

**U.S. Department of Justice**

United States Attorney

Southern District of Alabama

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<<Date>>

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Dear Judge <<Last Name>>

In the interest of reducing crime and recidivism in communities across the Southern District of Alabama I have some valuable information that I would like to share with you.

When criminal defendants are incarcerated they often get entangled in other negative law

enforcement consequences that are not necessarily due to a continuing intent to violate the law. The most common example is when a defendant has unresolved traffic citations at the time he is taken into custody for committing an unrelated felony offense. These unresolved traffic citations are not necessarily essential to community safety to enforce, but nonetheless can set in motion a series of negative legal consequences, such as augmented traffic fines and warrants being issued for Failure To Appear. These legal problems make it very difficult for ex-offenders to successfully reintegrate back into society.

In the Federal system a defendant’s unresolved traffic citations have a more immediate negative effect prior to the defendant’s release. Specifically, unresolved traffic citations can affect an inmate’s eligibility for some programs while incarcerated in the federal Bureau of Prisons. These programs play an important role in the rehabilitative process, increasing the chances of a successful reentry back into our community and lessening the chances of recidivism.

Moreover, in light of equitable and judicial economy considerations, determining whether such citations represent a legitimate threat to public safety or are instead an administrative snafu[[1]](#footnote-1), is a worthwhile exercise. If, in a given case, it is determined to be the latter, then it is reasonable to conclude that a defendant’s unresolved traffic citations unnecessarily clog up the court’s docket and are unduly burdensome on the defendant.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of the factors and circumstances outlined above as you juggle a very busy judicial docket.

Sincerely,

Kenyen R. Brown

United States Attorney

Southern District of Alabama

1. In many instances a defendant is already in custody on the more serious offense when a Failure To Appear determination is made. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)