

STATEMENT OF ARNOLD BOTTS

More than 20 years ago, I had the privilege and responsibility of serving as Chief of Police for the City of Cleveland. In 1991 and after 19 years of service, complaints were made regarding my conduct with employees of the Cleveland Police Department.

At the same time, I had a business opportunity which I believed would provide me with more income than I was receiving in my position with the Cleveland Police Department. Unexpectedly, representatives of law enforcement asked me to cooperate with them in an investigation of the complaints. I did so. I allowed an outside agency to interview any of our employees. My memory is that the investigation continued for approximately 10 months. I was assured that I would be interviewed before the investigation was complete. I was not. Subsequently, I learned that the complaints had been taken to the Bradley County Grand Jury. I asked to be allowed to appear before the Grand Jury. My request was not accepted. Grand Jury proceedings are secret and I was shocked when someone brought a copy of a Grand Jury Report to the Cleveland Police Department. Taking into consideration my plans for new employment, and the impact of any such allegations on my family and church community, I chose to resign and I surrender my certification as a Law Enforcement Officer to the Tennessee Post Commission. At that time I did not intend to ever re-enter law enforcement.

Over the past 12 months, while working as an Office Manager and Investigator with a local law firm, I had the opportunity see our State Representative Eric Watson and the interest which had been generated by his candidacy for Sheriff. I saw a man who was committed to, in his words, "a new direction in law enforcement for our community."

Eric Watson is without doubt a true leader. It has been my privilege to work with the leadership team of Sheriff Watson in developing plans to enhance the quality of law enforcement in Bradley County. I have contributed as a result of my experience and education; I have contributed from an administrative perspective to those plans. My experiences as a Law Enforcement Officer, Police Chief, Private Investigator, Certified Civil Mediator while holding a Masters Degree in Education Psychology, Masters Degree in Criminal Justice, Completion of the FBI National Academy, and many other schools, I am very familiar with law enforcement operations. I have the unique experience of having participated with the law firm in representing county government from the Georgia line to the Kentucky line in assessing the best means and methods of operations of Sheriff's Departments.

With this in mind, and when I was asked if I might be interested in serving the people of Bradley County and Sheriff Eric Watson in the capacity as a Director of Administration, I accepted. I did so because I believe that this was an area in which I could contribute to the effectiveness and efficiency of the Sheriff's Department.

I am a human and acknowledge that there are instances in my past in which I have not exercised the best judgment; however, I was not guilty of any criminal misconduct. I hold myself to the highest standard of personal conduct.

I am dedicated to serving Sheriff Eric Watson and for the people of Bradley County. I truly believe that the people will be well served as we continue to make changes for the betterment of our employees and all our citizens.

Arnold Botts