

March 23, 2024

Attn: Honorable Judge J. Randall Hall,

Dr. Matthew T. King
4204 Bitternut Trail
Greensboro, NC 27410

RE: Mr. Brandon Thurmond

Dear Honorable Judge J. Randall Hall,

My name is Matthew King, and I am writing you this letter in support of my good friend, Brandon Thurmond. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to do this, as I understand the magnitude of such decision making.

I have been in communication with Brandon offering positive reinforcement and accountability since not only his incarceration with the State of Georgia but since being charged with this Federal offense. I will continue to provide Brandon with encouragement and support, as long as I am able. Although not classmates, Brandon and I are alumni of the same university (University of Arkansas Pine Bluff) have known each other since 2012. We are also members of the same college fraternity and bonded quickly after meeting. Brandon was a star football player on campus, but I was struck by his humble demeanor and how much he embraced any guidance given to him. His obvious dream was to play in the NFL and it appeared that would be his calling. Unfortunately, that dream was not to be and I believe out of desperation and no "plan B" to speak of, Brandon made mistakes and decisions that would put his character in question.

Brandon and I have not spoken about the details of his offense, but he has told me that he made a serious error in judgement and prays for forgiveness. He has heavily increased his relationship with God and rejects negative associations of any kind. I am so proud of the fact that he is managing to deal with this situation by not placing blame or complaining about his circumstances. He takes responsibility for his wrong doings and has become totally committed to being the best person he can be, while allowing God to guide his thoughts and actions. He refuses to associate his past with the person he has become today. He fully understands this is crucial for his current stability and his ability to maintain the effort he has put forth to become the man he is today.

Brandon has always been a good-hearted person. Always a pleasure to be around and remains well loved for his genuine care for others and humble personality. He was a

pretty good student and athlete and started college upon graduating from high school. Like many of us at times, he lost his way when the initial plans [to play pro football] did not work out and allowed himself to be drawn into poor decisions. The 5 years he spent in the custody of the State of Georgia, Brandon truly shows in his actions that he understands the cost of making stupid and selfish decision does and that was never worth his while. He sincerely regrets the failure in judgement and decision-making. Since he has been released from prison, Brandon has done so much for his personal growth but also in assisting with the growth of others and he still has many, many positives to offer the world.

Brandon will have the support of myself and many others that love him and want the best for him. Again, I will continue to offer him positive guidance and support for as long as I am able. I will continue to connect him with resources to challenge himself to continue to grow as a hardworking man. I will continue to hold him accountable for the goals he sets for himself.

I ask that you please consider allowing Brandon to serve his time under home confinement. I know he has abiding by the rules and stipulations of his current probation with the Federal Government and the Parole guidelines that were set with the State of Georgia. I know that Brandon has been working a full time job since released, has obtained a position under a Nonprofit Organization to mentor youth. Brandon has been heavily involved in the life of not only his biological daughter Laila, but his girlfriend's daughter Dakota. Brandon has expressed to me what damage has been done in the 5 years he was physically absent in his daughter's, Laila, life. Since he has been home he has had the honor of spending time, creating memories and getting to know his baby girl all over again. He has expressed remorse and is determined to never put himself in a situation that will remove him from his daughter's life again.

Brandon has lost so much through his time incarcerated from time, missing milestones in his daughter's life, his father passing away and other things but Brandon never blamed anyone for the circumstances that he placed himself in. Since he has been home and has experienced what it is like living a law abiding way, working hard but also what a support system really feels like. His girlfriend Brandi, her daughter Dakota, her friends and her family have been super supportive and present since Brandon has been released. Brandon mentioned to me the he has experienced firsthand how much his presence means to the people who truly love him and I know Brandon is determined to only become the best man and father he can be. Brandon's sense of looking even the darkest situations in a positive way is honorable. He sees each day as an opportunity to be thankful in spite of his situation and is truly focused on leading a life of good character and higher standards going forward.

I will close this letter by again thanking you for this opportunity to be heard. Brandon has always respected me and sincerely cared about my thoughts and opinions. I know he will continue to do so. He will not let you down if given the chance.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew T. King", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Matthew T. King, PhD