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**OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF MENDOCINO**

July 27, 2015

The Honorable Thomas D. Allman
Mendocino County Sheriff
951 Low Gap Road
Ukiah, CA 95482

Re: Death of Inmate Neuroth in The Mendocino County Jail

Dear Sheriff Allman:

We have completed our review of the in-jail death of Steven Kellogg Neuroth. Accordingly, under this cover I am turning over to you the investigation binder of reports and evidence which were compiled by my investigators to allow for our independent review of the chain of events that lead to the declaration of Mr. Neuroth's death just before 1 o'clock on the morning on June 11, 2014.

As I believe you know, Mr. Neuroth was arrested by the Willits Police Department about quarter after 10 o'clock on the night of June 10, 2014. He was arrested for using and/or being under the influence of a controlled substance, a misdemeanor violation of Health and Safety Code section 11550(a). It is obvious from all accounts that Mr. Neuroth was suffering from drug-induced delusions at the time of his arrest, this finding supported by the report that Mr. Neuroth was perceiving non-existent snakes writhing on the floor of the patrol vehicle he was being transported in. After being transported down the hill to the Mendocino County jail facility for sobering, booking, and housing, Mr. Neuroth exhibited significant paranoia and was resistant with jail personnel. While physical force was necessary to overcome Mr. Neuroth's resistance, my review of the available evidence leads me to conclude that only that force necessary to reasonably overcome the inmate's resistance was employed. Given his words and actions, I find that the inmate clearly posed a safety risk to the correctional officers and they acted in a reasonable manner to address the situation without putting their own individual and collective safety at unnecessary risk. There is insufficient evidence for me to conclude, or any other objective fact finder for that matter to conclude, that the actions of the Willits police officers and/or the jail's correctional officers caused the death in question.

The scope of this review has been straight-forward. The focus has been to determine whether there is evidence available that would lead a reasonable person to conclude that Mr. Neuroth's death was the result of criminal misconduct – whether intentional or negligent – by any one or

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more of the police officers and/or correctional officers who interacted with Mr. Neuroth from Willits until his death in Ukiah. In short, while an extremely unfortunate situation, the information I have reviewed, along with all reasonable inferences that may be drawn from same, do not indicate or otherwise support criminal causation.

Finally, I will note that the amount of methamphetamine circulating in Mr. Neuroth's body at the time of his death is staggering and, in the pathologist's opinion, likely contributed to his symptoms as reported, as well as his eventual death. As noted in the hospital emergency room report, Mr. Neuroth had a "history of active methamphetamine abuse," abuse that seemed to be especially out of control during the weeks, days, and hours leading up to his death.

Yours truly,

C. David Eyster

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District Attorney

CDE:nc
cc: District Attorney Chief Investigator Kevin Bailey