

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -Letter 1**

PROVIDED BY  
Balanced Justice Network – Changing The System  
April 25, 2024

**To: Ms. Katherine Fernandez-Rundle**  
**State Attorney, Miami-Dade**      April 2, 2024

**From: Peter Bach**

**Re: Statement in Support of Mitchell Finlay's Release**

I am Mitchell Finlay's stepfather. I visited him several times in 2001 while he was in pre-trial detention. I was present during his Arthur hearing. I was present during a subsequent attempt to correct his sentence. In other words, I have been involved with this case for nearly 23 years and as such I possess firsthand knowledge of the consequences not only on Mitch but also on our family.

Frankly, I don't know how Mitch manages to stay sane after so many years in prison and maintain his dignity and integrity without getting entangled in standard prison trouble. Yet, he seems to possess an inner strength, which, I know, he sustains in large part because he believes in his release and pursuing his dream. His dream involves living an ordinary family life and pursuing a solid business plan that he has perfected over years in prison. While it may sound like a pipe dream, having discussed this plan with him repeatedly and extensively, I am convinced that given the chance to execute it, he would not only succeed but excel. I am certain he would not pose a danger to anybody.

As an attorney myself from Denmark, I understand the consequences of turning down a plea deal. However, after nearly 23 years of living with this nightmare, it remains inexplicable to me how such a decision can become a binary option between accepting a 5-year plea deal versus life in prison. While this is legal, at least in the United States, in my view this is not justice; it feels like vengeance with a capital V leaving Mitch and his family with no hope and no way out.

Finally, should the State Attorney be amenable to potentially considering Mitch's release, I imagine the question of precedent-setting and recidivism would loom large in her mind. However, given the particular set of facts in this case - including Mitch having served 23 years by this August - for a single event, no witnesses present, and no relation to organized crime, gangs, drugs, or money laundering - and based on my intimate knowledge of Mitch's character - I hope such considerations will be augmented by his exemplary behavioral record during his 22 years and 3 months in prison, and my personal guarantees that if given the chance, he would thrive and excel in the outside world.

Yours Sincerely,

**Peter Bach**

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - Letter 2**

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Balanced Justice Network – Changing The System  
April 25, 2024

**To: Katherine Fernandez Rundle**  
**From: Peter Bach**

April 10, 2024

On April 2, 2024, I sent you my statement in support of Mitchell Finlay's release as his step-father.

On 5 April, I received a rather perfunctory response from Mr. Talpins. It is disappointing that despite the sober and respectful nature of my communication, the response completely ignored the core argument in my communication, namely the unreasonable differential between the 5-year plea deal offered and the subsequent Life sentence imposed. The response also misspells Mr. Finlay's name.

Mitchell was convicted on four counts. He has served his time in relation to three of those. The outstanding matter is the Life sentence.

Let's be honest. Realistically, the only way this case may be resolved is if you, within your authority as the State Attorney, accept the argument that the differential between the original 5-year plea deal and the subsequent Life sentence is disproportionate and morally unjustifiable.

With this communication, I respectfully ask you to consider whether the equivalent of a death sentence is justified in what is essentially a she said, he said case with no witnesses, except one who saw them being close and affectionate in the hotel lobby.

I'd argue that the Life sentence, in reality a Death sentence -- of which Mitchell has served 22 years by August of this year -- is not only disproportionate but outright cruel, morally unjustifiable and plainly wrong.

As a lawyer with extensive Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law experience earned in war-torn countries in transition, I'd argue that in many parts of the world, including Europe, this sentence would also be considered a violation of human rights.

With this, I hope you can find it in your heart to grant my early release request.

Sincerely yours,

**Peter Bach**