nightmare of endless litigation and limitations on my freedom.



The lessons I have learned this year have been intense, and often brutal. But regardless of the severity of these lessons, I've absorbed them and learned from them. I didn't listen to my instincts leading up to January 6th which told me that it was time to move on from this issue and focus on the Georgia runoff election that was days away. Instead, I made a decision to involve myself where I didn't belong, and now those 8 minutes I spent on the Capitol steps will destroy entire pieces of my life for the rest of my existence. That I something I will have to live with and carry with me for the rest of my time on Earth, and I accept that. I will also accept whatever comes next in means of my sentencing from the Court. As stated previously, I'm just ready to move forward with my life in a positive way.

I thank you for your time and your consideration,  
Your Honor. And I thank you for hearing me today.

Brandon Straka



# #WalkAway Foundation

 441 N. Lee Street, Suite 300, Alexandria, VA 22314  
 [www.WalkAwayFoundation.org](http://www.WalkAwayFoundation.org)

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## EXTERNAL MEMORANDUM

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**Date** : December 14, 2021  
**To** : Stu Dornan  
**From** : Libby Albert, Executive Director  
**Subject** : Refund the Police Charitable Initiative

**Message :**

The #WalkAway Foundation, a 501c3 nonprofit, has created a charitable initiative to raise funds for police departments most impacted by the Defund the Police movement. We've identified 14 cities which received the greatest budget cuts, ranging from \$850,000 to \$1 billion and we intend to donate 75% of the funds raised to another charity that supports law enforcement efforts in these 14 cities.

We launched the initiative on November 22nd and it will run till December 31, 2021 at 12AM EST. As part of the initiative, we launched a marketing campaign that has been comprised of email and social media marketing to reach the hundreds of thousands of followers Brandon Straka has. These efforts will continue through December 31st and to date, we've raised \$15,873.87, of which, \$11,905.40 is earmarked for donation.

The organization that we've identified to be the best nonprofit, fit to support this initiative is the Fraternal Order of Police. They have a national organization in addition to local chapters across the country. I have made 3 separate attempts to reach out to them to discuss a large donation, including outreach to the National President but I have yet to speak with anyone. Regardless of whether or not we are able to have a discussion with the organization, the funds will be donated to a 501c3 nonprofit that supports law enforcement.

To donate or to view the details of this campaign, please go to [WalkAwayFoundation.org](http://WalkAwayFoundation.org) and click "Donate".

[REDACTED]

7/20/2021

April Russo  
Senior Assistant United States Attorney  
United States Attorney's Office  
555 4th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

RE: Brandon Straka

Dear Ms. Russo,

We, [REDACTED], are writing you to attest to the character of our son Brandon Straka; and the peaceful, nonviolent disposition he has always exhibited as his normal demeanor.

We are ranchers living in O'Neill, Nebraska, where we raise purebred Red Angus cattle. Our family has been part of the O'Neill community for generations. We have always been active in our community, church, and school. Brandon grew up in O'Neill as 1 of 4 children in our family. As part of a ranch family Brandon was active in the care and promotion of the cattle. That included being a member of 4H from 8 until 18 years of age. From the time he was a young boy until he graduated from high school he was showing cattle at our county fair and across the U.S. at state fairs as a means of promotion and sales of the cattle.

As a member of the community Brandon was a student at Saint Mary's Catholic grade and high school from K thru 12. While attending St. Mary's, Brandon was a consistent honor roll student and participated in many extracurricular activities. During his high school years Brandon also held after school and weekend jobs at several O'Neill businesses.

The O'Neill community has a group that promotes the community called the Irish Dancers which Brandon was a member of thru grade and junior high school. At the same time he was a member of the local Boy Scout chapter. Pride and respect for the community, and responsibility have always been a part of Brandon's life.

In July 2020 Brandon's high school class celebrated their 25th class reunion. One of his teachers relayed to us that while Brandon was home for his reunion he had gone to this teacher's home and apologized for misbehavior in the teacher's Junior year math class. The teacher still shares this story and uses it as an example at times when he has an uninspired student that misbehaves.

After high school, while living and working in Omaha, Nebraska, Brandon was a member of the Omaha Community Playhouse for several years and appeared in many of their productions.

In the past few years, Brandon has hosted numerous events speaking out, and being an advocate for, minority groups including the Black, Hispanic and LGBT communities.

Brandon has hosted numerous large scale events in Washington D.C. in the past few years. He's always worked in conjunction with the police and the government in Washington D.C. while preparing for these events, as he has always made respect for law and government a top priority, as well as the safety of the attendees of his events. One of these events in D.C. was a Town Hall to empower women. These events were always peaceful and respectful of the laws in Washington, D.C.

Brandon's character, integrity and honesty are values he would never compromise. This is not a biased statement by his parents, we know this sentiment would be echoed by anyone who knows and has worked with him.

We hope that this letter will help you better understand the truth of who Brandon really is, and how he has always demonstrated care, compassion, and concern for other people and his community.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]



**Sunday World-Herald**

FEBRUARY 9, 1997

# TERTAINMENT

A G A Z I N E



ERIC FRANCIS

h Buchanan and Brandon Straka star in "The Boy Friend," opening this week at the Omaha Community Playhouse. **Page 2.**

Exhibit C

## On Top



### NEBRASKANS ARE READING

#### FICTION

1. "Hornet's Nest," Patricia Cornwell
2. "The Deep End of the Ocean," J. Mitchard
3. "Executive Orders," Tom Clancy
4. "The Notebook," Nicholas Sparks
5. "Airframe," Michael Crichton

#### NONFICTION

1. "Simple Abundance," Sarah Ben Breathnach
2. "Angela's Ashes," Frank McCourt
3. "A Reporters Life," Walter Cronkite
4. "Living Faith," Jimmy Carter
5. "Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus," John Gray

—MIDLANDS BOOK RETAILERS



### TOP MOVIES PLAYING IN OMAHA

1. "Star Wars" ★★★★★
2. "Jerry Maguire" ★★★★★
3. "Scream" ★★★★★
4. "Metro" ★★
5. "Beverly Hills Ninja" ★★

★-WORLD-HERALD REVIEWS

### TOP WEEKEND OPENINGS

"Dante's Peak"



### TOP 10 ALBUMS IN THE OMAHA





1990

A black and white photograph of a large black Angus cow and her calf standing in a snowy field. A man in a light-colored shirt and dark pants stands to the right of the calf, holding a trophy. The year "1990" is printed in the upper left corner of the photo.

BRANDON STRAKA -- Grand Champion and Champion Angus Cow and Calf.

**Straka Red Angus & Feed Yard**

*Dan & Mary Straka & Family*

HC 65, Box 43A    Res.: 402-336-3913  
O'Neill, NE 68763    Office: 402-336-1415



Exhibit C

July 18, 2021

April Russo  
Senior Assistant United States Attorney  
United States Attorney's Office  
555 4th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

RE: Brandon Straka

Dear Ms. Russo:

I am writing to you today to give you insight on Brandon Straka's stellar character. I make no exaggeration in using the word stellar to describe Brandon's character. I have known Brandon for 3 years after our paths crossed quite coincidentally. Brandon is my employer but more importantly, one of my closest friends. I have not been asked to write this letter but I absolutely feel compelled to share my experience.

Brandon has been sober for 6 years and in the last 3 years, I can tell you that the challenges he's faced would be enough to shake anyone in their sobriety but Brandon has never wavered. He has been honest and transparent about his addiction and the steps he's taken to ensure his life stays on a positive track and I've never seen him falter from that path.

Brandon is a compassionate, determined leader. In May of 2018, he found himself in a position he never thought he'd be in- the leader of a national movement. His message was simple; to bring unity, civility and love to bridge the political divide in our country. I met him through this movement as I was feeling overwhelmed by the negativity between the political parties and needed a community that was supportive. He not only provided that community, he reached out to me personally and our friendship began. As Brandon and I discussed our passion for his mission, we grew a tremendous bond and in 2019, I became the Executive Director of his organization, #WalkAway Foundation

We have traveled the country together, facilitating open dialogue in minority communities to foster an understanding of differences, struggles and even commonalities. We have led multiple peaceful demonstrations where opposing sides engage in dialogue and shake hands when they part. He has been physically assaulted and intimidated and has never lifted a hand in defense. I have personally seen him wish people a great day after they've wished death upon him. I have seen him remain peaceful in the most harrowing and dangerous of confrontations. There is not a violent bone in Brandon Straka's body.

As a leader, Brandon treats me as a partner. My professional experience has been in the field of higher education and sales leadership. While I have an MBA, I had absolutely no experience running a business when Brandon and I met and after a failed attempt to lead a college



admissions department, I had little confidence that I could ever hold a leadership position again but Brandon believed in me. He didn't believe in me because of my resume or my education. He believed in me because he knew he could count on me. He knew that I had a passion for our mission as much as he did. And with our skills combined, we became a highly efficient team. All of this is indicative of him as a professional. He prides himself on assessing the whole of a person. He has a team that ranges in age from 20 to 80, from full time employees to part time volunteers; from high school graduates to doctors. He values each and every one of them for the unique skills, wisdom and dedication they bring to the table and moreover, he seizes every opportunity to learn from each of them. The growth I've seen in Brandon over these three years is nothing short of tremendous.

Now let me tell you about Brandon Straka, my friend. You will read many letters from people that will tell you that he changed their lives. My story is just a little different in that he saved mine. Just as it was for everyone, 2020 was a tough year for me. As a mother of two children, I was really struggling with the stress of Covid 19, a toxic political environment, the sidelining all of our organization's initiatives, and learning how to parent in a world where we weren't even sure it was safe to go outside let alone participate in any of the activities we normally would have. I began to experience severe anxiety and depression. As a parent, I was floundering trying to navigate the new learning at home routine and just as much struggling to keep my head in the game at work. Brandon noticed. The secret was out- I didn't have it all together like I was pretending. Brandon could have easily demanded that personal problems be left at home (like other boss' have told me) but he didn't. Instead, he immediately shifted gears to take up my slack and give me the space I needed to get better. He didn't complain about it. He didn't resent me for it. He listened attentively, checked on me daily offering his compassion and supported me in my journey to prioritize my mental health- not for a couple of days but for the better part of a year. If you take nothing else away from this letter, I'd want it to be this story. This is who Brandon is; someone willing to work double time to help and support a friend; someone willing to wait as long as it takes for that friend to heal and to provide the comfort of ensuring them that their livelihood will be waiting safe and sound for their return.

In closing, I hope that you will consider the true character of Brandon Straka as I've outlined here. He is not the summation of his charges. He is not what the media has reduced him to. He is a man of compassion, conviction, determination and drive; someone who takes accountability for his actions and learns from his mistakes. I hope you will give him the opportunity to continue to grow and make a positive impact in our country.

Sincerely,





[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

April Russo  
Senior Assistant United States Attorney  
United States Attorney's Office  
555 4<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

Re: Brandon Straka

Dear April Russo:

I am writing this letter as a character witness on Brandon's behalf. I am [REDACTED], business owner, author, life coach and mother of three daughters. I am also a spokesperson for the #WalkAway Campaign. I've been knowing Brandon for three years. I was blessed to make his acquaintance after someone sent him a video I posted online. I not only consider Brandon to be a successful businessman and great American, I've come to consider him a friend. He's actually like the brother I've never had.

In 2020, after working with Brandon on several events over a two-year period, he asked me to go on the road with him to "rescue" America. I agreed. For a few months, this commitment required me to leave home every weekend. We spent so much time together that his name became a very common one in my household. Phone calls and video chats while I was with my children allowed them to personally get to know the man behind the movement. My daughters grew to love Brandon so much! They began to see him as family and enjoyed the time they were able to spend with him eating, laughing and swimming in the pool during a much needed vacation last year. As the only single parent in our group, Brandon insisted that I bring my children, who had also sacrificed their weekends with mom for the greater good.

It was completely devastating to all of us to learn that Brandon had been charged with crimes. This is absolutely not in line with the man my children and I have come to know and love. He's always been considerate, compassionate and invested in my well-being and I've personally witnessed him showing this same kindness to countless others. This is why I'm praying that he's on the receiving end of the goodness he so generously gives to others.

April Russo  
July 20, 2021  
Page 2

Respectfully,

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]



7/20/2021

April Russo  
Senior Assistant United States Attorney  
United States Attorney's Office  
555 4th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

RE: Brandon Straka

Dear Ms. Russo,

I am writing on behalf of Brandon Straka as a witness to his moral character and exceptional integrity. My name is [REDACTED] I have been a Pastor, professional business owner and community organizer for the past 35 years. I have had the immense pleasure of working with Mr. Straka since June of 2018. I came to know him after offering to assist with the many details of the launching and organization start up of the #WalkAway Campaign, and I have continued working closely with him on numerous large projects since then. From our very first interaction on the phone, we just “clicked” and it was apparent to both of us that we were embarking on a more than a business relationship, but a special friendship that would act as the foundation of the work we would do together.

I have worked shoulder to shoulder with Brandon through the hardest of situations and have personally witnessed his unwavering commitment to do the right thing, even when it wasn’t popular. He has consistently demonstrated sound decision making and honesty is what guides him in making the most difficult of choices. If I were asked to describe Brandon in only one statement, it would be, Brandon Straka is a “Truth Seeker” this is at the foundation of who he is.

Brandon committing a crime is utterly inconsistent with his character. One of the roles that I have filled during the past year was organizing rallies across the Nation. Brandon’s commitment to abide by the law was clearly evident through his insistence that I obtain city permits for each applicable event and in every instance to coordinate with local law enforcement ahead of time. (A sample letter to law enforcement is attached) In addition to training each volunteer to abide by all laws and provisions of our permit. Brandon’s core value to demonstrate love was conveyed in every training, “DE-ESCALATION, not PROVOCATION is the expectation.” (Copy of the Volunteer Briefing is attached) We directed each volunteer to respond to insults and resistance from antagonists with “We Love You!” From the first event we organized together, to the last one, I have watched Brandon lead with love.

At one of the numerous rally planning meetings we held we were tasked with writing the messaging for the handheld signs that would be provided to attendees to hold. Here are the statements Brandon contributed that were written on thousands of signs held high by attendees across the country: #WalkAway Supports Law Enforcement; #WalkAway From Hatred; #Walk Toward Love, #WalkAway From Hypocrisy; #WalkAway From Violence; #Walk Toward Unity; #Walk Toward Civility; #Walk Toward Kindness; #Walk Toward Compassion. I believe these thoughts flowed from him effortlessly because they embody who he is.

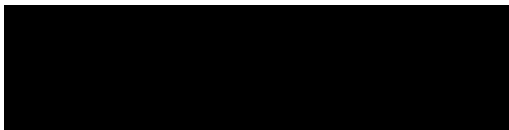
Brandon has lead with courage and has built a legal and ethical organization. From the legal formation, to its financial integrity, down to the legal/permitted assembly of our outreach events. I have watched him take the moral high ground rather than the easy path every-time. I have watched him extend compassion and mercy to those who have spitefully lied about him, rejected him and attacked him. My prayer is that you will be lenient toward him. Brandon Straka is a gem, and the world is better place because of him.

With sincerest respect,



Photos of [REDACTED] and  
Brandon Straka

October 2018  
Washington, DC

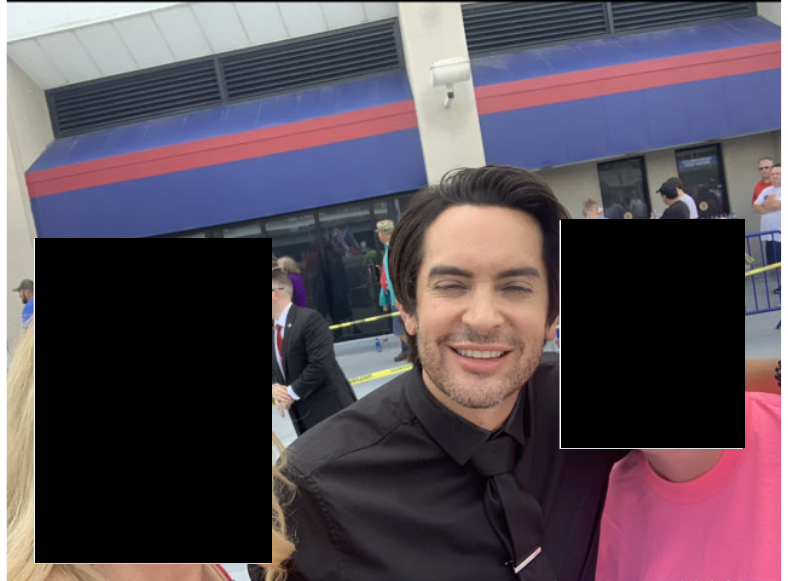


Napa, Ca 2019



Exhibit F

Ohio, 2020



Washington, DC 2018



Exhibit F



Washington DC, 2020

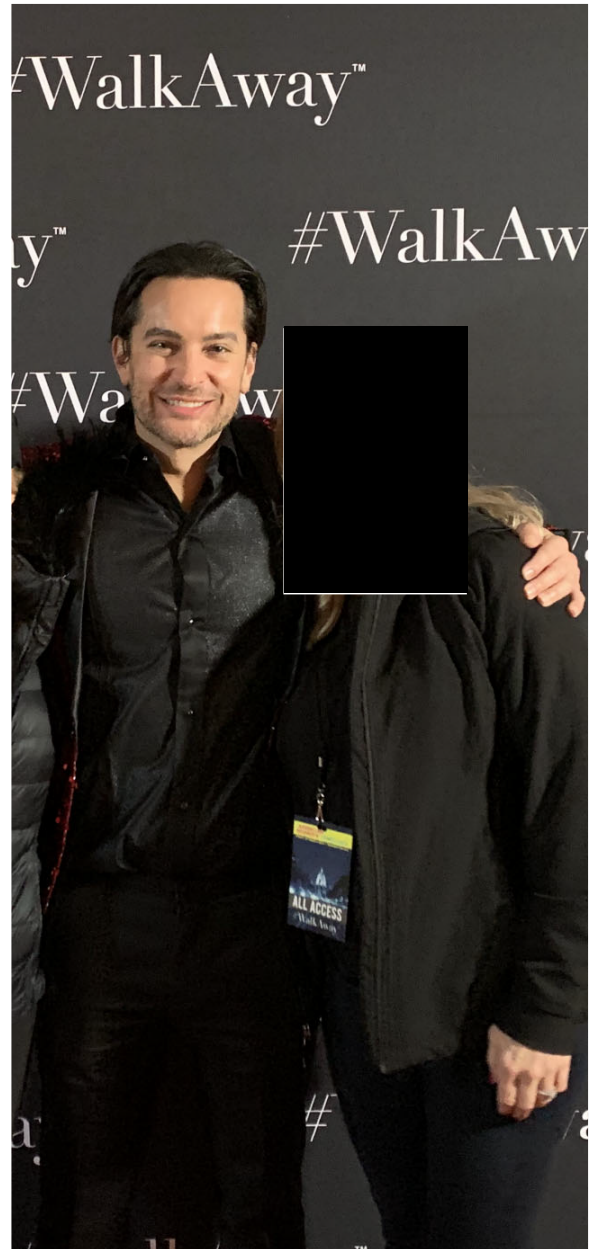


Exhibit F

# #WalkAway Campaign

## Letter of Introduction

**TUESDAY October 27, 2020**

#WalkAway Foundation is a non profit 501C3 which is dedicated to pushing back on the radical Left. We will no longer tolerate the destruction of America, the vilification of Law Enforcement, and the weaponization of tragedies. #WalkAway Rescue America peaceful protests and rallies are here to show the radical Left they do not own America's streets. Our Country is filled with kind, loving, big-hearted Americans of every race, religion, background, and creed and we will NOT SURRENDER our COUNTRY to leftist violence. We are walking toward patriotism and a new, unified America.

We stand for and support law and order and we value law enforcement.

This peaceful protest is the fifteenth in a nationwide series of protest/rallies from coast to coast until the end of this year. We have successfully completed fifteen events in the past 14 weeks without serious incident. Baltimore, MD; Sacramento, CA; Beverly Hills/W Hollywood, CA; Milwaukee, PA; Philadelphia, Chicago; San Francisco, CA; Tampa, FL; Charleston, SC; Nashville, TN; Washington, DC; Phoenix, AZ; and Omaha, NE all with overwhelming support of local police departments.

EVENT: #WalkAway Campaign Presents "Rescue America Rally/Protest"

Sunday November 1, 2020 at 4:00 PM.

(MAGA Drag the Interstate will end at our rally)

Location:

RALLY: Peachtree Corners 5140 Town Center Blvd., Peachtree Corners, GA 30092

Anticipated attendance: 300 or more

The #WalkAway Campaign peaceful protest is to encourage freedom loving Americans to rescue our country from anti-American radicals and their agendas of hate, violence, division, destruction, and anti-Americanism being promoted in our society today with an event called the #WalkAway Rescue America Peaceful Protest. All political parties are welcomed and encouraged to attend this peaceful event to engage in a respectful and thoughtful discussion about the challenges facing America today.



[REDACTED]  
Contact: Brandon Straka

[REDACTED] nder

[REDACTED]  
Twitter/Facebook: @BrandonStraka

[WalkAwayCampaign.com](http://WalkAwayCampaign.com)

Link to #WalkAway founder, Brandon Straka's viral video that started the movement.



Recent Rally in Washington, DC



# Rescue America Rally Volunteer Briefing

1. Introductions
2. Review Event Slide Deck
3. Review Day of Overview
  - a. Roles and Responsibilities
  - b. Review One Pagers
  - c. Assign Tasks
4. Emergency Preparedness
5. COVID Waivers
6. 501 C3 Status
  - a. Do not wear clothing that endorses a political candidate or party
  - b. We must protect our tax deductible status
  - c. Speakers may not ask for votes or sell merchandise
7. #WalkAway Win and Philosophy
  - Our purpose today is to hold a **PEACEFUL** march and rally to show the radical left that they do not own America's streets and that our country is filled with **kind, loving, big-hearted Americans** of every race, religion, background, and creed.
  - We will NOT SURRENDER our COUNTRY to violence.
  - We are walking toward **patriotism and a new, unified America!**
  - We are NOT gathering to antagonize the left or lower ourselves to their devices. We will demonstrate LOVE, PATRIOTISM, and COURAGE in a PEACEFUL manner.
  - DE-ESCALATION, not PROVOCATION is the expectation. Ample security and police support will be present throughout the event in the unforeseen event that any resistance ensues.
8. Media
  - a. We control our own messaging with our handheld signs
  - b. If approached by media
9. Photos with Brandon
  - a. Directly after the event at the step and repeat
  - b. Do not approach Brandon or any speakers for photos until the end

April Russo  
Senior Assistant United States Attorney  
United States Attorney's Office  
555 4th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20530  
RE: Brandon Straka

Dear Ms. Russo

I am a PROUD father of seven adult children. I have travelled around the world and across our nation helping others find their faith and becoming the greatest version of themselves. In 1992, I was eighteen years old and homeless. Sleeping on the streets of Atlanta, I saw the cruelest aspects of humanity as I was beaten, robbed, and literally urinated on. I just wanted to die but God gave me a second chance at life, and I refuse to squander it. Holding to my faith, I extend the same courtesy to Brandon, but I DO NOT SUPPORT THE EVENT ON JANUARY 6<sup>th</sup>.

Over the last three years I have gotten to know Brandon, became friends and even see him as a brother in Christ. I enjoyed working with him in 2020 speaking to millions of people about our love for America and freedom. This love crossed over all divisions (black, white, gay, straight, etc.) and is the root to conquer the darkest elements in our country. My proudest moment was when I prayed over Brandon in front of a large crowd in 2019, and he said that for the first time he is opening his heart to seek God. That was a beautiful moment.

When I got the news that Brandon was allegedly involved in the events on January 6<sup>th</sup>, I was shocked, appalled, and disappointed. The man I know has the passion to do what is right for our country. The high character he has displayed to me when he spoke to the LGBTIQ+ community about embracing America was powerful. I was further impressed when he reached out to the black community in Atlanta stating how relevant our vote is in the political process. I'm mostly impressed by his courage when some BLM activists chased him and tried to take his life while screaming homophobic slurs. Their actions were despicable, but Brandon continued to believe in America, stayed positive and courageously pushed forward.

Let me be clear; I condemn the 2020 BLM riots last summer and I equally condemn the 2021 storming of our nation's capital. These actions are WRONG regardless of race or political affiliation. They are divisive and do NOTHING to bring us together as a country. I am aware that in the future people may use this letter against me politically, but as a man of faith, I believe in giving second chances to people that learn from their mistakes, change their behavior and are willing to serve their community. Brandon is my friend; he has humbled himself and I will not turn my back on him.

Ms. Russo, I am asking you to give Brandon leniency. We have ALL made poor choices and our futures are uncertain. I think we all hope that if we ever find ourselves in trouble, that we can have at least one true friend to speak for us. NOT excusing our behavior, but willing to stand in the gap for us when it is hard, and the personal cost is high. I believe that if Brandon was involved in this action that he is ready to make amends. THANK YOU so much for your time and attention. I appreciate your service to our country, and may God bless you and everyone you hold dear.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]



November 13, 2021

RE: Character Letter

Your Honor,

I am writing this character letter on behalf of Brandon Straka. I ran into one of his videos back in May 2018. I loved his message and looked for him on social media. I started following him and saw that he had an event in Riverside, CA. I decided to go to his event on 08/30/2018 to meet him because people were saying that all members were bots. When I met him, he was kind, sweet, loving, and sincere. He had a plan to bring unity and love and bring people from all walks of life together. I decided to keep following him on his social media because his message was a breath of fresh air. I then decided to help on two of his events in Los Angeles, CA in May 2019. I saw him conduct himself in the same honorable and down to earth self. His events were open to all whether they agreed with the message or not, he wanted to hear their side to understand their views on a particular subject. As time went by, he always stated that he did not want anyone to be negative or any of his foundation volunteers to conduct themselves positively. I had friends who were volunteering and told me as much. He wanted to welcome everyone to his foundation. He never had an incident of poor behavior and never conducted himself in poor taste. He always advised that he did not want to do anything inappropriate. He always had rules in place to ensure we all conduct ourselves honorably. Therefore, I continued to follow him on social media. As he grew, his events were taking him elsewhere and I attended another even in Riverside, CA. Again, there were no discussions of hate and only spoke of unity and love. I admire Mr. Straka for his dedication to his foundation and ensuring that people be kind to one of another and bring love to the world. Brandon Straka = Love and peace.

I have my BS in Criminal Justice Administration (CJA), AS in CJA, Certificate in Law Enforcement. I worked for the County of San Diego for 29 ½ years with the last 10 years in appeals representing the County of San Diego in administrative law hearings. I retired in 2018.





BRANDON STRAKA-CHARACTER LETTER

11/15/2021

Your Honor -

BRANDON'S IMPACT ON MY LIFE  
CANNOT BE OVERSTATED.

IN 2017, AFTER A SOLID YEAR  
OF A NON-STOP BARRAGE OF NEGATIVE  
POLITICAL NEWS, I FOUND MYSELF  
DEEPLY DEPRESSED, TRYING TO FIGURE  
OUT HOW MY BELIEFS + VALUES FIT IN  
TO THE CURRENT POLITICAL CLIMATE.

I HAD COMPLETELY GIVEN UP TRYING  
TO HAVE HONEST CONVERSATIONS OR  
EXCHANGE FACTUAL INFORMATION WITH  
ANYONE! THE MORE I TRIED, THE  
DEEPER MY DESPAIR.

THE DAY I CLICKED ON  
BRANDON'S ORIGINAL 6 MINUTE VIDEO



CONT...

Pg 2/2

WAS THE DAY EVERYTHING CHANGED.

IT FELT LIKE A LITERAL TON OF BRICKS FLEW OFF MY SHOULDERS.

BRANDON SHOWED ME AND HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF OTHERS THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO HAVE SAFE, NON-JUDGEMENTAL, OPEN CONVERSATIONS WITHOUT ATTACKING THE OTHER PERSON'S CHARACTER!

HIS NATIONWIDE CAMPAIGN TO PROVIDE THIS PLATFORM TO OTHERS OF EVERY CONCEIVABLE GROUP, COMMUNITY OR IDENTITY, WITHOUT JUDGEMENT, HARASSMENT, RETRIBUTION OR "CANCELLING" HAS HAD A PROFOUND POSITIVE EFFECT ON ALL OF US.

BRANDON'S IMPACT ON OUR LIVES CAN NEVER BE OVERSTATED.

VERY SINCERELY,

Exhibit 1



November 13, 2021

TO: Your Honor, Presiding over the case of Brandon Straka

FROM: [REDACTED], Federal Investigator and Ethics Specialist,  
FDIC/RTC from 1991 to 95

Purpose: Character Statement IFO Brandon Straka

Your Honor,

I am taking the time to write and asking you to take into account my statement as you consider the sentencing of Brandon Straka. As a former officer of the court, I swore to uphold the law in the execution of my duties as an Investigator. This is my statement:

I have followed Straka almost from the beginning, as he began his efforts to convince others of his sincerely held beliefs. I looked into his disclosed background, evaluated his stated mission and believed him to be sincere and forthright. I also believe he is a strong believer in law enforcement and supports the judicial process.

Additionally, I have been financially supporting his efforts for over one year with a monthly payment to his 5013C corporation to assist him in carrying out his stated goals, from which he has not strayed.

Brandon is strong of character and will and I expect he will persevere once this phase of his life is complete, and after having received and completed a fair and just sentence from Your Honor.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED] 11/15/2021

My name is [REDACTED], I'm a female, naturalized US citizen, and I feel the motivation to write this letter in behalf of Brandon Straka, who I haven't met in person, but who I have followed in social media for about 3 or 4 years now. I'm writing this letter because I feel sincere appreciation and dearest affection for him.

Without going further, please forgive my typos. I'm Hispanic from origin and English isn't my mother tongue. I hope I can convey this letter perfectly, but it's highly likely I won't.

One of the reasons I liked Brandon's message is because his video was not only very professionally done, but impeccable. He was simply saying what many of us wanted to say or were thinking. Naturally, I identified with him and his message because now it was mine.

I know Brandon will succeed everywhere he goes and he will continue to embrace with positivism and truthful messages to his clients, friends, acquaintances. Brandon is a brave man, he is loving and had been able to unified us all. Who are we? Many of us! It's quite a large spectrum.

Brandon not only earned my respect but also my sincere appreciation and care.

Brandon loves God, loves people, loves America, love the American people.

I'm certainly looking forward to see him shining and succeeding on his next project, career and endeavors.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]