

**Statement regarding the whistleblower lawsuit filed by Detectives Ian Justice and Will Purdom  
March 6, 2025**

As a law enforcement agency, the Nelson County Sheriff's Office and Sheriff Ramon Pineiroa ("NCSO") treat all allegations of criminal wrongdoing with an appropriate level of respect. This includes allegations of wrongdoing against employees of the Office. NCSO does not retaliate against employees for good faith reports of wrongdoing, mismanagement or illegal activity.

The lawsuit brought by Detectives Ian Justice and Will Purdom misstates their current status with the Nelson County Sheriff's Office. Both Detectives remain active members of the Greater Hardin County Narcotics Task Force. Neither Detective has lost pay nor faced adverse employment action as a result of any alleged whistleblower activity—indeed, both Detectives remain employed by NCSO at their same rate of pay and in their same positions.

The lawsuit brought by Detectives claims that both employees were denied overtime as a result of whistleblower activity; however, this is patently false. NCSO, like many law enforcement agencies, relies on federal funds to pay overtime to its employees, including its narcotics detectives. On January 27, 2025, the Federal Office of Management and Budget issued a memorandum which, in part, directed federal agencies to freeze disbursement of federal funds. This memorandum resulted in widespread confusion among state and federal agencies as to the status of their funding. When Sheriff Pineiroa became aware of the potential freeze on the federal funds needed to pay overtime to his employees, he directed his employees whose overtime pay was directly tied to the federal funds, including Detectives Justice and Purdom, to refrain from working more than forty hours per week until the status of the funding could be verified. The uncertainty as to the effect of the freeze on overtime funds was resolved in just a few days, and those employees, including Detectives Justice and Purdom, were permitted to work overtime nearly immediately upon resolution of that issue.

The Nelson County Sheriff's Office denies the allegations of wrongdoing brought by Detectives Justice and Purdom and is committed to defending the lawsuit accordingly. However, the Office also remains committed to ensuring that its employees feel safe in reporting good-faith allegations of wrongdoing. NCSO will continue to enforce and act within the law at all times and at all levels.