	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	RWHC CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO Attorney General ROBERT GIUNTA Senior Deputy Attorney General Nevada Bar Number 1229 Office of the Attorney General 555 E Washington Ave, Ste 3900 Las Vegas, NV 89101-1608 P: (702) 486-3455 F: (702) 486-0660 rgiunta@ag.nv.gov Attorneys for the State of Nevada	
	9	EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT	
	10	CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA	
	11 12	THE STATE OF NEVADA,) Case No.: C-11-277573-1 C-11-277573-2	
3900	13	Plaintiff,)	
al's Off 1, Suite 7 89101	14) Dept. No.: V vs.	
Attorney General's Office 555 E. Washington, Suite 3900 Las Vegas, NV 89101	15 16	GARY RANDALL TRAFFORD, GERALDINE ANN SHEPPARD, aka Gerri Sheppard,)	
41	17	Defendants.	
	18		
	19	ADDITIONAL REPLY BRIEF IN OPPOSITION TO DEFENDANTS' MOTION TO DISMISS AND IN SUPPORT OF RETURN TO DEFENDANTS' WRITS OF HABEAS CORPUS	
	20		
>	21	MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES STATEMENT OF THE FACTS	
	22	The State reasserts and realleges the facts set forth in its prior pleadings.	
	23	STATEMENT OF THE CASE	
	24	After its initial review of the issues raised in the defendants' writs of habeas corpus and	
	25	in their motions to dismiss, the Court reserved ruling and requested supplemental briefing	
	26	on several issues raised. Specifically, the Court tentatively ruled that the defendants'	

-1-

argument for dismissal of the counts charged in the indictment based on a Statute of

limitation argument was rejected. The Court, citing Nevada case law which expanded the

interpretation of crimes committed in secret, disagreed with that basis for dismissal of the

27

28

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

indictment, but requested further briefing on two additional issues. Initially, the Court requested direction with regard to the manner in which the indictment was plead. Secondly, the Court requested research on the issue of whether the State had exceeded the boundaries of fair dealing during the presentation of its case to the grand jury.

ARGUMENT

THE INDICTMENT IS PROPERLY PLED OR IN THE ALTERNATIVE MAY BE AMENDED

In its tentative ruling on October 27, the Court expressed a concern about the wording of the indictment. Specifically, the counts alleging OFFERING A FALSE INSTRUMENT FOR FILING OR RECORDING in violation of NRS 239.330 and FALSE CERTIFICATE TO CERTAIN INSTRUMENTS in violation of NRS 205.120, both of which contain the term "forgery" were of concern to the Court. In particular, the Court found that there could be no forgery if the person whose signature was signed had given consent.

An indictment is legally sufficient if the offense is clearly set forth in ordinary and concise language. DePasquale v. State 106 Nev. 843, 803 P2d 218 (1990). A review of the indictment demonstrates that the counts sought to be dismissed quote the language of the statutes alleged to have been violated.

Each and every count asserting a violation of Offering a False Document for Filing or Recording specifically sets forth verbatim the wording of NRS 239.330.

On or about (date), Defendant did, in the County of Clark State of Nevada, then and there, knowingly and feloniously, cause to be offered for filing in a public office, a false and/or forged instrument, which instrument, if genuine, might be filed, registered or recorded in a public office under the law of the State of Nevada, to wit:

On or about (date), Defendant, within Clark County, State of Nevada, either directly or through an agent or employee, caused to be offered for filing, a NOTICE OF DEFAULT AND ELECTION TO SELL UNDER DEED OF TRUST, with the Office of the County Recorder of Clark County, Nevada dated Said document was forged in that it purported to be signed by defendant, as the agent for the beneficiary of the property listed in said instrument, when in truth and in fact Defendant did not sign said instrument, as Defendant well knew.

The same issue statutory reference is found in the False Certification charge.

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

On or about (date), Defendant, within the County of Clark, State of Nevada, did then and there plan, direct, and arrange to have a person authorized to take proof or acknowledgement of an instrument which by law may be recorded, willfully certify falsely that the execution of the instrument was acknowledged by a party thereto or that the execution thereof was proved, to wit:

On or about (date), Defendant planned, directed, and arranged to have (Notary), a notary public appointed by the Nevada Secretary of State, and authorized to take proof or acknowledgment of an instrument, to forge and willfully certify falsely that the execution of this instrument was acknowledged by her signature, on a document entitled NOTICE OF DEFAULT AND ELECTION TO SELL UNDER DEED OF TRUST,... filed in the Office of the Country Recorder of Clark County, Nevada (date), Defendants, within Clark County, State of Nevada.

By the very wording of the pleading, the indictment sets forth specifically how the defendants filed false documents. "(The Defendants) planned directed and arranged to have (the notary) forge and willfully certify that the falsely that the execution of the document was acknowledged by the notary's signature, which clearly is false.

The State has set forth a complete description of exactly how the defendants filed false documents. To argue that the defendants have been denied their due process rights by virtue of the use of the word "forge" is absurd, especially in light of the common usage of the term to include the act of signing a name with the signee's authorization. The defendant's argument that they have been prejudiced by the description set forth in the indictment has no merit. The grand jury transcript is filled with the testimony of the notaries who indicated that they had been instructed to sign the defendants' names and then notarize them. There is no way that a reading of the indictment, along with the transcript could lead an individual to a conclusion other than that the documents were false because of the fact that the person whose signature was certifying the NOD was not the signer. As the Court pointed out in its tentative ruling, simply removing the words "by forging" as surplusage would clarify the charging document and remove any doubt as to the acts alleged to have constituted the crimes.

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

24

25

26

27

28

Contrary to the defense argument, this in no way permits the State to change its theory of the case; the facts to be proven at trial would remain the same. The Defendants' contention that the State has changed its theory of the case has no merit. If it had been the State's intention to charge the Defendants with forgery, the provisions of NRS 205.090 thru 205.110 would have been charged.

Moreover, Defendant Sheppard argues that a jurat may be false and that falsity does not affect the legitimacy of the document. In other words, the defendants' position is that they may falsify signatures on the acknowledgment attached to a document and the false acknowledgment does not constitute a crime unless the body of the document constitutes a crime. It should be remembered that these documents which directly affect ownership of real property and they declare that the homeowners have been notified of their delinquency in its entirety. The basis for the Defendants' assertion is a series of civil cases, which stand for the proposition that an improperly acknowledged document still has legal import. A review of these cases cited demonstrate that references are taken from a wholly different context, mainly which a certificate of acknowledgment is not necessary for the document itself, and further that the acknowledgment is not even a part of the document. The defendants seek to justify their conduct based on dicta in wholly irrelevant civil matters from other jurisdictions.

Obviously, the Defendants are requesting this Court to ignore the plain meaning of the statutes under which the defendants are charged. NRS 239.330 and NRS 205.120 are both clear in their intent that documents be properly notarized especially when they are filed as an official document required for the involuntary transfer or taking of real estate. The legislative intent is clear; obviously, the Clark County Recorder's office cannot obtain an independent verification as to the identity of the signors of documents to be filed in their office. As noted previously, once filed, subsequent transactions are based upon these original documents. As such, they rely on the affirmations provided by the notaries that certify that the proper parties have executed the documents. To assert that a faulty acknowledgment on a physician's affidavit submitted to a screening panel is equivalent to

the necessity for accuracy in the involuntary transfer of real estate strains credulity. The defendants' arguments should be rejected.

THE EVIDENCE PRESENTED TO THE GRAND JURY IS RELEVANT AND DOES NOT CONSTITUTE PROSECUTORIAL CONDUCT

The Defendants next argue that the State intentionally withheld exculpatory from the grand jury, and that this constitutes prosecutorial misconduct. Specifically, the Defendants argue that the State misleads the jury into believing that the signatures were not authorized, that the signings were a lawful practice and the NODs were valid and that the NODs were legitimately issued to individuals who were delinquent on mortgage payments. Not only are these assertions without factual basis, they have no legal significance.

The purpose of the grand jury has been described as follows: "to investigate possible offenses and to act as an independent barrier which protects the innocent from oppressive prosecution." Losavio v. Kikel, 187 Colo. 148, 529 P.2d 306, 310 (1974). It is also said that the grand jury proceeding "is an ex parte investigation to determine whether a crime has been committed and whether criminal proceedings should be instituted against any *463 person." State v. Bell, 60 Haw. 241, 589 P.2d 517, 519 (1979). Historically, the grand jury has also been viewed as a safeguard in protecting citizens against unfounded criminal prosecutions. Lane v. Second Judicial Dist., Washoe County 104 Nev. 427, 462-463, 760 P.2d 1245, 1268 (Nev.,1988).

These facts as alleged by the defendants, even if true, would have no bearing on the outcome of the grand jury proceeding.

First and foremost, it is absolutely disingenuous for the defendants to argue that the State withheld the fact that the signatures were authorized. The direct testimony of the notaries indicates that they were expressly ordered to sign and notarize the defendant's names on the NODs. Each notary told the grand jury just that and this fact was the basis of the State's case. Further, to assert that the State has a duty to argue the defendants'

opinion that surrogate signing is a legal defense to filing false documents has no basis in law.

In fact, Nevada law in this regard is absolutely contrary.

In <u>Schuster v. Mosley</u>, 123 Nev. 187, 160 P.3d 873 (2007) our Supreme Court has held that the prosecutor has no independent, mandatory duty to instruct the grand jury on legal significance of exculpatory evidence. In <u>Schuster</u>, the defendant argued that obligating the State to present exculpatory evidence to the grand jury without also requiring the State to instruct the grand jury on the legal effect of such evidence is an absurdity. In rejecting his argument, the Court held that the legislature did not intend to expand the grand jury beyond its historical, traditional investigative and accusatory function (Id. at 876). The Court's review of the statutory scheme regulating the grand jury process revealed that the Legislature viewed the primary role of the grand jury as investigative and accusatory. (See <u>Hyler v. Sheriff</u> 93 Nev 561, 564, 571 p.2d 114, 116, <u>Philips v. Sheriff</u> 93 Nev 309, 487 p.2d 330) While pointing out that the grand jury is not an adjudicatory body, the Schuster court stated

"Although Nevada law requires the State to present exculpatory evidence to a grand jury, requiring the State to also instruct a grand jury on the legal significance of exculpatory evidence simply does not comport with the traditional investigative, accusatory role of a grand jury. Rather, the full presentation and credibility of an accused's defense are matters reserved for the adversarial process of trial...Absent explicit statutory authority, and in light of the traditional view of the grand jury as an investigative, accusatory body, rather than an adjudicative one, this court will not construe NRS 172.145 to include such a duty."

The Court went on to refer to the holding in <u>Sheriff v. Keeney</u> 106 Nev 213, 791 P.2d 55, that "the grand jury may request advice and that the prosecutor is authorized to explain matters of law." (see also <u>In the Matter of the Grand Jury of Sandoval County, Kerpan v. Sandoval County District Attorney's Office</u> 106 N.M. 764, 750 P.2d 464 (1988) where the court held that

the prosecutor is invested with wide discretion as to the selection and presentation of evidence and since the function of the grand jury is to investigate and not to adjudicate guilt or innocence, the target of the investigation does not have a clear legal right to have the investigation proceed in the same manner as a criminal trial with the full panoply of due process rights)

(see also In the Matter of the Grand Jury of Sandoval County, Kerpan v. Sandoval County District Attorney's Office 106 N.M. 764, 750 P.2d 464 (1988) where the court held that the prosecutor is invested with wide discretion as to the selection and presentation of evidence and since the function of the grand jury is to investigate and not to adjudicate guilt or innocence, the target of the investigation does not have a clear legal right to have the investigation proceed in the same manner as a criminal trial with the full panoply of due process rights)

Moreover, the defense, despite having been served with a MARCUM notice, did not avail itself of the opportunity to submit evidence to establish this allegation. Nothing to establish this purported legitimate business practice was submitted; nothing to establish the legitimacy of the NODs was ever submitted to the State. The defendants' argument that the State had a duty to present these arguments to the grand jury has no merit.

Additionally, the defendants argue that the State's presentation destroyed an independent and informed grand jury. The defendants have presented nothing to support this bald assertion. In addition to percipient witnesses, the State presented the testimony of Romy Ashjian and John Shaffer, both of whom explained the difficulties they experienced by virtue of the invalid Notice of Default executed by LSI, the same company that had filled the NODs in the cases presented. The Defendants' employer, LPS was producing most of the illegal documents filed with the Clark County Recorders' office, along with First American National Default and Quality Loan Services, all clients of LPS.

2

3

4

5

6

8

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

The elements required to be proven by the State to establish that the NODs were falsely notarized and filled with the Clark County Recorder's Office were clearly provided by virtue of legal evidence submitted to the grand jury. The State did not mischaracterize the defendant's actions as forgery. Although the term "forgery" was used, it was always used in the context that the signatures on the documents were not those of the defendants, but that they notaries had been ordered to fabricate them. The State's case rested entirely on the notaries' testimony that both defendants authorized and directed the actions taken. assert that the State somehow tricked the grand jury into indicting the defendants for otherwise legal actions is absurd. At no time did the State allege that the defendants forged their own signatures; the forgery was ordering the notaries to falsely endorse the NODs as having been signed by the defendants. The defendants were committing a crime and as demonstrated to the grand jurors, they attempted to keep these actions a secret. The jurors read and heard the testimony about the e-mail sent to the notaries requesting that a more secure method of secreting the crime be employed. In light of the evidence presented, to assert that the grand jurors could possibly be swayed into indicting where no crime had been committed is meritless. The defendants have provided no basis for the Court to believe in the existence of a reasonable probability that a different presentation to the grand jury would have resulted in a dissimilar outcome. This standard has not been met.

Moreover, in order to dismiss this matter with prejudice, the Court must find that extremely offensive circumstances exist in reference to the State's presentation. Only if this is shown should the Court even address the need to deter the State's conduct, and this remedy should be employed only if the need to deter this conduct outweighs the acts of the individuals committing the crimes. In this case, the Clark County Recorder's Office has been deluged with falsely notarized documents. Based on these activities, as well as the resultant legislation enacted, which requires personal verification of documents to be filed, the

number of foreclosures in Clark County is virtually non-existent. The State submits that in the interests of society dictate against dismissal with prejudice.

Moreover, the facts do not support the defendants' claim of a reasonable probability of a different outcome absent the alleged misconduct. Again, the evidence presented supports the indictment. Regardless of how the jurors interpreted the phrase 'forgery', the fact remains, the defendants actions resulted in false documents being filed with the Clark County Recorder's Office.

CONCLUSION

Based upon the foregoing, the State respectfully requests that the Defendants' Writ of Habeas Corpus and Motion to Dismiss be denied.

DATED this 26th day of November 2012

Submitted by:

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO Attorney General

By: /s/ ROBERT GIUNTA
ROBERT GIUNTA
Senior Deputy Attorney General
Fraud Unit

	2	I hereby certify that, on the 26 th day of November, 2012, service of the <u>ADDITIONAL</u>
	3	REPLY BRIEF IN OPPOSITION TO DEFENDANTS' MOTION TO DISMISS AND IN
	4	SUPPORT OF RETURN TO DEFENDANTS' WRITS OF HABEAS CORPUS was made
	5	this date by depositing a true and correct copy of the same for mailing, first class mail, at
	6	Las Vegas, Nevada, or via facsimile, addressed as follows:
	7	
	8	<u>Via U.S. Mail and Fax to: (714) 338-2795</u>
	9	Kenneth Julian, Esq.
ø	10	Justin C Johnson, Esq. MANATT, PHELPS & PHILLIPS, LLP
	11	695 Town Center Dr., 14th Floor Costa Mesa, CA 92626-1924
	12	Attorneys for Defendant Geraldine Sheppard
Office nite 3900 1101	13	<u>Via U.S. Mail and Fax to: (702) 489-6619</u>
~ \@ \@	14	Lisa Rasmussen, Esq.
Attorney General's 55 E. Washington, St. Las Vegas, NV 89	15	LAW OFFICE OF LISA RASMUSSEN, P.C. 601 S 10th St
Attorney General 555 E. Washington, Las Vegas, NV	16	Las Vegas, NV 89101-7027 Attorney for Defendant Geraldine Sheppard
Ψ.	17	
	18	<u>Via U.S. Mail and Fax to: (310) 203-7199</u>
	19	John C. Hueston, Esq. Alexander Porter, Esq.
	20	IRELL & MANELLA 1800 Avenue of the Stars, Ste 900
	21	Los Angeles, CA 90067-4211
	22	Attorneys for Defendant Gary Trafford
	23	<u>Via U.S. Mail and Fax to: (702) 382-8135</u>
	24	Kirk Lenhard, Esq. Anthony DiRaimondo, Esq.
	25	BROWNSTEIN HYATT FARBER & SCHREK, LLP
	26	100 N City Pkwy, Ste 1600 Las Vegas, NV 89106-4616
	27	Attorneys for Defendant Gary Trafford
	28	/s/ Corinne Montana An employee of the Office of the Attorney General

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

* * COMMUNICATION RESULT REPORT (NOV. 26. 2012 4:14PM) * * *

FAX HEADER 1: Bureau Criminal Justice LV

FAX HEADER 2: 7024860660

TRANSMITTED/STORED: NOV. 26. 2012 4:02PM

ADDRESS

8043 MEMORY TX

REASON FOR ERROR E-1) HANG UP OR LINE FAIL E-3) NO ANSWER

E-2) BUSY E-4) NO FACSIMILE CONNECTION



STATE OF NEVADA OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

LA Fax Server

555 E Washington Avenue, Sulte 3900 Las Vegas, Nevada 89101-1608

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

FAX TRANSMITTAL MEMORANDUM

TO:	KENNETH JULIAN, ESQ. JUSTIN C JOHNSON, ESQ.	DATE: <u>NOVE</u>	EMBER 26, 2012
FAX #;	(714) 338-2795		
FROM:	ROBERT GUINTA, SR DAG	PHONE: <u>(70</u>	2) 486-3455
SUBJECT:	STATE vs GERALDINE ANN	SHEPPARD - C-11-2	<u>77573-2</u>
REMARKS: DEFENDANTS DEFENDANTS	INCLUDED: <u>ADDITIONAL</u> S' MOTION TO DISMISS A S' WRITS OF HABEAS CORPU	AND IN SUPPORT	OPPOSITION TO
This fax consis	sts of <u>eleven (11) </u>	Including this cover sh	eet.
If you have ar Secretary for E Thank you.	ny difficulties with this transmis Bob Giunta, SR DAG at (702) 48	sion, please call Cori 86-3786.	nne Montana, Legal

* * * COMMUNICATION RESULT REPORT (NOV. 26, 2012 3:58PM) * * *

FAX HEADER 1: Bureau Criminal Justice LV

FAX HEADER 2: 7024860660

TRANSMITTED/STORED: NOV. 26. 2012 3:55PM

FILE MODE OPTION ADDRESS RESULT PAGE

8041 MEMORY TX 702 489 6619 OK 11/11

REASON FOR ERROR E-1) HANG UP OR LINE FAIL E-3) NO ANSWER

E-2) BUSY E-4) NO FACSIMILE CONNECTION



STATE OF NEVADA OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

555 E Washington Avenue, Suite 3900 Las Vegas, Nevada 89101-1608

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
Attorney General

KEITH G. MUNRO
Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH

FAX TRANSMITTAL MEMORANDUM

TO:	LISA RASMUSSEN, ESQ.	DATE: NOVEMBER 26, 2012
FAX #:	(702) 489-6619	
FROM:	ROBERT GUINTA, SR DAG	PHONE: (702) 486-3455
SUBJECT:	STATE vs GERALDINE SHEPP	ARD - C-11-277573-2
REMARKS: DEFENDAN DEFENDAN		***************************************
This fax con	nsists of <u>eleven (11) </u>	cluding this cover sheet.
	any difficulties with this transmission Bob Giunta, SR DAG at (702) 486-	on, please call Corinne Montana, Legal -3786.

* * COMMUNICATION RESULT REPORT (NOV. 26. 2012 4:17PM) * * *

310 203 7199

FAX HEADER 1: Bureau Criminal Justice LV

FAX HEADER 2: 7024860660

TRANSMITTED/STORED: NOV. 26. 2012 4:13PM

ADDRESS

8044 MEMORY TX

REASON FOR ERROR E-1) HANG UP OR LINE FAIL E-3) NO ANSWER

E-2) BUSY E-4) NO FACSIMILE CONNECTION



STATE OF NEVADA

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

555 E Washington Avenue, Suite 3900 Las Vegas, Névada 89101-1608

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO Attomay General

Thank you.

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

FAX TRANSMITTAL MEMORANDUM

TO:	JOHN HUESTON, ESQ. ALEXANDER PORTER, ESQ.	DATE: <u>NOVEMBER 26, 2012</u>
FAX #:	(310) 203-7199	
FROM:	ROBERT GUINTA, SR DAG	PHONE: (702) 486-3455
SUBJECT:	STATE VS GARY RANDALL TRAFFO	RD - C-11-277573-1
REMARKS: DEFENDANTS DEFENDANTS		
This fax consis	sts of <u>eleven (11)</u> pages, including	g this cover sheet.
₹	ny difficulties with this transmission, pl 3ob Giunta, SR DAG at (702) 486-3786	

* * * COMMUNICATION RESULT REPORT (NOV. 26. 2012 4:01PM) * * *

7023828135

FAX HEADER 1: Bureau Criminal Justice LV

FAX HEADER 2: 7024860660

TRANSMITTED/STORED : NOV. 26. 2012 4:00PM

ADDRESS

PAGE

8042 MEMORY TX

REASON FOR ERROR
E-1) HANG UP OR LINE FAIL
E-3) NO ANSWER

E-2) BUSY E-4) NO FACSIMILE CONNECTION



STATE OF NEVADA

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

555 E Washington Avenue, Suite 3900 Las Vegas, Nevada 89101-1608

CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO Attorney General

Thank you.

KEITH G. MUNRO Assistant Attorney General

GREGORY M. SMITH Chief of Staff

FAX TRANSMITTAL MEMORANDUM

TO:	KIRK LENHARD, ESQ. DATE: NOVEMBER 26, 2012 ANTHONY DIRAIMONDO, ESQ.
FAX #:	(702) 382-8135
FROM:	ROBERT GUINTA, SR DAG PHONE: (702) 486-3455
SUBJECT:	STATE vs GARY RANDALL TRAFFORD - C-11-277573-1
REMARKS: DEFENDANTS DEFENDANTS	INCLUDED: ADDITIONAL REPLY BRIEF IN OPPOSITION TO S' MOTION TO DISMISS AND IN SUPPORT OF RETURN TO S' WRITS OF HABEAS CORPUS
This fax consis	sts of <u>eleven (11)</u> pages, including this cover sheet.

If you have any difficulties with this transmission, please call Corinne Montana, Legal

Secretary for Bob Glunta, SR DAG at (702) 486-3786.