UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA
AUGUSTA DIVISION

IN RE JOSEPH NEAL, JR.	)))	No. MC-112-008

DECLARATION

I, JEFFREY R. HARRIS, do here by declare, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, that the following is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief:

1. I am licensed to practice law in the State of Georgia and am a member of the Bar of the Southern District of Georgia.

2. I am familiar with the character and reputation of Joe Neal, Jr., and make this Declaration in Support of Joe Neal Jr.'s Motion to Vacate his suspension from practice in this federal district.

3. I am generally familiar with the allegations against Joe Neal, Jr., arising out of his indictment on Rape in the Superior Court of Richmond County and am familiar with the resolution of that case.

4. This matter was tried before the Superior Court of Richmond County and resulted in a dismissal of the rape charge and a plea agreement to three non-violent, non-sexual misdemeanors on a separate accusation, acts which were totally unrelated to Mr. Neal's law practice or his representation of clients, or his candor or

honesty towards a Court or tribunal.

5. I am troubled that the judicial process against Mr. Neal could have played out in Court that resulted in the dismissal of the rape charge against him, but that he could now be subject to what amounts to a retrial of these charges against him in a Bar proceeding in federal court.

6. Specifically, I understand that an Assistant United States Attorney in the Southern District has been appointed to represent the members of the Bar of the Southern District of Georgia, however, those actions do not represent my views in this matter.

7. In particular, Mr. Neal is factually innocent of the charge of rape against him as that charge was dismissed. Mr. Neal's innocence of the charge of rape should vindicate him in this Court and his private, personal, consensual sexual conduct should not be again paraded before the public.

8. I understand that the Superior Court Judge in the trial at this case, stated in open court that no rape occurred and I understand that the prosecutor admitted in open court that the alleged victim would not be credible on cross examination.

9. It is my view that it is inappropriate to comment upon the private, consensual sexual conduct of a member of this Bar because such conduct is private and protected by the U.S. and Georgia Constitution. Whether or not Mr. Neal

engages in private conduct authorized by our Constitution which offends others, it is not unlawful and it is private. That conduct should not be a basis for suspension or disbarment or we go too far in offending our right to privacy. Any disciplinary proceeding should only be about whether Mr. Neal should be suspended or disbarred for committing the misdemeanor offenses.

10. The rape charge has been dismissed. The misdemeanor dispositions are first offenses which rarely, if ever, have been justification for suspension or disbarment.

11. In light of there being no evidence in Mr. Neal's history of dishonesty or misuse of his license as a lawyer, I would endorse Mr. Neal's reinstatement to the Bar of the Southern District of Georgia.

12. I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing 11 paragraphs are true and correct, and that this declaration was executed on the 17th day of September, 2012, in Savannah, Georgia.

Jeffrey R. Harris

Sworn and subscribed to before me
this 17th day of September, 2012.

Notary Public of Georgia
My Commission Expires: 9/12/2014