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JUNE 4, 2026, TESTIMONY OF SHERIFF GARRY L. McFADDEN TO THE HOUSE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE OF THE NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Members of the House Oversight Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

The Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) shares the Committee's sentiment that the death of 6-year-old Dominique Moody should never have happened. This tragedy is heartbreaking, and our thoughts remain with everyone affected by this unimaginable loss.

It is important to clarify the role and responsibilities of MCSO, as my agency's involvement in this case was extremely limited.

Long before I ever became Sheriff, almost all of Mecklenburg County was incorporated into seven distinct municipalities, each with its own law enforcement agency. Put another way, almost all of Mecklenburg County's citizens live in either Davidson, Cornelius, Huntersville, Pineville, Matthews, Mint Hill, or Charlotte. Accordingly, and again since long before I became Sheriff, MCSO has ceased to function as a traditional law enforcement agency. Unlike most North Carolina Sheriffs' Offices, MCSO does not respond to calls for service through the 911 dispatch system. In Mecklenburg County, only those seven municipalities' police departments respond to 911 calls. MCSO does not have deputies or officers trained to investigate crimes like the municipal police agencies in the county do. MCSO has not been funded to provide those services for several decades now. We do not conduct child welfare checks, as well. Those duties are simply not within MCSO's capacity.

Rather, MCSO's daily responsibilities are centered on the functions (unlike traditional law enforcement, which can be and is provided by Mecklenburg County's seven municipal police departments) that no other agency is authorized to provide. These responsibilities

include operating the largest detention center in the state, as well providing courthouse security, civil service of process, carrying out summary ejectment/evictions, sex offender registration and gun permitting. The most direct involvement MCSO had related to the case of Dominique Moody was through the service of civil process.

In 2020 and again (and most recently) in 2023, MCSO deputies served Domestic Violence Protective Orders, commonly known as 50B orders, against Tonya McKnight at 7608 Gwynne Hill Drive. In 2022, a deputy also served a Complaint for Custody or Visitation upon Tonya McKnight, on behalf of Tery'n McKnight, at that same address. Since December 10, 2023, MCSO deputies have not been to that residence.

To be clear: if MCSO deputies ever encounter a child in distress or observe circumstances that raise concerns for a child's safety, we take those situations seriously and address them appropriately – intervening as necessary.

As Sheriff, and as someone committed to protecting the citizens of Mecklenburg County, I wish MCSO had seen Dominique's suffering or had some reason to question whether she was being properly cared for or that she was at risk. I wish we had been given an opportunity to intervene before this tragedy occurred. But at no point did our deputies witness or receive information that Dominique was put in harm's way.

This is a devastating case. I wish more could have been done to save this child's life. I also believe continued collaboration, communication, and resources, focused on child safety and well-being, among the various agencies across the county are critical to preventing tragedies like this in the future.

Thank you again for your time and for the opportunity to testify.