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May 15, 2009

The Honorable Bill McCollum
Office of Attorney General
The Capitol PL-01
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1050

Re: Death of Murray B. Cohen

Dear Attorney General McCollum:

Please be advised that I am an attorney in Jacksonville, Florida. I have been retained by Steve Esdale in connection with the death of his natural father, Murray B. Cohen. Over the course of the past many months, I have corresponded extensively with the Governor's office. I have requested a special prosecutor be appointed in connection with the above-captioned matter. For your review, I am enclosing a very detailed report which I sent to Governor Crist, together with multiple factual exhibits. As you will note, my clients believe that Murray Cohen died as the result of murder. Specifically, they believe he was killed by poison. Moreover, the original investigation into his death was so flawed and contaminated with irregularities by the Sarasota Sheriff's Office, I felt the need to bring this matter to your attention.

It is my belief that this matter should be referred to a special prosecutor. The prosecutor in the geographical venue assigned to this case, Earl Moreland, has refused to file charges or even assemble a grand jury, despite the overwhelming evidence, as attached. Moreover, Mr. Moreland has already stated that even if poison was found in the body of Murray Cohen, he would not prosecute. Thus, a conflict clearly exists, which would warrant assistance from your office.

Attached also please find the sworn testimony of Steve Beninati, who believes he was a witness to the murder of Murray Cohen. Beninati also talks about substantial inappropriate behavior by the Sarasota Sheriff's Office detectives.

Additionally, I have learned since my letter to Governor Crist, that both witnesses to the marriage of Murray and Maria Cohen are drug traffickers, one of whom was charged with murder last year. Additionally, we believe that we may have isolated the purchase point of the Corazol to a pharmacy in LaPaz, Bolivia, which is where Maria Cohen traveled for her honeymoon, just three weeks before Murray Cohen's death.

I have spent hundreds of hours trying to achieve justice for the Esdale family. I am working pro bono. I have a large law practice and am well respected around the State and generally represent big business. I accepted this case to advocate on behalf of the Esdale family. I have no plans involving litigation against any State agency. I merely want justice for my clients.

The Honorable Bill McCollum
Office of Attorney General
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We have assembled a group of former and current police officers and experts who have also dedicated substantial time, pro bono, in this case. All of us believe Murray Cohen was the victim of foul play. Every media outlet that has looked at this case has come to the same conclusion. The Sarasota Sheriff's Office has never commented or answered any questions about their false documents or irregularities, despite dozens of inquiries.

If there was ever a need for a special prosecutor, this is it. I would be happy to travel to Tallahassee with our team of experts and law enforcement personnel to speak with you or your lawyers at any opportunity. Please give us that opportunity.

As I mentioned to the Governor's office, I have been contacted by Teri Whitcraft, a producer with ABC News, and they wish to produce a story for 20-20 in connection with Mr. Cohen's death. Naturally, I would like our State to look favorably in that interview.

I look forward to hearing from someone from your office.

Sincerely,



Mark H. Gelman

MHG/lcf

Enc.

cc: Steve Esdale

Teri Whitcraft, ABC News (w/enc.)