Notification of Misconduct by Law Enforcement within the State of Colorado

To whom it may concern,

I am writing you in hopes of addressing and resolving egregious civil and human rights violations that I have experienced at the hands of law enforcement within the State of Colorado. I am an individual who has served in the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, am a wilderness first responder, and have consistently volunteered and been an active participant throughout the communities in which I have lived. To improve my ability to more meaningfully participate in these initiatives and to further my professional development I also attained a graduate degree from the highly regarded University of Denver's Josef Korbel School of International Studies. The human and civil rights violations I am writing you about occurred nearly five years ago, and the other Constitutional law violation occurred around a year ago.

This all began when my vehicle was struck by a spike strip without being pursued, forewarned, or given the opportunity to pull over. I was then arrested in a manner which should be described as a clear use of excessive use of force. Besides being hit by around 6-8 tasers and then thoroughly pummeled though I did not resist in any way whatsoever, one deputy is seen on body cam bragging about how he "shoved the flashlight of his assault rifle into my eye socket" to hold my head down to which another officer responded by turning around and saying, "Shit." Another deputy is heard stating, "They didn't even know if it was the right vehicle they had hit" and it should be noted that the officers involved also struck one of their own sheriff vehicles with a spike strip. Further, one of the officers picked up my keys as I was handcuffed and being fully cooperative, started waving them in my face, and said, "I got a brand new vehicle."

After these events I was placed in a booking cell where I was held for over 32 hours though the cells around me were being properly processed. During this time I had a cut on one of my fingers that resulted from the arrest which was nearly bone deep that was openly bleeding on the cell floor, I could barely lift my left arm, had a visible contusion on my head, and my right wrist was nearly incapacitated. Because of these injuries I requested medical aid several times but was not rendered any form of assistance.

Based on this treatment, and in protest of my innocence, I then began a ten day religious hunger strike in which I also did not drink water for the first five days. During this time I was filing nearly daily complaints against staff and guards in their electronic grievance system documenting my experience. Upon completion of my hunger strike I was then moved to a minimum security area of the prison. Jail documents confirm that I was placed on what they call a high calorie diet after being weighed at 140 pounds when initially being brought in at an athletic 185 pounds.

Once in minimum security I approached the desk with a guard to file paperwork for representation by an attorney. I asked the guard about the paperwork to which he then attempted to insult me by stating that I had a unibrow. I informed him I was in jail and that I've had it my whole life while attempting to get the guard back on task. He then again insulted me

for having a unibrow to which I in return jested at him about his weight and began to walk away. He then stood up from the desk, yelled at me to put my hands behind my back, put me in cuffs, and started forcefully yanking the cuffs high in the air to create discomfort as he led me into a hallway.

In three to four incoherent sentences the guard stated that I had been uncooperative and he had to “sweep me from my feet” to get me to sit down in the hallway. After this I was placed in an area called “the hole” and was given the opportunity to write an appeal letter. My description of events was three to four detailed paragraphs about the incident. Video evidence showed that the guard lied about having to sweep me from my feet and that I was fully cooperative. Nevertheless, I was given the maximum sentence of ten days in “the hole,” which is a solitary confinement area.

After this I was placed into a maximum security area. Within 24 hours three gang members, one of whom was my cellmate, walked into the cell as I was sitting on a bunk. My cellmate stated that “I should request to move cells.” I informed him that if he would like to move cells then he could make the request. He then restated his demand several more times, to which I ignored. He then blindsided me by punching me several times in the back of the head. I then stood up unfazed, grabbed my things, left the cell as they willingly moved out of my way, and reported the gang member to the guards for formal assault charges.

I was subsequently moved throughout various other maximum security areas of the jail where I faced numerous death threats. This ranged from being told “I shouldn't sleep at night,” to being physically shoved and spat on, to having an entire cell block chant my name at night from their cells as the guards did nothing. In that area I was surrounded by inmates while talking on the phone and had to be evacuated. I was then placed in solitary confinement, through no fault of my own, after a guard lied about my conduct (as proven by video footage), and after facing multiple threats against my life.

The State of Colorado in 2017 adopted a law based on the United Nations human rights law referred to as the Nelson Mandela Rules. The Nelson Mandela Rules state that solitary confinement beyond 15 consecutive days for any reason whatsoever is prohibited and considered cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment, amounting to torture under international human rights law. I accuse the Jefferson County Sheriff's Jail of purposefully and wantonly breaking this law by placing me in solitary confinement for 5-6 months in total as an attempt to place undue pressure on me as I was protesting my innocence and in retaliation for my accusations against the department for civil rights violations. Whatever the case, this is undeniably a breach of both state and international law. I also accuse Jefferson County of breaking due process of law during prosecution, which is included as a protection in the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution.

After being forced to accept a plea deal I served about a year and a half of prison time. I then served parole time without incident, and, once completed, began being harassed almost immediately by law enforcement. This led to a situation where I had an abandoned vehicle

notice placed on my vehicle after only being parked for a few hours. In response to this I called to file a complaint with the Denver District 1 police station for harassment by law enforcement. An officer answered and asked what I was calling about. I informed her that I would like to report police misconduct. She then openly laughed and hung up the phone.

I then called 911 to report this misconduct by the officer at the Denver District 1 station. I spoke with the operator and he informed me to go in person to the police station and make the report. I then went to the Denver District 1 station and approached the only officer at the front desk to speak with her about the incident. Though she was openly giggling when I was attempting to speak with her (which I have recorded), she stated she would allow me to meet with an upper level officer about the incident. I then waited 10-15 minutes after which she left from behind the desk to speak with me.

The uniformed officer then approached me and stated that she was not going to allow me to speak with an upper level officer. I asked why not, and she stated that she wasn't going to allow me to. I informed her that if she did not allow me to speak with an upper level officer I would call 911 on the spot. She then said she would arrest me if I called 911. I asked her for what. She responded by stating: for filing a false report. I told her it wasn't a false report and she responded by stating she would arrest me anyway. I then walked out of the station and immediately called 911 and spoke with an administrator.

I have filed formal complaint with the FBI, the Federal Judiciary's Civil Rights Division, the Colorado Attorney General, the Denver Police Department, Jefferson County Sheriff Department, the Colorado Commission on Judicial Discipline, the Colorado Supreme Court's Office of the Presiding Disciplinary Judge, etc. and they have largely chosen nearly complete inaction up to this point. Though there is ample, sufficient, and undeniable proof that these events occurred law enforcement has shown a near complete unwillingness to enforce the law upon itself. Though I have spoken with Senator Hickenlooper's office most extensively, they have as yet to make any meaningful progress on addressing these issues. I have also had multiple conversations with the Denver Police Department, but they have shown no willingness to meaningfully address the situation either.

The way in which I have been treated has been deplorable, at times humiliating, and I have undeniably faced civil and human rights violations within the state. The conduct of authorities has not only been reprehensible but has demonstrated a complete lack of institutional control, capacity, and integrity. As this is merely an abbreviated summary of my concerns, it is my hope that this letter raises sufficient interest as to be the basis for further discussion on this matter. I would greatly value speaking in regards to these issues so that we can work to address these concerns.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing back from you.

Chris Hoffman - hoffman8480@gmail.com - 720.304.5044