

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER
MARICOPA COUNTY

JAMES J. HAAS
Public Defender

October 7, 2019

HAND DELIVERED

James J. Haas
Maricopa County Public Defender

Re: Letter of Resignation - William H. Knight

Dear Jim:

People typically start these letters by saying something about “deep regrets.” My resignation letter cannot start that way, because I regret nothing about the incredible time I spent under your administration as a Deputy Public Defender. I learned so much, grew professionally, and developed as a lawyer and community leader in ways I couldn’t conceive beforehand. Most importantly, I provided the best legal representation I could to *hundreds* of indigent men and women whose lives had fallen under the inexorable scrutiny of the government. I have absolutely no regrets about that dignified, necessary work I did, with your support, to give a voice to the voiceless and meaning to the 6th Amendment as a bulwark against the immense power of the State’s criminal machine.

I do not resign my position because I no longer wish to do this important work, or because I received some “lucrative” offer. I am resigning today because I have to. November 2020 is shaping up to be a very interesting election cycle, and with the recent appointment of Justice Montgomery to the Supreme Court of Arizona, the powerful incumbent with statewide name recognition will no longer stand in the way of meaningful reform. The next year presents an incredible opportunity for a passionate, courageous, and inspiring candidate to speak truth about *meaningful* justice reform, ending mass incarceration, and restoring fiscally responsible, compassionate prosecutorial sensibilities to our community. As a Hispanic immigrant, a passionate advocate for redemption over retribution, a crime victim, a former prosecutor, and a proud public defender, I am that candidate.

So it is with great humility and appreciation, not regret, that I tender my resignation today, effective October 25, 2019. After I wind my practice down here, I will be campaigning full time to seek the Democratic nomination for the office of Maricopa County Attorney. When I win the election in November 2020, I hope to build on my already positive relationship with the Maricopa County Public

LAW OFFICE OF THE MARICOPA COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER

Delivering America's Promise of Justice for All

October 7, 2019

Defender—albeit as a minister of justice at that point—to ensure that every criminal defendant is treated fairly and equally, with dignity and respect, as we work together to pave a better way for the future.

[Faint, illegible text]

Thank you for everything, sir, and I will see you again, I hope, (and in our personal capacities) on the campaign trail.

Very truly yours,

MARICOPA COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER



WILLIAM KNIGHT
Deputy Public Defender