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## PRESS RELEASE

### Benton County Sheriff Innocent of Charges

**Richland, WA, October 10, 2019:** Despite false allegations and a politically motivated investigation and prosecution, Benton County Sheriff Jerry Hatcher remains committed to his family and the people of people of Benton County, whom he has the privilege to serve.

After experiencing marital problems, Sheriff Hatcher and his wife began divorce proceedings. Mrs. Hatcher filed divorce proceedings without any allegations of physical harm or any request for an order preventing Sheriff Hatcher from contacting her while the divorce proceeded. The divorce was sad but not contentious and both Sheriff and Mrs. Hatcher wanted the divorce to be amicable. After the filing of the divorce, Sheriff and Mrs. Hatcher continued to speak to each other, see each other, and work on trying to repair the relationship.

Several weeks after the divorce was filed, Benton County elected officials involved themselves in the Hatcher's divorce. The officials, who are not members of law enforcement or investigators, started pressuring Mrs. Hatcher to report a two-year-old allegation against Sheriff Hatcher. The officials went so far as to hold an hour-long meeting with Mrs. Hatcher without any law enforcement or investigators present. The pressure put on Mrs. Hatcher by the officials was so great that she drove to Idaho to ask for help in dealing with the pressure put on her by the officials.

Mrs. Hatcher drafted an email making it clear that the 2-year-old allegation was **not true** and that she had been pressured by Benton County officials to make the allegation. Mrs. Hatcher also continued to communicate with Sheriff Hatcher during this period of time, asking his advice on how to deal with what the officials had done.

It was only after the Benton County officials had pressured Mrs. Hatcher to make a report she knew to be false that the same officials then recused themselves from the case. If there was a conflict, that conflict existed the minute they involved themselves in the matter. The conflict existed when they held an hour long meeting with Mrs. Hatcher. The conflict existed throughout the time they pressured her.

Divorce proceedings can be emotional and people can make emotional decisions. While Sheriff Hatcher adamantly denies these false accusations, he does not blame his wife for the current situation and stands by his family. Sheriff Hatcher does blame the Benton County officials would exploit Mrs. Hatcher for their own gains.

Sheriff Hatcher will aggressively defend against these false allegations. To that end, Sheriff Hatcher's legal team has already begun their own investigation. Charges were hastily filed without even the semblance of a full and fair investigation by the Washington State Patrol. Witnesses have not been interviewed. Vital evidence has not been collected. Sheriff Hatcher's legal team has already begun collecting the evidence the State Patrol failed to secure. Sheriff Hatcher's legal team will also be seeking a preservation order to ensure that forensic evidence that may be in the possession of Benton County officials is not destroyed.

Sheriff Hatcher will rely on his legal team to handle these false allegations while he continues to concentrate on serving the citizens of Benton County who elected him and have trusted him for over 30 years.

Sheriff Hatcher has retained **Mr. Mason Pickett** to assist with the civil portion of these accusations and **Mr. Scott Johnson** to assist with the criminal case.

For further information or if anyone has any information about the events described above, please contact: **Scott W. Johnson at Johnson & Orr, (509) 579-0080 or [scott@johnsonorr.com](mailto:scott@johnsonorr.com).**

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**From:** [mhatcher@owt.com](mailto:mhatcher@owt.com) <[mhatcher@owt.com](mailto:mhatcher@owt.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 3, 2019 9:26 PM  
**To:** '[Andy.miller@co.benton.wa.us](mailto:Andy.miller@co.benton.wa.us)' <[Andy.miller@co.benton.wa.us](mailto:Andy.miller@co.benton.wa.us)>;  
'[daniel.richmond@wsp.wa.gov](mailto:daniel.richmond@wsp.wa.gov)' <[daniel.richmond@wsp.wa.gov](mailto:daniel.richmond@wsp.wa.gov)>  
**Cc:** 'Monica Hatcher' <[mhatcher@owt.com](mailto:mhatcher@owt.com)>  
**Subject:** Hatcher

Benton Cnty Prosecutor, Andy Miller

Washington State Patrol, Sgt. Richmond

I have tried to contact you several times since the beginning of this week as I have some questions and concerns that I needed to share with you regarding my conversation with the Detectives as well as others. After spending a lot of time going over everything that has transpired since I received your call on September 18<sup>th</sup> regarding this ongoing issue between my husband and I, it has become very clear to me that I am confused about quite a lot of things. Given everything that has been going on in my world over the past few months, I wanted to share that I have really had a hard time, mentally and emotionally. With my entire world falling apart, your call on 09/18 caught me completely off guard. Not only was I surprised by the subject and your questions, I was so overwhelmed at the time that .....

After being questioned by the Detectives in my office, I have done a lot of thinking, which is why I have tried to contact you. Andy, as I have shared with you, I have been a complete mess, everything in my world has been ripped apart

and I have not only had difficulty in controlling my emotions, but it has been incredible tough to concentrate, let alone focus on one single thing.

Looking back at everything and trying to remember what I said to the detectives, I do not feel comfortable and honestly am not sure that I can even remember all that I said, which is why I cannot in good faith swear to my recollection of the events that occurred two years ago are accurate. I am not sure that you are aware as I am not sure that I told the Detectives but during that time period I was in a pain management program through one of my Doctors, I was taking a significant amount of medications for my chronic pain condition from an injury and multiple surgeries to my hand.

I should have probably told you and the Detectives that years ago I suffered a significant brain injury in a car accident, one reoccurring result of the trauma to my brain has been extremely vivid dreams that I experience quite often and over the years has been difficult for me to sometimes realize when I'm awake or still dreaming. This has been something over the years that I am not comfortable sharing with people and embarrasses me, as I am sure it might make me look a little nuts, however it is something that has been an issue that I have to pay attention to. There have been a few occasions that I have woken up and actually left marks on myself as I have been known to physically struggle in certain dreams. (I'm truly embarrassed that I feel I need to share this with you).

Andy, when you called me on the 18<sup>th</sup> with your questions, I did not hesitate to tell you that I did not want to discuss or share anything. That I had been a victim of Domestic Violence in a previous marriage and that **this was not the case with Jerry and I**. I had also said that I did not ask for any of this, I did not contact anyone and was not comfortable telling you anything... When you told me that you could subpoena me and I would be forced to answer or I could answer your questions then, because you really did not want to have to subpoena me.

That not only intimidated me but frankly, scared the crap out of me. After talking to my parents last week, I now understand that I did not have to talk to you and I did have the option to reject your questions. I have to say, that I do feel that I was pushed into talking with you. The other side of this that I am embarrassed about is the fact of my limitations when it comes to my memory and difficulty in things that happen and what I have dreamt...

These dreams are so vivid that I often wake up in a panic and the dream feels so real. These dreams at times have included Jerry in a very negative way, only to wake up and find him laying next to me or already gone to work. This is why, I did not want to talk with you. I have been stressing over this, and to be honest I do not feel comfortable at all, and I cannot be positive about the details. I know that I personally told you (and the Detectives) that I never reported anything,

and I did not want to. I did tell you (and the Detectives) that Jerry is NOT a violent person and that he had never raised his hand to me, and that he has never ever hit me or pushed me.. nothing! As I shared above, when you told me that you would Subpoena me, it truly scared me and made me feel as if I did not have a choice. Being as I believed you and Jerry were friends, I trusted you but did not want to share my personal difficulties and memory issues. I feel that I need to apologize because I should have just been upfront with you at that time... especially about details that I am uncertain of. My conversation two years ago with my co-worker, Betty Cooper, should have never happened. I don't know if Jerry's inappropriate involvement with woman is a trigger for me, but I have seriously taken a closer look at just that this past week.

One more thing that I want to share with you is that last week when I spoke with Pat (my divorce attorney) I told her that I was feeling like I was being used to push some other agenda... Looking back at everything, I certainly do feel that may have been the case as I know that I was very clear that I did not want to report anything in 2017, nor did I want to report anything now. And in fact, I have NOT reported anything or asked for help. I have become upset with the fact that I believe I may be being used. This is especially upsetting to me as you are fully aware of the facts of my marriage and how difficult things have been for me, not to mention my uncontrollable emotions.

The morning I went to work in 2017 and spoke to my co-worker, Betty Cooper, I remember my neck being blotchy my conversation with Betty was out of anger that I felt toward Jerry and should not have happened.

When I was interviewed by the 3 State Patrol Detectives, it was very intimidating and uncomfortable. At the end I was asked if I would like to have a protection order which they could arrange, I refused as I did not feel it was necessary. I received a call from them again that and again asked and my response was no.

In addition to their the questioning, I was asked if I wanted to add anything... what I stated at this point as it was the same thing that I said directly to you the very first time that you contacted me, and I know I had stated the same thing a few additional times... "I did not ask for any of this. I did not report anything in 2017. I hope you can understand that I would not want to accuse anyone of a crime that I am not absolutely positive of. I wish I could have shared this with you earlier as I did try and contact you.

I was very surprised to receive an email from my divorce lawyer asking me to sign a protection order. The protection order stated things that were not even true, and certainly had not been said by me. It is my understanding that you called her to facilitate this. I feel I am being used, or pushed into making this report into to support someone's personal vendetta against Jerry. Please know

that I will not be part of that. I further want you to know that I will not be meeting with you or the detectives any further on this matter. I ask you to please respect my wishes and do not attempt to pressure me any further or use me to support someone's agenda. Jerry and I are getting a divorce over him having an affair, and I have every reason to be angry with him. That being said, I should not have let you and Jerome play on my emotions as you are both fully aware of the difficult things I am going through.

At this point, because I am uncomfortable and feel pressured into doing or saying things that I am choosing to step back and will allow my attorney to communicate on my behalf, should it be requested or needed.

*Monica Hatcher*