

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA**

Nia Mills,

Plaintiff,

vs.

William Allen Connelly;
John Gaudet;
Vance Matranga Jr.;
Sheriff Michael Cazes;
Zachary Simmers;
Kasey Perrault;
Johns Doe 1-4,

Defendants.

Case No. 3:22-cv-193

Judge

Magistrate Judge

COMPLAINT

1. Plaintiff Nia Mills, by and through her undersigned counsel, and for her Complaint against Defendants William Allen Connelly (“Defendant Connelly”), John Gaudet (“Defendant Gaudet”), Vance Matranga Jr. (“Defendant Matranga”), Sheriff Michael Cazes (“Defendant Sheriff Cazes”), Zachary Simmers (“Defendant Simmers”), Kasey Perrault (“Defendant Perrault”), and Johns Doe 1-4, alleges as follows:

INTRODUCTION

2. This case seeks to address a culture of unconstitutional searches and seizures in the West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff’s Office, which is encouraged by Louisiana’s asset forfeiture regime. Due to this culture of impunity, Nia Mills was subject to prolonged

detention and invasive searches, among other abuses and violations of the federal and Louisiana constitutions.

3. Ms. Mills is a Black woman who was born in Switzerland while her father served in the U.S. military. She relocated to Jackson, Mississippi several years ago. Ms. Mills is an audio engineer.

4. Ms. Mills is the mother to an eight-year-old daughter.

5. On March 26, 2021, Ms. Mills and her partner left their daughter with family in Mississippi while they traveled to Texas to buy a new car with their COVID-relief checks. Early in the afternoon, as they passed through Port Allen, Louisiana, they were pulled over—ostensibly for a minor traffic violation. But after the routine tasks of the traffic stop were concluded, Defendant Officer William Allen Connelly chose to continue and escalate the encounter, ordering Ms. Mills and her partner out of the car. Defendant Connelly then forcefully grabbed Ms. Mills' partner, who was recovering from a traumatic brain injury. Ms. Mills' partner became terrified and ran.

6. Defendant Connelly then arrested Ms. Mills. Defendants Connelly and Gaudet pilfered through her personal belongings in the car, musing about how much they could get for them. As Ms. Mills waited, Defendant Gaudet falsely told her that her partner had been shot and killed. Hearing these false reports, Ms. Mills burst into tears, which were met only with further taunts. Ms. Mills was then transported to a local sheriff's office, where she was subjected to further baseless searches and interrogation. For Ms. Mills, what began as a traffic stop for an improper lane change became a traumatic, life-altering ordeal that she is still struggling with today. She suffers from severe emotional distress and anxiety and has lost thousands of dollars in fees and expenses.

7. Unfortunately, the harassment and torment that Ms. Mills suffered at the hands of police is far from unique. For Black people in America, a routine traffic stop for a minor infraction too often becomes a nightmare in which police harass, escalate, and sometimes become violent.¹ These encounters with police are often financially devastating, especially when officers are incentivized to escalate them. This case seeks to hold accountable the officers who violated Ms. Mills's constitutional rights, and to formally acknowledge that Ms. Mills is deserving of dignity and constitutional treatment by those who wear a badge.

PARTIES

8. Plaintiff Nia Mills is a resident of Jackson, Mississippi and a citizen of Mississippi.

9. Defendant William Allen Connelly is an officer with WBRSO acting and/or neglecting to act in the course and scope of his employment and under color of state law. He is a citizen of Louisiana. He is sued in his individual capacity.

10. Defendant John Gaudet is an officer with WBRSO acting and/or neglecting to act in the course and scope of his employment and under color of state law. He is a citizen of Louisiana. He is sued in his individual capacity.

¹ For a comprehensive list of studies and reports demonstrating racial bias in policing, see Rodney Balko, *There's overwhelming evidence that the criminal justice system is racist. Here's the proof.*, WASH. POST, June 10, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/opinions/systemic-racism-police-evidence-criminal-justice-system/>; See also Report, *Racial Profiling in Louisiana: Unconstitutional and Unproductive*, SOUTHERN POVERTY L. CENT., Sept. 18, 2018, <https://www.splcenter.org/20180918/racial-profiling-louisiana-unconstitutional-and-counterproductive> (finding widespread evidence of racial profiling by law enforcement in Louisiana, including large racial disparities in arrest rates across the state that cannot be explained by differing rates of crime commission); Roland G. Fryer Jr., *An Empirical Analysis of Racial Differences in Police Use of Force*, 127 J. POLITICAL ECON. 1 (June 2019) (finding that Black and Hispanic people are "more than 50 percent more likely to experience some form of force in interactions with police").

11. Defendant Vance Matranga, Jr., is an officer with WBRSO acting and/or neglecting to act in the course and scope of his employment and under color of state law. He is a citizen of Louisiana. He is sued in his individual capacity.

12. Defendant Sheriff Michael B. Cazes is the Sheriff of West Baton Rouge Parish. Under the Louisiana Constitution, he is the chief law enforcement officer of the Parish and the political subdivision responsible for the policies and practices of WBRSO. The Sheriff of West Baton Rouge Parish is a constitutional office and political subdivision of the State of Louisiana and is a legal entity subject to suit. Sheriff Cazes is a citizen of Louisiana. He is sued in his official capacity.

13. Defendant Major Zachary Simmers is a Major in the WBRSO. He has been designated as the internal custodian of records for the Sheriff's Office. In that role, he is responsible for responding to requests under the Louisiana Public Records Act. He is sued in his official capacity and is a citizen of Louisiana.

14. Defendant Kasey Perrault is the custodian of records for the West Baton Rouge Parish Department of Homeland Security, Emergency Preparedness, and 911 (DOHS). In that role, she is responsible for responding to requests under the Louisiana Public Records Act. She is sued in her official capacity and is a citizen of Louisiana.

15. Defendant John Doe 1 is an officer with WBRSO acting and/or neglecting to act in the course and scope of his employment and under color of state law. He is a citizen of Louisiana. He is sued in his individual capacity.

16. Defendant John Doe 2 is an officer with WBRSO acting and/or neglecting to act in the course and scope of his employment and under color of state law. He is a citizen of Louisiana. He is sued in his individual capacity.

17. Defendant John Doe 3 is an officer with WRBSO acting and/or neglecting to act in the course and scope of his employment and under color of state law. He is a citizen of Louisiana. He is sued in his individual capacity.

18. Defendant John Doe 4 is an officer with WRBSO acting and/or neglecting to act in the course and scope of his employment and under color of state law. He is a citizen of Louisiana. He is sued in his individual capacity.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

19. Jurisdiction is proper in this Court pursuant to 18 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1343 because the Plaintiffs bring causes of action that arise under the Constitution and laws of the United States, including 28 U.S.C. § 1983.

20. This Court also has diversity jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 1332 over the Plaintiff's state-law claims because the Plaintiff is a resident of a different state than the Defendants, and the amount in controversy on state-law claims exceeds \$75,000.

21. If diversity jurisdiction is lacking, this Court has supplemental jurisdiction over Plaintiff's Louisiana state-law claims pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1367, because they arise out of the same operative facts and are so related to the federal claims that they are part of the same case or controversy.

22. Venue is proper in the Middle District of Louisiana pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(2), because the events giving rise to the Plaintiff's causes of action occurred in the Middle District of Louisiana. Venue is also appropriate because, on information and belief, Defendants Connelly, Gaudet, and the Doe Defendants are residents of the Middle District of Louisiana and the official-capacity defendants are officials of political subdivisions within the Middle District of Louisiana.

FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

A. The Traffic Stop

23. On March 26, 2021, Nia Mills and her partner were driving in a rented Ford Mustang from Jackson, Mississippi to Houston, Texas to purchase a new car. Ms. Mills had rented the car in her own name. It was due to be returned after the couple's trip to Houston.

24. Ms. Mills and her partner had recently cashed their government stimulus checks to purchase the car and had an appointment at a Houston dealership that evening. Ms. Mills drove the entire time.

25. As Ms. Mills drove through West Baton Rouge Parish on Interstate 10, she was pulled over by a white truck near Exit 151 (Port Allen).

26. Ms. Mills and her partner waited in their parked car for several minutes before a white police officer finally approached.

27. The officer was Defendant William Allen Connelly of WBRSO.

28. Defendant Connelly then walked to the driver's side window and told Ms. Mills that he had pulled her over because her tire had improperly touched the yellow line.

29. Defendant Connelly also stated that there are a lot of drunk drivers in the area, and that he wanted to ensure that her car was not stolen. Ms. Mills informed him that the car was a rental and provided him with her driver's license and the rental information.

30. Ms. Mills and her partner waited in the car while Defendant Connelly returned to his truck. After several more minutes, he came back to Ms. Mills' car and ordered her to step out so that he could "show her where the yellow line was."

31. Ms. Mills did not understand why this would be necessary, but she nonetheless complied and exited the car. Defendant Connelly walked her to the back of the car to point

out the yellow line.

32. Defendant Connelly then stated Ms. Mills was “good to go.”

33. Despite this indication that the traffic stop was complete, he then stated that he needed to see her partner’s identification as well, even though he was not driving.

34. Defendant Connelly instructed Ms. Mills to continue to stand behind the car.

35. There was no reasonable basis for Defendant Connelly to believe that Ms. Mills or her partner were armed or dangerous.

36. There was no reasonable basis for Defendant Connelly to believe that Ms. Mills or her partner were in possession of contraband or evidence of a crime.

37. Defendant Connelly approached the passenger-side window of the car and requested Ms. Mills’ partner’s identification.

38. Moments later, Defendant Connelly asked Ms. Mills’ partner to step out of the car and instructed him to walk to the back of the car, turn around, and face the car. He complied with these orders.

39. Despite his compliance, Defendant Connelly became physical, grabbing him by both arms and pressing his body up against the car.

40. As Ms. Mills’ partner stood against the car, Defendant Connelly remained behind him. Ms. Mills observed Defendant Connelly pressing a black object against her partner’s back.

41. The next moment, Ms. Mills’ partner suddenly took off running.

42. Panicked, Ms. Mills immediately went to retrieve her cell phone from the car to record the encounter, but Defendant Connelly ordered her to stop, stating, “You didn’t see anything. You were looking at traffic.” Ms. Mills understood his statement to be an order to

pretend that she had not seen how he had just treated her partner.

43. Defendant Connelly then informed Ms. Mills that she was under arrest. When Ms. Mills asked why she was being placed under arrest, Defendant Connelly responded that it was “because he ran.”

44. Defendant Connelly went to his police vehicle and released a dog that had been sitting inside.

45. None of the traffic stop, nor any of the subsequent events described below, were captured on film, because WBRSO does not own or use police-worn body cameras or dashboard cameras.

B. The Search of the Car and Ms. Mills’ Electronic Devices

46. Soon after Ms. Mills’ partner fled, two more officers arrived, both of whom were also white: Defendant John Gaudet and Defendant John Doe 1.

47. While Defendant Gaudet and Defendant Doe 1 pursued Ms. Mills’ partner, Defendant Connelly continued to detain Ms. Mills near the parked vehicles on the side of the highway.

48. After 15 - 20 minutes, Defendant Gaudet returned. Together, he and Defendant Connelly began to search Ms. Mills’ rental car while Ms. Mills was forced to sit on the ground—an arm’s length behind the car with her back towards it—handcuffed.

49. Neither Ms. Mills nor her partner ever gave consent to the officers to search their vehicle.

50. Defendants Connelly and Gaudet rummaged through the entire vehicle and its contents, opening closed bags and luggage stored in the trunk. As they did this, they joked

and laughed about stealing what they found, asking each other how much money they could get for Ms. Mills' shoes and whether any of the clothes or shoes would fit one of their sons. The Defendants made these comments loudly, as though they wanted Ms. Mills to hear or did not care that she did. During the search, Ms. Mills heard the Defendants state that they had found marijuana.

51. During this time, Ms. Mills continued to ask Defendants Connelly and Gaudet why she was under arrest. Defendant Gaudet replied that she was under arrest "for you being you."

52. Defendant Gaudet then told Ms. Mills that he had shot and killed her partner.

53. Ms. Mills immediately became very upset at the representation that her partner had been killed. Defendant Gaudet, noticing that Ms. Mills was beginning to cry, told her that in truth, he had not shot her partner, but that he "wished [he] had."

54. Defendant Gaudet also told Ms. Mills that her partner "isn't gonna look much like a boyfriend when you see him again." Ms. Mills understood this comment to mean Defendant Gaudet had severely beaten him.

55. At some point, another officer arrived drove up to the scene. That officer was Black.

56. That officer transported Ms. Mills to the Sheriff's Office.

57. After Ms. Mills was taken from the scene, officers towed and impounded the rental car.

58. During the drive to the Sheriff's Office, Ms. Mills cried and told the transporting officer about Defendant Gaudet's statement that she was arrested "for you being you." The officer responded that Ms. Mills should not have rented a Mustang, but instead should have

chosen a less flashy car such as a Sonata. When Ms. Mills told the officer that Defendants Connelly and Gaudet said they found marijuana in the car, the officer said “*Allegedly.*”

59. Upon arrival at the Sheriff’s Office, Defendant Connelly ordered Ms. Mills to sit in the hallway and be quiet, telling her that if she “talked,” she would “go to prison.”

60. Ms. Mills asked for an attorney, but the officers did not respond.

61. Seeing Defendant Gaudet, and concerned for her partner’s safety, Ms. Mills repeatedly told the Defendants that her partner was recovering from two recent brain surgeries. The Defendants gave no response, except to say that it was not Ms. Mills’ partner that she should be worried about, but Defendant Gaudet, because Defendant Gaudet had been forced to run.

62. Ms. Mills continued to be detained in the hallway for roughly one hour. During this time, she could overhear Defendants Connelly and Gaudet conversing with several other officers in the room next to her. On information and belief, one of the other officers was Defendant Vance Matranga Jr.

63. Defendant Gaudet mentioned something about finally getting shoulder surgery, joking that he would no longer have to lie at work about how he injured his shoulder.

64. During this time, the Defendants searched Ms. Mills’ wallet and attempted to run a debit card and a pre-paid card using a credit card reader.

65. From the hallway, Ms. Mills could hear the Defendants discussing and joking about the amount in each of her accounts. She heard one of them state gleefully that WBRSO was “ten bands up for the week.”

66. Growing increasingly frustrated, Ms. Mills told the officers that what was happening was illegal. In response, Defendant Connelly told her that she “didn’t have any

rights” because she “wasn’t born here.”

67. Ms. Mills is a citizen of the United States. She was born in Switzerland while her father was serving in the U.S. military.

68. After about an hour, Defendant Connelly told Ms. Mills that she was free to go. He wrote her a summons for the alleged traffic violation and misdemeanor possession of marijuana.

69. However, Defendant Connelly also told Ms. Mills that she could not leave with her cell phone and laptop unless she granted him consent to search those items.

70. Having lost access to the rental car, Ms. Mills could think of no way to get home from Louisiana to Mississippi without her cell phone. When she asked Defendant Connelly how she was supposed to get home, he told her she could “walk home.” Jackson, Mississippi is roughly 180 miles from Port Allen, Louisiana.

71. As a Black woman, alone and surrounded by male officers, Ms. Mills felt unsafe and uncomfortable, particularly in light of the comments being made by the Defendants and their refusal to let her speak to an attorney.

72. Seeing no other option other than to relent to their coercion, Ms. Mills told Defendant Connelly that he could search her cell phone and laptop. Defendant Connelly, Defendant Gaudet, Defendant Matranga, and Defendants Doe 1, Doe 2, Doe 3, and Doe 4 looked through her texts, photos, emails, and other applications for about 20 minutes. As they did so, they joked and laughed about the private contents of the phone, speaking loudly. On information and belief, these Defendants intended for Ms. Mills to hear them or did not care that she did.

73. After searching Ms. Mills’ cell phone and laptop, Defendant Connelly and the

other officers also searched Ms. Mills' partner's cell phone without his consent.

74. When the search was complete, Defendant Connelly returned Ms. Mills' items back to her, making a comment to the effect of: "See? We're not so bad."

75. After receiving her cell phone back and leaving the Sheriff's Office, Ms. Mills looked at her Cash App (a prepaid account). It showed two attempted withdrawals by WBRSO—one for \$5,000 and another for \$1,000.

76. Stranded without a vehicle in a state where she does not reside, Ms. Mills used her cell phone to order an Uber home to Jackson, Mississippi. The ride cost her over \$200.

77. On top of the cost of traveling home, Ms. Mills was ultimately charged thousands of dollars in daily fees by the rental-car agency for the period of time that the rental car was impounded.

78. Ms. Mills' partner was carrying approximately \$3,500 in cash during their drive, which he and Ms. Mills had intended to use for the purchase of a new car. The \$3,500 had come from Ms. Mills' COVID-stimulus check and her partner's, as well as some of the couple's collective savings.

79. A WBRSO officer seized the cash during the incident.

80. Ms. Mills and her partner were later presented with a Notice of Proposed Forfeiture of the cash, pursuant to which each filed a claim.

81. Prosecutors proceeded to file a forfeiture proceeding in the 18th Judicial District Court, which remains pending.

82. Ms. Mills had to borrow her partner's grandmother's car and pay for enough gas to return to West Baton Rouge Parish to collect the items that had been left in the impounded car, such as her shoes and clothing.

83. Ms. Mills returned again to West Baton Rouge Parish and appeared in court pursuant to the criminal summons she was issued. The court informed her that she had no charges pending and did not instruct her to return to court again.

84. Ms. Mills suffers lasting mental anguish and emotional distress resulting from this incident, including sadness, outrage, and frustration stemming from the mistreatment she suffered from law enforcement.

C. Public Records Requests

85. On behalf of Ms. Mills, the ACLU of Louisiana and the Social Justice Legal Foundation submitted a series of public records requests to the West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff seeking records and information regarding the March 26 incident.

86. In response, Defendant Cazes, Defendant Simmers, and Defendant Perrault have unlawfully resisted their statutory obligation to timely respond to public information requests. When they eventually did respond, they did so with incomplete and inadequate information.

Request 1 (On Behalf of Ms. Mills)

87. The ACLU of Louisiana submitted a formal, written public records request on behalf of Ms. Mills on October 1, 2021 (“Request 1”). *See* Ex. A (attaching Request 1).

88. Having received no response to Request 1, the ACLU of Louisiana submitted a written follow-up request on October 19, 2021, restating the law as it applies to public records requests, and restating the Defendants’ obligation to produce the requested documents within the mandated timeframe. Again, no response or documents were provided.

89. On November 2, 2021, more than a month after Request 1 was submitted,

Defendant Simmers responded via email, simply confirming receipt of the request and claiming that he was “working on” the request.

90. The ACLU of Louisiana responded by requesting an estimated date by which they could expect a response. Defendant Simmers estimated “at least 5 business days,” claiming that he was experiencing “computer difficulties” that should be “resolved sometime [that day].”

91. After five days there was still no response. On November 10, 2021, the ACLU of Louisiana sent another written follow-up via email. Defendant Simmers stated that they were “still having computer issues” and he could not provide a date by which he would produce the documents. He further stated that it would take “some time” to respond to the requests.

92. Finally, on November 24, Major Simmers provided some documents, but those documents were not fully responsive to the request.

93. The Social Justice Legal Foundation submitted a deficiency letter as to Request 1 on December 17, 2021.

94. On January 3, 2022, Defendant Simmers responded via email addressing some of the deficiencies for Request 1. Defendant Simmers stated that he was still waiting for internal affairs documents from a captain in the department, which would take “some time” to answer.

95. To date, the requested internal affairs documents have not been produced.

96. Defendant Simmers’ January 3 email also stated that he was reaching out to a case officer to confirm whether Defendants Gaudet and Connelly were the only officers present at the scene of the incident.

97. Defendants Gaudet and Connelly were not the only officers present at the scene of

the incident. To date, no records have been provided with the names of the other officers present, despite the fact that such information was sought through Request 1.

98. On January 5, 2022, undersigned counsel responded via email, stating knowledge of at least four officers who responded to the scene, and the presence of a police dog.

99. On February 18, 2022, Defendant Simmers' office provided the names of two other WBRSO officers who he claimed were the proper records custodians for the remaining items.

100. On March 3, undersigned counsel followed up via email with the individuals Defendant Simmers named.

101. On March 3, 2022, Major John Barker responded that, according to Defendants Connelly and Gaudet, they were the only two officers present on the scene. However, he stated that "other deputies were in the area" and that a transport deputy "may have responded." Major Barker did not name the additional deputies that were in the areas. Moreover, he stated that he "cannot help anymore."

102. The Social Justice Legal Foundation submitted a formal, written public records request on behalf of Ms. Mills' partner on December 10, 2021. Defendant Simmers has similarly failed to provide responsive documents or explanation for each item in the request.

Request 2 (On Behalf of Ms. Mills and her Partner)

103. On February 7, 2022, the Social Justice Legal Foundation submitted a third, formal written public records request on behalf of both Ms. Mills and her partner ("Request 2"). See Ex. B (attaching Request 2).

104. To date, no response has been received.

Request to West Baton Rouge Department of Homeland Security (On Behalf of Ms. Mills and her

Partner)

105. On January 14, 2022, the Social Justice Legal Foundation submitted a formal written public records request on behalf of both Ms. Mills and her partner to the West Baton Rouge Parish Department of Homeland Security, Emergency Preparedness, and 911 (DOHS) (“Request 3”). *See* Ex. C (attaching Request 3).

106. DOHS is the custodian of dispatch call records.

107. Undersigned counsel has diligently made telephone calls to DOHS to follow up on the Request 3. Those calls have been unanswered or transferred to a line that goes straight to voicemail.

108. To date, no response has been received.

D. WBRSO’s Deliberate Indifference to Conducting Unlawful Searches and Seizures

109. Throughout their encounter with Ms. Mills and her partner, WBRSO officers displayed a cavalier attitude towards their extensive—and unreasonable—searches and seizures, which treats unconstitutional policing as a norm or policy.

110. This attitude evinces an organizational culture that either encourages or tolerates unlawful searches and seizures incentivized by profit.

111. While conducting the illegal search of Ms. Mills’ car, Defendants Connelly and Gaudet loudly commented and joked about converting the items to their own use, showing no concern that their conduct would be noticed or disciplined.

112. Similarly, while conducting the illegal and intrusive search of Ms. Mills’ cell phone and laptop, Defendants ridiculed photographs and other private content, again showing no concern that Ms. Mills or anyone at the office could hear them.

113. This is not the first time that WBRSO officers have been accused of confiscating and searching a cell phone unlawfully and without consent. Last year, a woman accused an WBRSO officer of forcefully removing her phone from her hands while she attempted to record her son's arrest. WBRSO kept the phone for four days and deleted the recordings she had taken. On information and belief, Defendants Connelly and Matranga were among the officers involved. *See* Compl., *Wright v. Cazes*, No. 3:21-cv-00410-JWD-RLB (M.D. La. June 16, 2021).

114. Defendants also used an electronic card reader to conduct a wholly unnecessary search of Ms. Mills' debit cards to ascertain their balances. While lawful, this search reflects an incentive for WBRSO officers to use their position of authority to seek financial gain, for themselves or for their employer.

115. Louisiana's asset forfeiture system creates a financial incentive for such unconstitutionally aggressive and invasive searches and seizures.

116. If seized property, like the cash taken from Ms. Mills and her partner, is adjudged to be forfeit, the seizing law enforcement agency receives 60% of the value of the property. The remainder of the property's value goes to the District Attorney and the parish's criminal court fund, providing an institutional interest for each participant in the process to forfeit the property.

117. In West Baton Rouge Parish, proceeds from asset forfeiture make up a substantial proportion of the criminal court fund. In recent years, as much as 70% of the total revenue to the fund has come from forfeitures.

118. In recent years, WBRSO received hundreds of thousands of dollars annually in forfeited property. In 2017, it received more than \$900,000, and the year before, WBRSO

used forfeiture funds to build itself a Fitness Wellness Center.

119. WBRSO's culture of impunity is further evidenced by their refusal to implement police-worn body cameras or dashboard cameras.

120. WBRSO has cited privacy and security concerns as a rationale for refusing to implement body or dashboard cameras. Despite this supposed concern for privacy, WBRSO frequently allows television cameras to follow them on patrols for the A&E series, LivePD.

121. WBRSO's pervasive culture of indifference towards their constitutional duties is further demonstrated by their refusal to produce documents that are subject to public records, particularly records relating to internal policies and disciplinary records.

122. WBRSO's refusal to implement body or dashboard cameras also evinces inadequate supervision of officers by Defendant Sheriff Cazes, and a lack of interest in monitoring or disciplining misconduct.

123. WBRSO's records custodian has evaded his responsibility to produce any records related to Internal Affairs. He has evaded his responsibility to produce any records related to prior complaints against the Defendant Officers in this Complaint.

124. Taken together, the preceding facts demonstrate that WBRSO operates with a culture of deliberate indifference towards the constitutional rights of the people they police (particularly relating to unlawful searches and seizures), and that WBRSO officers are incentivized to police for profit.

CLAIMS

COUNT ONE

42 U.S.C. § 1983 (Fourth Amendment) Unlawfully Prolonged Detention (Against Defendant Connelly)

125. The Plaintiff hereby incorporates by reference all preceding paragraphs of this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

126. After Defendant Connelly showed Ms. Mills the yellow line that she had crossed, he completed the legitimate mission for the stop (as reflected by his statement that she was “good to go”), and he had no basis for any reasonable suspicion of criminal activity, let alone probable cause, to justify prolonging her detention.

127. Defendant Connelly nonetheless continued to detain the Plaintiff.

128. By prolonging the stop after its mission had concluded, without reasonable suspicion or probable cause, Defendant Connelly violated the Plaintiff’s Fourth Amendment right to be free from unreasonable seizure.

129. At the time Defendant Connelly impermissibly extended the detention, he was operating under color of law.

130. As a direct and proximate result of Defendant Connelly’s conduct as set forth above, the Plaintiff has suffered and continue to suffer embarrassment, humiliation, pain, and suffering. Moreover, if Defendant Connelly had not unlawfully prolonged the stop, the Plaintiff’s car would not have been impounded, requiring her to incur late fees from the rental agency and the costs to return to Mississippi and retrieve her belongings.

COUNT TWO
42 U.S.C. § 1983 (Fourth Amendment)
Unreasonable Search of Car
(Against Defendants Connelly and Gaudet)

131. The Plaintiff hereby incorporates by reference all preceding paragraphs of this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

132. The Plaintiff had a reasonable expectation of privacy as to the rental car and its contents, including closed containers in the trunk.

133. Defendants Connelly and Gaudet did not possess a lawfully issued warrant to search the car.

134. The Defendants Connelly and Gaudet did not possess probable cause, arguable probable cause, or reasonable suspicion sufficient to justify a warrantless search of the car.

135. Neither Ms. Mills nor her partner ever gave consent to search the car.

136. No other exception to the warrant requirement under the Fourth Amendment justified a search of the car.

137. When they searched the car, Defendants Connelly and Gaudet were acting under color of state law.

138. The Plaintiff was harmed by the Defendants Connelly and Gaudet's search of her personal property in violation of her Fourth Amendment rights.

139. As a direct and proximate result of the Defendants Connelly and Gaudet's conduct as set forth above, the Plaintiff suffered interference with her personal property and suffered and continues to suffer embarrassment, humiliation, pain, and suffering.

COUNT THREE
42 U.S.C. § 1983 (Fourth Amendment)
Unreasonable Search of Phone and Computer
(Against Defendant Connelly, Defendant Gaudet, Defendant Matranga, and Defendant
Does 1-4)

140. The Plaintiff hereby incorporates by reference all preceding paragraphs of this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

141. Defendants Connelly, Gaudet, Matranga, and Does 1-4 conspired together to coerce Ms. Mills to give consent to search her phone and computer and to conduct the search. Accordingly, they are liable jointly, solidarily, and *in solido* for the conduct set forth below.

142. Ms. Mills had a reasonable expectation of privacy in the contents of her cell phone and laptop.

143. The immense storage capacity of modern cell phones implicates serious privacy concerns, and law enforcement is forbidden from searching the digital information stored on a cell phone as a search incident to arrest.

144. There was no legal basis or justification for the search of Ms. Mills' cell phone or laptop, and she did not give voluntary consent to the search. She was forced to give consent to search the phone and laptop under duress.

145. Had she been giving any meaningful choice, or the opportunity to speak to an attorney as she requested, Ms. Mills would not have consented to such an invasive search and would have kept her information private.

146. Defendants Connelly, Gaudet, Matranga, and Doe 1-4's search of the cell phone and laptop were not brief or minimally intrusive. Defendants searched the items at length, scrolling through Ms. Mills' photos, videos, and applications, and ridiculing them for 15 to 20 minutes.

147. At all times related to this action, Ms. Mills was the legal owner of the cell phone and laptop searched on March 26, 2021.

148. Ms. Mills was harmed by the Defendants Connelly, Gaudet, Matranga, and Doe 1-4's search of her private information in callous disregard of her Fourth Amendment rights.

149. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants Connelly, Gaudet, Matranga, and Doe 1-4's conduct as set forth above, Ms. Mills suffered damages in an amount to be proven at trial.

150. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants Connelly, Gaudet, Matranga, and Doe 1-4's conduct as set forth above, Ms. Mills suffered interference with her personal property and suffered and continues to suffer embarrassment, humiliation, pain, and suffering.

COUNT FOUR
42 U.S.C. § 1983 (Fourth Amendment-Monell)
Unlawful Searches and Seizures
(Against Defendant Sheriff Cazes)

151. The Plaintiff hereby incorporates by reference all other paragraphs of this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

152. The West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff, in his official capacity, is the political subdivision with authority to supervise officers for WBRSO. Defendant Cazes, as Sheriff, is the final policymaker. In that role, he (and his predecessors in office) have developed and maintained the policies, customs, and practices which proximately caused the violations of Ms. Mills' rights as described here and the resulting damages suffered.

153. WBRSO Officers' treatment of the Plaintiff displayed a cavalier disregard for individuals' Fourth Amendment rights to be free from unreasonable search and seizure. Rather, officers repeatedly commented about seizing the Plaintiff's property for personal use. They ultimately seized the Plaintiff's stimulus funds, initiating proceedings that would financially benefit WBRSO.

154. On information and belief, this disregard stems from a culture of aggressive search and seizure of drivers and their property, beyond the boundaries of constitutional policing.

155. On information and belief, this culture results from the failure of Defendant Sheriff Cazes to supervise officers as to their clear constitutional duty to not subject citizens to unreasonable searches and prolonged seizures. This failure to supervise amounts to deliberate indifference by Defendant Cazes towards the constitutional duties of his officers and the constitutional rights of the people they police.

156. Section 1983 permits municipal liability for inadequate supervision where the failure to adequately supervise amounts to a deliberate indifference to the constitutional rights of persons with whom the police come into contact.

157. In the alternative, on information and belief, this culture reflects an informal policy, by which the Sheriff encourages his officers to disregard the Fourth Amendment right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures.

158. Whether caused by a failure to supervise or an informal policy, this culture of unconstitutionally aggressive searches and seizures was a proximate cause of the violation of the Plaintiff's Fourth Amendment rights and her resulting injuries.

COUNT FIVE
La. Const. Art. I § 5 and La. Civ. Code Art. 2315
Invasion of Privacy
(Against Defendant Connelly, Defendant Gaudet, Defendant Matranga, Defendant Does 1-4, and Defendant Sheriff Cazes)

159. The Plaintiff hereby incorporates by reference all other paragraphs of this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

160. The Louisiana Constitution provides an express right of every person to be “secure in his person, property, communications, houses, papers, and effects” against unreasonable invasions of privacy.

161. Louisiana courts have expressly recognized a civil cause of action for invasion of privacy. An actionable invasion of privacy occurs when the Defendant's conduct is unreasonable and seriously interferes with the plaintiff's privacy interest.

162. Ms. Mills had a privacy interest in the contents of her cell phone and laptop. Courts have recognized the immense storage capacity of digital devices, and an accordingly heightened privacy interest in their contents.

163. Ms. Mills did not give voluntary consent to search the contents of her cell phone or laptop.

164. Defendants Connelly, Gaudet, Matranga, and Does 1-4 intentionally and unreasonably intruded upon the Plaintiff's privacy interest by conducting a thorough search of the cell phone, including looking at the photos in her camera roll and commenting on what they saw. This was a serious intrusion.

165. The Plaintiff's privacy interests in the contents of her devices outweighs the interest of Defendants Connelly, Gaudet, Matranga, and Does 1-4 in looking through the devices without a lawful justification for doing so.

166. Defendant Sheriff Cazes is vicariously liable for the invasion of Ms. Mills' privacy by WBRSO Officers, pursuant to LA Civ. Code Art. 2320.

167. Defendants Connelly and Doe 1-4 acted in the course and scope of their employment, and their conduct occurred on WBRSO premises and during their hours of employment.

168. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants Connelly, Gaudet, Matranga, and Does 1-4's conduct as set forth above, Ms. Mills experienced embarrassment, humiliation, pain, and suffering.

COUNT SIX
La. Civ. Code Art. 2315
Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress
(Against Defendant Gaudet)

169. The Plaintiff hereby incorporates by reference all other paragraphs of this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

170. Defendant Gaudet's false statement to Ms. Mills that he had shot and killed her partner was extreme and outrageous. His later statement, that he had not shot her partner but that he wished he had, was also extreme and outrageous.

171. Defendant Gaudet's false statement served no legitimate investigatory or penological purpose; rather, he made the statement solely to devastate and torment Ms. Mills. His subsequent statement that he had not killed her partner, but that he wished he had, further demonstrates his gross callousness and cruelty towards Ms. Mills.

172. The loss of a loved one, especially the knowledge that a loved one has been shot to death, causes incalculable pain and devastation. By falsely informing Ms. Mills and that her partner—the father of her child—had been killed, the Defendant Gaudet intentionally and unnecessarily caused her to feel this terrible pain.

173. Defendant Gaudet's acts constituted extreme and outrageous conduct which was so outrageous in character, and so extreme in degree, as to go beyond all possible bounds of decency, and to be regarded as atrocious and utterly intolerable in a civilized community.

174. As a direct and proximate result of Defendant Gaudet's statements and actions, Ms. Mills continues to suffer severe emotional injury and psychiatric distress. She further continues to suffer from severe distress, anguish, humiliation, and loss of enjoyment of life.

175. Defendant Gaudet desired to inflict severe emotional distress on Ms. Mills or knew that severe emotional distress would be certain or substantially certain to result from his statements and actions.

176. Any reasonable officer in these circumstances would have understood that causing someone to falsely believe their loved one had been shot is unjustified, unnecessary, and unreasonable.

COUNT SEVEN
La. Const. Art. XII § 3 & La. R.S. § 44 :31 et seq.
Violation of Louisiana Public Records Law
(Against Defendant Cazes and Defendant Simmers)

177. The Plaintiff hereby incorporates all paragraphs in this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

178. Under Article XII § 3 of the Louisiana Constitution and the Public Records Law, La. R.S. § 44:31, et seq., a person has the right to examine public documents.

179. In connection with the incident of March 26, 2021, the Plaintiff, through undersigned counsel, sought several public records from the records custodian of WBRSO, under Louisiana Public Records Law.

180. Sheriff Michael Cazes is the public official or head of WBRSO, a public body.

181. Major Zach Simmers is the Records Custodian for WBRSO.

182. To date, WBRSO has not provided documents for numerous requests, and has provided responses to various items which are incomplete.

183. For the unanswered items, WBRSO has not: (1) provided notification in writing that it believes one or more of the requested records are not public; (2) claimed an exemption under the Public Records Act or any other statute or specified the requested records for

which it is claiming an exemption; or (3) stated its reasons in writing for believing an exemption applies to any of the requested public records as required under La. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 44:32.

184. WBRSO has not certified in writing that any of the unanswered items are not immediately available as required under La. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 44:32.

185. WBRSO has withheld responsive documents without explaining the basis for withholding those documents.

186. The Plaintiff has been deprived of her rights under the Louisiana Public Records Law and is entitled to injunctive relief and/or issuance of a writ of mandamus, attorneys' fees and costs, and damages, including the attorneys' fees incurred for bringing this action.

COUNT EIGHT
La. Const. Art. XII § 3 & La. R.S. § 44 :31 et seq.
Violation of Louisiana Public Records Law
(Against DOHS Records Custodian Kasey Perrault)

187. The Plaintiff hereby incorporates all paragraphs in this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

188. The Plaintiff, through undersigned counsel, submitted a request for public records from the records custodian of the West Baton Rouge Parish Department of Homeland Security, Emergency Preparedness, and 911 (DOHS), under Louisiana Public Records Law.

189. Undersigned counsel has attempted to call the Department numerous times and has received no answer.

190. To date, DOHS has made no response.

191. For the unanswered items, DOHS has not: (1) provided notification in writing that it believes one or more of the requested records are not public; (2) claimed an exemption

under the Public Records Act or any other statute or specified the requested records for which it is claiming an exemption; or (3) stated its reasons in writing for believing an exemption applies to any of the requested public records as required under La. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 44:32.

192. DOHS has not certified in writing that any of the unanswered items are not immediately available as required under La. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 44:32.

193. DOHS has withheld responsive documents without explaining the basis for withholding those documents.

194. The Plaintiff has been deprived of her rights under the Louisiana Public Records Law and is entitled to injunctive relief and/or issuance of a writ of mandamus, attorneys' fees and costs, and damages, including the attorneys' fees incurred for bringing this action.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff Nia Mills respectfully requests that the Court enter judgment in her favor against Defendants William Allen Connelly, John Gaudet, Sheriff Michael Cazes, Zachary Simmers, Kasey Perrault, and Does 1-4, and award the following relief:

- A. A declaration that the Defendants' conduct violated the U.S. and/or Louisiana Constitutions;
- B. Compensatory damages;
- C. Special damages, including the cost of the Uber to Jackson, Mississippi; all fees owed to the car rental agency; the cost of gas required to return to West Baton Rouge Parish to retrieve items from the impounded car; and other costs incurred;
- C. Punitive damages;

- D. Attorney's fees and costs as provided by law;
- E. Injunctive relief and/or issuance of a writ of mandamus requiring the production of copies of the public records identified above;
- F. Further appropriate equitable relief; and
- G. Any other relief this Court deems just and proper.

Dated: March 22, 2022

Respectfully submitted,

By: 

Megan E. Snider, LA Bar No. 33382
Nora Ahmed*, NY Bar No. 5092374
(*pro hac forthcoming*)
ACLU Foundation of Louisiana
1340 Poydras St., Suite 2160
New Orleans, LA 70112
T: (504) 522-0628 Ext. 122
msnider@laaclu.org
nahmed@laaclu.org
justicelab@laaclu.org
*Admitted to the New York Bar,
not admitted to the Louisiana Bar

Joshua Rosenthal (Cal. Bar #325949)*
Emily Barber (Cal. Bar #342467)*
Amelia Piazza (Cal. Bar #342473)*
SOCIAL JUSTICE LEGAL
FOUNDATION
523 West 6th St., Suite 450
Los Angeles, CA 90014
T: 213-973-4063
F: 213-973-4063
Email: jrosenthal@socialjusticelaw.org
Email: ebarber@socialjusticelaw.org
Email: apiazza@socialjusticelaw.org
*Motion for Admission *Pro Hac Vice*
Pending

Attorneys for Plaintiff Nia Mills

EXHIBIT A

October 1, 2021

Via Certified U.S. Mail

Sheriff Michael B. Cazes
West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff
850 8th Street
PO Box 129
Port Allen, LA 70767



PO Box 56157
New Orleans, LA 70156
504-522-0617
laaclu.org

Lindsey Douglas
Intake & Investigations
Paralegal

Re: Public Records Request

Dear Sir/Madam:

Pursuant to the Public Records Act of Louisiana, La. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 44:1 et seq., I request copies of public records as defined in La. R.S. 44:1(A)(2)(a) and as described below.

For purposes of this request, the term “the Incident” means the traffic stop, detainment and/or arrest of Nia Mills (DOB March 17, 1991) beginning on March 26, 2021 around 1:00 p.m. near the La Quinta Inn & Suites by Wyndham Baton Rouge (2720 N Westport Dr, Port Allen, LA 70767) and including but not limited to the occurrence(s) which resulted in Criminal Summons Case #N-21-034.

1. Any video and any audio recordings regarding the Incident, including, but not limited to, any police officer body-worn camera, backseat, and/or dash camera footage.
2. Any internal reports regarding the Incident, including, but not limited to, any reports written by the officers involved in the incident.
3. Any records identifying persons present during the Incident, including, but not limited to, witnesses to the Incident or individuals interviewed regarding the Incident.
4. Any records regarding any investigation of the Incident, including the results of the investigation and the identity of the officer(s) who conducted the investigation.
5. Any records regarding the identity of the officers involved in the Incident, including, but not limited to, officers named Allen Connelly, John Gaudet, and Vance Matranga, Jr.
6. Any forfeiture notices issued regarding the Incident.

7. Any performance reviews of the officers involved in the Incident, including emails regarding job performance and probationary evaluations, even if the performance review was unrelated to the Incident.
8. Any records regarding any prior investigations of the officers involved in the Incident, even if the investigation was unrelated to the Incident.
9. Any records that regarding any prior disciplinary proceedings instituted and/or complaints filed against the officers involved in the Incident, regardless of the status of the disciplinary proceeding and/or complaint (i.e., open, open but suspended, suspended, or in any other status).
10. Any records regarding any trainings that the officers involved in the Incident have ever been required to attend regarding proper traffic stops, arrest tactics, searches and seizures, the use of excessive force, racial profiling, and/or constitutional rights.
11. Any records regarding any mandatory training programs for officers of West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office regarding proper traffic stops, arrest tactics, searches and seizures, the use of excessive force, racial profiling, and/or constitutional rights.
12. Any records regarding the number of complaints made against officers of West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office for excessive force in the last five years.
13. Any records regarding the number of arrests made by West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office in the last five years.
14. Any records regarding the number of arrests and/or citations issued by West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office in the last five years for La. R.S. 32:79 - Improper Lane Usage.
15. Any records regarding the number of arrests and/or citations issued by West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office in the last five years for La. R.S. 32:104 - Failure to Signal.
16. Any records regarding the number of arrests and/or citations issued by West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office in the last five years for La. R.S. 40:966(c) - Possession of Marijuana.
17. Any records regarding the number of arrests and/or citations issued by West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office in the last five years for any other violation that occurred during the Incident, for which anyone was arrested and/or cited.
18. Any records regarding West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office's policies and/or procedures for investigating claims of excessive force.



PO Box 56157
New Orleans, LA 70156
504-522-0617
laaclu.org

Lindsey Douglas
Intake & Investigations
Paralegal

19. Any records regarding West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office's policies and/or procedures for an officer's use of force against arrestees.

Under the provisions of La. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 44:32, if you raise a question as to whether any of the records requested is a public record, you are required to notify in writing the person making the request of your determination and the reasons, including the legal basis. Notice shall be made within three days of the receipt of the request, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays. If you claim exemption for a record or records under the Public Records Act, or any other statute, include for each record the section of law under which exemption is claimed and your reasons for believing the statute is applicable to the record.

Under the provisions of La. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 44:33, if the public record is not immediately available, you are required to certify this in writing promptly, and in your certificate fix a day and hour within three days, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays, for the exercise of the right granted in the Public Records Act.

Under La. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 44:34, "[i]f any public record applied for by any authorized person is not in the custody or control of the person to whom the application is made, such person shall promptly certify this in writing to the applicant, and shall in the certificate state in detail to the best of his knowledge and belief, the reason for the absence of the record from his custody or control, its location, what person has custody of the record and the manner and method in which, and the exact time at which it was taken from his custody and control. He shall include in the certificate ample and detailed answers to inquiries of the applicant which may facilitate the exercise of the right granted by this Chapter."

If you are invoking La. Rev. Stat. Ann. § R.S. 44:34 to deny this request, please give "ample and detailed answers" to the following "inquiries":

1. Is a copy of the requested public record usually located in your office?
2. Why is your copy of the requested public record absent from your office?
3. Where is your copy of the requested public record?
4. Who has received a copy of the requested public record?
5. How and from whom did the present custodian gain control of your copy of the requested public record?
6. What was the exact time your copy of the public record was taken from your custody and control?
7. When will your copy of the requested public record be returned to your office?
8. Is there any other public official who has a copy of the requested record?
9. What is/are the name(s) of anyone who has a copy of the requested public record?
10. What is/are the location(s) where the public record can be viewed?
11. What are the hours and dates when the requested public record can be viewed?



PO Box 56157
New Orleans, LA 70156
504-522-0617
laaclu.org

Lindsey Douglas
Intake & Investigations
Paralegal

Please contact us when the requested materials are ready to be mailed. We request that any and all documents that are available be made available in electronic form. This request includes any documents that are in paper form, but can be scanned to electronic form, as well as digital copies of any recordings. For those documents that cannot be produced in electronic form, if the cost of copies does not exceed \$50.00, please proceed without further approval and send us an invoice with the records. If the cost of copies will exceed \$50.00, please call to advise us and gain approval to proceed.

As a reminder, you have a legal obligation to preserve public records. *See* La. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 44:36(a) (“All persons and public bodies having custody or control of any public record... shall exercise diligence and care in preserving the public record.”). Additionally, failure to abide by the Public Records Law may result in certain penalties and the award of attorney’s fees. We trust this will not be an issue in this case, and we look forward to your cooperation. Thank you for considering our request. Please email us with any questions.



PO Box 56157
New Orleans, LA 70156
504-522-0617
laaclu.org

Lindsey Douglas
Intake & Investigations
Paralegal

Sincerely,

/s/ Lindsey Douglas

Lindsey Douglas

EXHIBIT B



EMILY BARBER
Fellow

ebarber@socialjusticelaw.org
D: 213 805 5339
F: 213 805 5339

523 West 6th Street
Suite 450
Los Angeles, CA 90014

February 7, 2022

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL

Sheriff Michael B. Cazes
West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff
850 8th Street
PO Box 129
Port Allen, LA 70767

Re: Public Records Request

Dear Sheriff Michael B. Cazes :

Pursuant to the Public Records Act of Louisiana, La. Rev. Stat. Ann. 44:1 et seq., I request copies of public records as defined in La. R.S. 44:1(A)(2)(a) and as described below.

For purposes of this request, the term “the Incident” means the traffic stop, detainment, and arrest of [REDACTED] Nia Mills beginning on March 26, 2021 around 1:00 p.m. near the La Quinta Inn & Suites by Wyndham Baton Rouge (2720 N. Westport Dr., Port Allen, LA 70767).

1. A full and complete roster of the names of all individual officers who were on duty on March 26, 2021, or any records that would reflect the names of all officers who were on duty on March 26, 2021.
2. Photographs of all officers who were employed by the West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff’s Office as of March 26, 2021.
3. Any inventory documents related to the search of the vehicle involved in the Incident, including, but not limited to, a list of all items recovered or seized from the vehicle.
4. [REDACTED]
5. Any and all records related to the hiring of Allen Connelly.
6. Any and all records related to the hiring of John Gaudet.
7. Any records regarding West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff’s Office’s policies and/or procedures for searching an arrestee’s electronic devices.
8. Any records regarding West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff’s Office’s policies and/or procedures for providing medical treatment to arrestees.
9. Any records regarding West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff’s Office’s policies and/or procedures for making custodial arrests for misdemeanor offenses that were in effect in March 2021.
10. Any records regarding West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff’s Office’s policies for hiring officers.



11. Any records regarding policies and/or procedures for the West Baton Rouge Parish Detention Center's grievance process.

Under the provisions of R.S. 44:32, if you raise a question as to whether any of the records requested is a public record, you are required to notify in writing the person making the request of your determination and the reasons, including the legal basis therefor. Notice shall be made within three days of the receipt of the request, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays and legal public holidays. If you claim exemption for a record or records under the Public Records Act, or any other statute, include for each record the section of law under which exemption is claimed and your reasons for believing the statute is applicable to the record.

Under the provisions of R.S. 44:33, if the public record is not immediately available, you are required to certify this in writing promptly, and in your certificate fix a day and hour within three days, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays and legal public holidays, for the exercise of the right granted in the Public Records Act.

Under R.S. 44:34, "If any public record applied for by any authorized person is not in the custody or control of the person to whom the application is made, such person shall promptly certify this in writing to the applicant, and shall in the certificate state in detail to the best of his knowledge and belief, the reason for the absence of the record from his custody or control, its location, what person has custody of the record and the manner and method in which, and the exact time at which it was taken from his custody and control. He shall include in the certificate ample and detailed answers to inquiries of the applicant which may facilitate the exercise of the right granted by this Chapter."

If you are invoking R.S. 44:34 to deny this request, please answer the following questions in detail.

1. Is a copy of the requested public record usually located in your office?
2. Why is your copy of the requested public record absent from your office?
3. Where is your copy of the requested public record?
4. Who has received a copy of the requested public record?
5. How and from whom did the present custodian gain control of your copy of the requested public record?
6. What was the exact time your copy of the public record was taken from your custody and control?
7. When will your copy of the requested public record be returned to your office?
8. Is there any other public official who has a copy of the requested record?
9. What is/are the name(s) of anyone who has a copy of the requested public record?
10. What is/are the location(s) where the public record can be viewed?
11. What are the hours and dates when the requested public record can be viewed?

Please contact us at the number above when the requested materials are ready to be mailed. We request that any and all documents that are available be made available in electronic form. This request includes any documents that are in paper form but that can be scanned to electronic form, as well as digital copies of any recordings. For those documents that cannot be produced in electronic form, if the cost of copies does not exceed \$50.00, proceed without further approval and send us an invoice with the records; otherwise, call to advise and gain approval to proceed. As you are aware, failure to abide by the Public Records Law may



Sheriff Michael B. Cazes
February 7, 2022
Page 3

result in certain penalties and the award of attorney's fees. We trust that you will comply without the necessity of any further action on our part.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Emily Barber".

Emily Barber
Fellow

eb

EXHIBIT C



EMILY BARBER
Fellow

ebarber@socialjusticelaw.org 523 West 6th Street
D: 213 805 5339 Suite 450
F: 213 805 5339 Los Angeles, CA 90014

January 14, 2022

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL

Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness
2413 Ernest Wilson Dr.
Port Allen, LA 70767

Re: Public Records Request

Dear Custodian of Records:

Pursuant to the Public Records Act of Louisiana, La. Rev. Stat. Ann. 44:1 et seq., we request copies of public records as defined in La. R.S. 44:1(A)(2)(a) and as described below.

For purposes of this request, the term “the Incident” means the traffic stop, detainment, and arrest of [REDACTED] Nia Mills beginning on March 26, 2021 around 1:00 p.m. near the La Quinta Inn & Suites by Wyndham Baton Rouge (2720 N. Westport Dr., Port Allen, LA 70767). This written request memorializes one submitted via the “Public 9-1-1 Records Request” online form on Tuesday, January 11.

1. Any audio recordings of communications among officers regarding the Incident, including any dispatch records regarding the incident.
2. Any records regarding the identity of the officers involved in the Incident, including, but not limited to, officers named Allen Connelly, John Gaudet, and Vance Matranga, Jr.

Under the provisions of R.S. 44:32, if you raise a question as to whether any of the records requested is a public record, you are required to notify in writing the person making the request of your determination and the reasons, including the legal basis therefor. Notice shall be made within three days of the receipt of the request, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays and legal public holidays. If you claim exemption for a record or records under the Public Records Act, or any other statute, include for each record the section of law under which exemption is claimed and your reasons for believing the statute is applicable to the record.

Under the provisions of R.S. 44:33, if the public record is not immediately available, you are required to certify this in writing promptly, and in your certificate fix a day and hour within three days, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays and legal public holidays, for the exercise of the right granted in the Public Records Act.

Under R.S. 44:34, “If any public record applied for by any authorized person is not in the custody or control of the person to whom the application is made, such person shall promptly certify this in writing to the applicant, and shall in the certificate state in detail to the best of his knowledge and belief, the reason for the



Department of Homeland
Security and Emergency
Preparedness
January 14, 2022
Page 2

absence of the record from his custody or control, its location, what person has custody of the record and the manner and method in which, and the exact time at which it was taken from his custody and control. He shall include in the certificate ample and detailed answers to inquiries of the applicant which may facilitate the exercise of the right granted by this Chapter.”

If you are invoking R.S. 44:34 to deny this request, please answer the following questions in detail.

1. Is a copy of the requested public record usually located in your office?
2. Why is your copy of the requested public record absent from your office?
3. Where is your copy of the requested public record?
4. Who has received a copy of the requested public record?
5. How and from whom did the present custodian gain control of your copy of the requested public record?
6. What was the exact time your copy of the public record was taken from your custody and control?
7. When will your copy of the requested public record be returned to your office?
8. Is there any other public official who has a copy of the requested record?
9. What is/are the name(s) of anyone who has a copy of the requested public record?
10. What is/are the location(s) where the public record can be viewed?
11. What are the hours and dates when the requested public record can be viewed?

Please contact us at the number above when the requested materials are ready to be mailed. We request that any and all documents that are available be made available in electronic form. This request includes any documents that are in paper form but that can be scanned to electronic form, as well as digital copies of any recordings. For those documents that cannot be produced in electronic form, if the cost of copies does not exceed \$50.00, proceed without further approval and send us an invoice with the records; otherwise, call to advise and gain approval to proceed. As you are aware, failure to abide by the Public Records Law may result in certain penalties and the award of attorney’s fees. We trust that you will comply without the necessity of any further action on our part.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Emily Barber".

Emily Barber
Legal Fellow
Social Justice Legal Foundation
523 West 6th Street Suite 450
Los Angeles, CA 90014
(213) 805-5339
ebarber@socialjusticelaw.org

**Not admitted to practice law in the State of Louisiana.*

eb

CIVIL COVER SHEET

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS

Mills, Nia

(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff Hinds, MS
(EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)

(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number)

See attachment

DEFENDANTS

Connelly; Gaudet; Cazes; Simmers; Matranga; Perrault; and Does 1-4

County of Residence of First Listed Defendant _____
(IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)

NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.

Attorneys (If Known)

II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- ☐ 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff ☒ 3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party)
- ☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant ☐ 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)

III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES (Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff and One Box for Defendant)

- | | PTF | DEF | | PTF | DEF |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Citizen of This State | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 | Incorporated or Principal Place of Business In This State | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |
| Citizen of Another State | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | Incorporated and Principal Place of Business In Another State | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | Foreign Nation | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 |

IV. NATURE OF SUIT (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

Click here for: [Nature of Suit Code Descriptions.](#)

CONTRACT	TORTS	FORFEITURE/PENALTY	BANKRUPTCY	OTHER STATUTES
<input type="checkbox"/> 110 Insurance <input type="checkbox"/> 120 Marine <input type="checkbox"/> 130 Miller Act <input type="checkbox"/> 140 Negotiable Instrument <input type="checkbox"/> 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment <input type="checkbox"/> 151 Medicare Act <input type="checkbox"/> 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans (Excludes Veterans) <input type="checkbox"/> 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits <input type="checkbox"/> 160 Stockholders' Suits <input type="checkbox"/> 190 Other Contract <input type="checkbox"/> 195 Contract Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 196 Franchise	PERSONAL INJURY <input type="checkbox"/> 310 Airplane <input type="checkbox"/> 315 Airplane Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 320 Assault, Libel & Slander <input type="checkbox"/> 330 Federal Employers' Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 340 Marine <input type="checkbox"/> 345 Marine Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 350 Motor Vehicle <input type="checkbox"/> 355 Motor Vehicle Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 360 Other Personal Injury <input type="checkbox"/> 362 Personal Injury - Medical Malpractice PERSONAL INJURY <input type="checkbox"/> 365 Personal Injury - Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 367 Health Care/Pharmaceutical Personal Injury Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 368 Asbestos Personal Injury Product Liability PERSONAL PROPERTY <input type="checkbox"/> 370 Other Fraud <input type="checkbox"/> 371 Truth in Lending <input type="checkbox"/> 380 Other Personal Property Damage <input type="checkbox"/> 385 Property Damage Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 625 Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881 <input type="checkbox"/> 690 Other LABOR <input type="checkbox"/> 710 Fair Labor Standards Act <input type="checkbox"/> 720 Labor/Management Relations <input type="checkbox"/> 740 Railway Labor Act <input type="checkbox"/> 751 Family and Medical Leave Act <input type="checkbox"/> 790 Other Labor Litigation <input type="checkbox"/> 791 Employee Retirement Income Security Act IMMIGRATION <input type="checkbox"/> 462 Naturalization Application <input type="checkbox"/> 465 Other Immigration Actions	<input type="checkbox"/> 422 Appeal 28 USC 158 <input type="checkbox"/> 423 Withdrawal 28 USC 157 PROPERTY RIGHTS <input type="checkbox"/> 820 Copyrights <input type="checkbox"/> 830 Patent <input type="checkbox"/> 835 Patent - Abbreviated New Drug Application <input type="checkbox"/> 840 Trademark <input type="checkbox"/> 880 Defend Trade Secrets Act of 2016 SOCIAL SECURITY <input type="checkbox"/> 861 HIA (1395ff) <input type="checkbox"/> 862 Black Lung (923) <input type="checkbox"/> 863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g)) <input type="checkbox"/> 864 SSID Title XVI <input type="checkbox"/> 865 RSI (405(g)) FEDERAL TAX SUITS <input type="checkbox"/> 870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant) <input type="checkbox"/> 871 IRS—Third Party 26 USC 7609	<input type="checkbox"/> 375 False Claims Act <input type="checkbox"/> 376 Qui Tam (31 USC 3729(a)) <input type="checkbox"/> 400 State Reapportionment <input type="checkbox"/> 410 Antitrust <input type="checkbox"/> 430 Banks and Banking <input type="checkbox"/> 450 Commerce <input type="checkbox"/> 460 Deportation <input type="checkbox"/> 470 Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations <input type="checkbox"/> 480 Consumer Credit (15 USC 1681 or 1692) <input type="checkbox"/> 485 Telephone Consumer Protection Act <input type="checkbox"/> 490 Cable/Sat TV <input type="checkbox"/> 850 Securities/Commodities/Exchange <input type="checkbox"/> 890 Other Statutory Actions <input type="checkbox"/> 891 Agricultural Acts <input type="checkbox"/> 893 Environmental Matters <input type="checkbox"/> 895 Freedom of Information Act <input type="checkbox"/> 896 Arbitration <input type="checkbox"/> 899 Administrative Procedure Act/Review or Appeal of Agency Decision <input type="checkbox"/> 950 Constitutionality of State Statutes
REAL PROPERTY <input type="checkbox"/> 210 Land Condemnation <input type="checkbox"/> 220 Foreclosure <input type="checkbox"/> 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment <input type="checkbox"/> 240 Torts to Land <input type="checkbox"/> 245 Tort Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 290 All Other Real Property	CIVIL RIGHTS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 440 Other Civil Rights <input type="checkbox"/> 441 Voting <input type="checkbox"/> 442 Employment <input type="checkbox"/> 443 Housing/Accommodations <input type="checkbox"/> 445 Amer. w/Disabilities - Employment <input type="checkbox"/> 446 Amer. w/Disabilities - Other <input type="checkbox"/> 448 Education PRISONER PETITIONS Habeas Corpus: <input type="checkbox"/> 463 Alien Detainee <input type="checkbox"/> 510 Motions to Vacate Sentence <input type="checkbox"/> 530 General <input type="checkbox"/> 535 Death Penalty Other: <input type="checkbox"/> 540 Mandamus & Other <input type="checkbox"/> 550 Civil Rights <input type="checkbox"/> 555 Prison Condition <input type="checkbox"/> 560 Civil Detainee - Conditions of Confinement			

V. ORIGIN (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- ☒ 1 Original Proceeding ☐ 2 Removed from State Court ☐ 3 Remanded from Appellate Court ☐ 4 Reinstated or Reopened ☐ 5 Transferred from Another District (specify) ☐ 6 Multidistrict Litigation - Transfer ☐ 8 Multidistrict Litigation - Direct File

VI. CAUSE OF ACTION

Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing (Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity):
42 USC 1893Brief description of cause:
Fourth and Fourteenth Amendment violations and related state-law torts

VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:

☐ CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER RULE 23, F.R.Cv.P.DEMAND \$
In excess of \$75,000

CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint:

JURY DEMAND: ☐ Yes ☒ No

VIII. RELATED CASE(S) IF ANY

(See instructions):

JUDGE _____

DOCKET NUMBER _____

DATE

03/22/2022

SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

RECEIPT # _____ AMOUNT _____ APPLYING IFP _____ JUDGE _____ MAG. JUDGE _____

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ATTORNEYS COMPLETING CIVIL COVER SHEET FORM JS 44**Authority For Civil Cover Sheet**

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replaces nor supplements the filings and service of pleading or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. Consequently, a civil cover sheet is submitted to the Clerk of Court for each civil complaint filed. The attorney filing a case should complete the form as follows:

- I.(a) Plaintiffs-Defendants.** Enter names (last, first, middle initial) of plaintiff and defendant. If the plaintiff or defendant is a government agency, use only the full name or standard abbreviations. If the plaintiff or defendant is an official within a government agency, identify first the agency and then the official, giving both name and title.
 - (b) County of Residence.** For each civil case filed, except U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county where the first listed plaintiff resides at the time of filing. In U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county in which the first listed defendant resides at the time of filing. (NOTE: In land condemnation cases, the county of residence of the "defendant" is the location of the tract of land involved.)
 - (c) Attorneys.** Enter the firm name, address, telephone number, and attorney of record. If there are several attorneys, list them on an attachment, noting in this section "(see attachment)".
- II. Jurisdiction.** The basis of jurisdiction is set forth under Rule 8(a), F.R.Cv.P., which requires that jurisdictions be shown in pleadings. Place an "X" in one of the boxes. If there is more than one basis of jurisdiction, precedence is given in the order shown below.
- United States plaintiff. (1) Jurisdiction based on 28 U.S.C. 1345 and 1348. Suits by agencies and officers of the United States are included here. United States defendant. (2) When the plaintiff is suing the United States, its officers or agencies, place an "X" in this box.
- Federal question. (3) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1331, where jurisdiction arises under the Constitution of the United States, an amendment to the Constitution, an act of Congress or a treaty of the United States. In cases where the U.S. is a party, the U.S. plaintiff or defendant code takes precedence, and box 1 or 2 should be marked.
- Diversity of citizenship. (4) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1332, where parties are citizens of different states. When Box 4 is checked, the citizenship of the different parties must be checked. (See Section III below; **NOTE: federal question actions take precedence over diversity cases.**)
- III. Residence (citizenship) of Principal Parties.** This section of the JS 44 is to be completed if diversity of citizenship was indicated above. Mark this section for each principal party.
- IV. Nature of Suit.** Place an "X" in the appropriate box. If there are multiple nature of suit codes associated with the case, pick the nature of suit code that is most applicable. Click here for: [Nature of Suit Code Descriptions](#).
- V. Origin.** Place an "X" in one of the seven boxes.
- Original Proceedings. (1) Cases which originate in the United States district courts.
- Removed from State Court. (2) Proceedings initiated in state courts may be removed to the district courts under Title 28 U.S.C., Section 1441.
- Remanded from Appellate Court. (3) Check this box for cases remanded to the district court for further action. Use the date of remand as the filing date.
- Reinstated or Reopened. (4) Check this box for cases reinstated or reopened in the district court. Use the reopening date as the filing date.
- Transferred from Another District. (5) For cases transferred under Title 28 U.S.C. Section 1404(a). Do not use this for within district transfers or multidistrict litigation transfers.
- Multidistrict Litigation – Transfer. (6) Check this box when a multidistrict case is transferred into the district under authority of Title 28 U.S.C. Section 1407.
- Multidistrict Litigation – Direct File. (8) Check this box when a multidistrict case is filed in the same district as the Master MDL docket.
- PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE IS NOT AN ORIGIN CODE 7.** Origin Code 7 was used for historical records and is no longer relevant due to changes in statute.
- VI. Cause of Action.** Report the civil statute directly related to the cause of action and give a brief description of the cause. **Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity.** Example: U.S. Civil Statute: 47 USC 553 Brief Description: Unauthorized reception of cable service.
- VII. Requested in Complaint.** Class Action. Place an "X" in this box if you are filing a class action under Rule 23, F.R.Cv.P.
- Demand. In this space enter the actual dollar amount being demanded or indicate other demand, such as a preliminary injunction.
- Jury Demand. Check the appropriate box to indicate whether or not a jury is being demanded.
- VIII. Related Cases.** This section of the JS 44 is used to reference related pending cases, if any. If there are related pending cases, insert the docket numbers and the corresponding judge names for such cases.

Date and Attorney Signature. Date and sign the civil cover sheet.

Attachment to Civil Cover Sheet

I.(c) Attorneys (*Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number*)

Megan E. Snider, LA Bar No. 33382

Nora Ahmed*, NY Bar No. 5092374

(pro hac forthcoming)

ACLU Foundation of Louisiana

1340 Poydras St., Suite 2160

New Orleans, LA 70112

T: (504) 522-0628 Ext. 122

msnider@laaclu.org

nahmed@laaclu.org

justicelab@laaclu.org

**Admitted to the New York Bar,
not admitted to the Louisiana Bar*

and

Joshua Rosenthal (Cal. Bar #325949)*

Emily Barber (Cal. Bar #342467)*

Amelia Piazza (Cal. Bar #342473)*

SOCIAL JUSTICE LEGAL FOUNDATION

523 West 6th St., Suite 450

Los Angeles, CA 90014

T: 213-973-4063

F: 213-973-4063

Email: jrosenthal@socialjusticelaw.org

Email: ebarber@socialjusticelaw.org

Email: apiazza@socialjusticelaw.org

**Motion for Admission Pro Hac Vice Pending*

Attorneys for Plaintiff Nia Mills

CLERK OF COURT

Civil Action No. _____

PROOF OF SERVICE*(This section should not be filed with the court unless required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 4 (l))*

This summons for *(name of individual and title, if any)* _____
 was received by me on *(date)* _____ .

☐ I personally served the summons on the individual at *(place)* _____
 _____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

☐ I left the summons at the individual's residence or usual place of abode with *(name)* _____
 _____, a person of suitable age and discretion who resides there,
 on *(date)* _____, and mailed a copy to the individual's last known address; or

☐ I served the summons on *(name of individual)* _____, who is
 designated by law to accept service of process on behalf of *(name of organization)* _____
 _____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

☐ I returned the summons unexecuted because _____ ; or

☐ Other *(specify)*: _____

My fees are \$ _____ for travel and \$ _____ for services, for a total of \$ 0.00 .

I declare under penalty of perjury that this information is true.

Date: _____

Server's signature

Printed name and title

Server's address

Additional information regarding attempted service, etc:

CLERK OF COURT

Civil Action No. _____

PROOF OF SERVICE*(This section should not be filed with the court unless required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 4 (l))*

This summons for *(name of individual and title, if any)* _____
 was received by me on *(date)* _____ .

☐ I personally served the summons on the individual at *(place)* _____
 _____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

☐ I left the summons at the individual's residence or usual place of abode with *(name)* _____
 _____, a person of suitable age and discretion who resides there,
 on *(date)* _____, and mailed a copy to the individual's last known address; or

☐ I served the summons on *(name of individual)* _____, who is
 designated by law to accept service of process on behalf of *(name of organization)* _____
 _____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

☐ I returned the summons unexecuted because _____ ; or

☐ Other *(specify)*: _____

My fees are \$ _____ for travel and \$ _____ for services, for a total of \$ 0.00 .

I declare under penalty of perjury that this information is true.

Date: _____

Server's signature

Printed name and title

Server's address

Additional information regarding attempted service, etc:

Civil Action No. _____

PROOF OF SERVICE*(This section should not be filed with the court unless required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 4 (l))*

This summons for *(name of individual and title, if any)* _____
 was received by me on *(date)* _____ .

☐ I personally served the summons on the individual at *(place)* _____
 _____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

☐ I left the summons at the individual's residence or usual place of abode with *(name)* _____
 _____, a person of suitable age and discretion who resides there,
 on *(date)* _____, and mailed a copy to the individual's last known address; or

☐ I served the summons on *(name of individual)* _____, who is
 designated by law to accept service of process on behalf of *(name of organization)* _____
 _____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

☐ I returned the summons unexecuted because _____ ; or

☐ Other *(specify)*: _____

My fees are \$ _____ for travel and \$ _____ for services, for a total of \$ 0.00 .

I declare under penalty of perjury that this information is true.

Date: _____

Server's signature

Printed name and title

Server's address

Additional information regarding attempted service, etc:

Civil Action No. _____

PROOF OF SERVICE*(This section should not be filed with the court unless required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 4 (l))*

This summons for *(name of individual and title, if any)* _____
 was received by me on *(date)* _____ .

☐ I personally served the summons on the individual at *(place)* _____
 _____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

☐ I left the summons at the individual's residence or usual place of abode with *(name)* _____
 _____, a person of suitable age and discretion who resides there,
 on *(date)* _____, and mailed a copy to the individual's last known address; or

☐ I served the summons on *(name of individual)* _____, who is
 designated by law to accept service of process on behalf of *(name of organization)* _____
 _____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

☐ I returned the summons unexecuted because _____ ; or

☐ Other *(specify)*: _____

My fees are \$ _____ for travel and \$ _____ for services, for a total of \$ 0.00 .

I declare under penalty of perjury that this information is true.

Date: _____

Server's signature

Printed name and title

Server's address

Additional information regarding attempted service, etc:

Middle District of Louisiana

Civil Action No. 3:22-cv-193

Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

Civil Action No. _____

PROOF OF SERVICE*(This section should not be filed with the court unless required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 4 (l))*

This summons for *(name of individual and title, if any)* _____
 was received by me on *(date)* _____ .

☐ I personally served the summons on the individual at *(place)* _____
 _____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

☐ I left the summons at the individual's residence or usual place of abode with *(name)* _____
 _____, a person of suitable age and discretion who resides there,
 on *(date)* _____, and mailed a copy to the individual's last known address; or

☐ I served the summons on *(name of individual)* _____, who is
 designated by law to accept service of process on behalf of *(name of organization)* _____
 _____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

☐ I returned the summons unexecuted because _____ ; or

☐ Other *(specify)*: _____

My fees are \$ _____ for travel and \$ _____ for services, for a total of \$ 0.00 .

I declare under penalty of perjury that this information is true.

Date: _____

Server's signature

Printed name and title

Server's address

Additional information regarding attempted service, etc:

AO 440 (Rev. 06/12) Summons in a Civil Action

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Middle District of Louisiana

Nia Mills

Plaintiff(s)

V.

Allen Connelly, John Gaudet, Vance Matranga Jr.,
Michael B. Cazes, Zachary Simmers, Kasey Perrault,
and John Does 1-4

Defendant(s)

Civil Action No. 3:22-cv-193

SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION

To: *(Defendant's name and address)* Zachary Simmers
2605 Emily Dr.
Port Allen, LA 70767

A lawsuit has been filed against you.

Within 21 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) — or 60 days if you are the United States or a United States agency, or an officer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) — you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff’s attorney, whose name and address are:

Megan E. Snider, LA Bar No. 33382
ACLU Foundation of Louisiana
1340 Poydras St., Suite 2160, New Orleans, LA 70112
T: (504) 522-0628 Ext. 122
msnider@laaclu.org

If you fail to respond, judgment by default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court.

CLERK OF COURT

Date: _____

Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

Civil Action No. _____

PROOF OF SERVICE*(This section should not be filed with the court unless required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 4 (l))*

This summons for *(name of individual and title, if any)* _____
 was received by me on *(date)* _____ .

☐ I personally served the summons on the individual at *(place)* _____
 _____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

☐ I left the summons at the individual's residence or usual place of abode with *(name)* _____
 _____, a person of suitable age and discretion who resides there,
 on *(date)* _____, and mailed a copy to the individual's last known address; or

☐ I served the summons on *(name of individual)* _____, who is
 designated by law to accept service of process on behalf of *(name of organization)* _____
 _____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

☐ I returned the summons unexecuted because _____ ; or

☐ Other *(specify)*: _____

My fees are \$ _____ for travel and \$ _____ for services, for a total of \$ 0.00 .

I declare under penalty of perjury that this information is true.

Date: _____

Server's signature

Printed name and title

Server's address

Additional information regarding attempted service, etc: