SANDRA R. BROWN Acting United States Attorney LAWRENCE S. MIDDLETON Assistant United States Attorney Chief, Criminal Division PATRICIA A. DONAHUE (Cal. Bar No. 132610) Assistant United States Attorney 4 Public Corruption & Civil Rights Section 1500 United States Courthouse 5 312 North Spring Street Los Angeles, California 90012 6 Telephone: (213) 894-0640 Facsimile: (213) 894-7631 7 patricia.donahue@usdoj.gov E-mail: 8 Attorneys for Plaintiff 9 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 10

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

V.

CASSANDRA ALEXANDER,

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Defendant.

PLEA AGREEMENT FOR DEFENDANT CASSANDRA ALEXANDER

Nd. 7cRC1R-00601-6

This constitutes the plea agreement between CASSANDRA 1. ALEXANDER ("defendant") and the United States Attorney's Office for the Central District of California (the "USAO") in the abovecaptioned case. This agreement is limited to the USAO and cannot bind any other federal, state, local, or foreign prosecuting, enforcement, administrative, or regulatory authorities.

DEFENDANT'S OBLIGATIONS

- 2. Defendant agrees to:
- Give up the right to indictment by a grand jury and, at the earliest opportunity requested by the USAO and provided by the Court, appear and plead quilty to an information in the form attached

to this agreement as Exhibit A or a substantially similar form (the "Information"), which charges defendant with Theft From An Organization Receiving Federal Funds in violation of 18 U.S.C. \$ 666(a)(1)(A).

- b. Not contest facts agreed to in this agreement.
- c. Abide by all agreements regarding sentencing contained in this agreement.
- d. Appear for all court appearances, surrender as ordered for service of sentence, obey all conditions of any bond, and obey any other ongoing court order in this matter.
- e. Not commit any crime; however, offenses that would be excluded for sentencing purposes under United States Sentencing Guidelines ("U.S.S.G." or "Sentencing Guidelines") § 4A1.2(c) are not within the scope of this agreement.
- f. Be truthful at all times with Pretrial Services, the United States Probation Office, and the Court.
- g. Make restitution at or before the time of sentencing, and not seek the discharge of any restitution obligation, in whole or in part, in any present or future bankruptcy proceeding.
- h. Pay the applicable special assessment at or before the time of sentencing unless defendant lacks the ability to pay and prior to sentencing submits a completed financial statement on a form to be provided by the USAO.

THE USAO'S OBLIGATIONS

- 3. The USAO agrees to:
 - a. Not contest facts agreed to in this agreement.
- b. Abide by all agreements regarding sentencing contained in this agreement.

c. Except for criminal tax violations (including conspiracy to commit such violations chargeable under 18 U.S.C. § 371), not further criminally prosecute defendant premised on any offense committed prior to the date of execution of this Agreement arising from defendant's conduct described in the factual basis set forth in this Agreement, or the Information. Defendant understands that the USAO is free to criminally prosecute defendant for any other unlawful past conduct or any unlawful conduct that occurs after the date of this Agreement. Defendant agrees that at the time of sentencing the Court may consider any uncharged conduct in determining the sentence to be imposed after consideration of the Sentencing Guidelines and all other relevant factors under 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a).

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- d. At the time of sentencing, provided that defendant demonstrates an acceptance of responsibility for the offense up to and including the time of sentencing, recommend a two-level reduction in the applicable Sentencing Guidelines offense level, pursuant to U.S.S.G. § 3E1.1, and recommend and, if necessary, move for an additional one-level reduction if available under that section.
- e. At the time of sentencing, move the Court for a two-level reduction in the applicable Sentencing Guidelines offense level, pursuant to U.S.S.G. § 5kl.1, for substantial assistance to the government.
- f. At the time of sentencing, recommend that defendant be sentenced to a term of imprisonment no higher than the low end of the applicable Sentencing Guidelines range, provided that the offense level used by the Court to determine that range is 17 or higher. For purposes of this agreement, the low end of the Sentencing Guidelines

range is that defined by the Sentencing Table in U.S.S.G. Chapter 5,

NATURE OF THE OFFENSE

- 4. Defendant understands that in order to be guilty of a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 666(a)(1)(A) as charged in the Information, the following must be true:
- a. First, that defendant was an agent of the City of Glendale, a government entity;
- b. Second, that defendant embezzled, stole, or obtained by fraud money owned by or under the care, custody, or control of the City of Glendale;
 - c. Third, that the money had a value of \$5,000 or more;
 - d. Fourth, that defendant acted knowingly; and
- e. Fifth, that the City of Glendale in a one-year period, received benefits of more than \$10,000 under any federal program involving a grant, contract, subsidy, loan, guarantee, insurance or other assistance.

PENALTIES AND RESTITUTION

- 5. Defendant understands that the statutory maximum sentence for a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 666(a)(1)(A) is: 10 years of imprisonment; a three-year period of supervised release; a fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or gross loss resulting from the offense, whichever is greatest; and a mandatory special assessment of \$100.
- 6. Defendant understands that defendant will be required to pay full restitution to the victim of the offense to which defendant is pleading guilty. The parties currently believe that the applicable amount of restitution is \$609,764.84, but recognize and

agree that this amount could change based on facts that come to the attention of the parties prior to sentencing.

- 7. Defendant understands that supervised release is a period of time following imprisonment during which defendant will be subject to various restrictions and requirements. Defendant understands that if defendant violates one or more of the conditions of any supervised release imposed, defendant may be returned to prison for all or part of the term of supervised release authorized by statute for the offense that resulted in the term of supervised release, which could result in defendant serving a total term of imprisonment greater than the statutory maximum stated above.
- 8. Defendant understands that, by pleading guilty, defendant may be giving up valuable government benefits and valuable civic rights, such as the right to vote, the right to possess a firearm, the right to hold office, and the right to serve on a jury.

 Defendant understands that once the court accepts defendant's guilty plea, it will be a federal felony for defendant to possess a firearm or ammunition. Defendant understands that the conviction in this case may also subject defendant to various other collateral consequences, including but not limited to revocation of probation, parole, or supervised release in another case and suspension or revocation of a professional license. Defendant understands that unanticipated collateral consequences will not serve as grounds to withdraw defendant's guilty plea.
- 9. Defendant understands that, if defendant is not a United States citizen, the felony conviction in this case may subject defendant to: removal, also known as deportation, which may, under some circumstances, be mandatory; denial of citizenship; and denial

of admission to the United States in the future. The court cannot, and defendant's attorney also may not be able to, advise defendant fully regarding the immigration consequences of the felony conviction in this case. Defendant understands that unexpected immigration consequences will not serve as grounds to withdraw defendant's guilty plea.

FACTUAL BASIS

10. Defendant admits that defendant is, in fact, guilty of the offense to which defendant is agreeing to plead guilty. Defendant and the USAO agree to the statement of facts provided below and agree that this statement of facts is sufficient to support a plea of guilty to the charge described in this agreement and to establish the Sentencing Guidelines factors set forth in paragraph 12 below, but is not meant to be a complete recitation of all facts relevant to the underlying criminal conduct or all facts known to either party that relate to that conduct.

The City of Glendale, California ("Glendale") was a local government located within Los Angeles County that received Federal assistance benefits in excess of \$10,000 for each of the years 2001 through 2017 under a Federal program.

Defendant was an agent of Glendale, employed in the position of Claims and Litigation Support Supervisor at the Glendale City Attorney's Office. Defendant was responsible for assembling "Settlements Packets," which contained the documents memorializing the settlement of claims against Glendale for personal injury or property damage. Settlement Packets included documentation of the settlement's approval by an attorney and the City Council, as well as the "Request for Demand" form that authorized the Finance Department

to issue the check to the claimant in the approved amount. Defendant had authority to sign Request for Demand forms without limit as to the amount. Defendant was responsible for submitting completed Settlement Packets to the Finance Department, and she had authority to pick up the checks and provide them to claimants' attorneys.

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Beginning in July 2001, and continuing through on or about March 10, 2017, defendant knowingly and willfully embezzled, stole, and obtained by fraud \$692,264.84 owned by, and under the care, custody, and control of Glendale. Defendant created and submitted to the Finance Department false Settlement Packets that caused 30 fraudulent checks to be issued to her family members and acquaintances. Defendant created false settlement agreements and false city council minutes purporting to show approval of settlement payments to these false claimants, and she prepared and signed false Request for Demand forms. Based on defendant's false Settlement Packets, the Finance Department issued checks payable to the false claimants. Defendant took possession of the checks and provided them to the payees, who cashed them and transferred the funds to defendant at her direction. One of the checks, payable to a family member of defendant for \$82,500.00, was seized by the Glendale Police Department from defendant before it was cashed.

SENTENCING FACTORS

11. Defendant understands that in determining defendant's sentence the Court is required to calculate the applicable Sentencing Guidelines range and to consider that range, possible departures under the Sentencing Guidelines, and the other sentencing factors set forth in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a). Defendant understands that the Sentencing Guidelines are advisory only, that defendant cannot have

any expectation of receiving a sentence within the calculated Sentencing Guidelines range, and that after considering the Sentencing Guidelines and the other § 3553(a) factors, the Court will be free to exercise its discretion to impose any sentence it finds appropriate up to the maximum set by statute for the crimes of conviction.

12. Defendant and the USAO agree to the following applicable Sentencing Guidelines factors:

Base Offense Level:

6 [U.S.S.G. § 2B1.1(a)(2)]
Loss Amount > \$550,000: +14 [U.S.S.G. § 2B1.1(b)(1)(H)]
Abuse of Position of Trust: + 2 [U.S.S.G. § 3B1.3]
Acceptance of Responsibility: - 3 [U.S.S.G. § 3E1.1(b)]
Total Offense Level: 19

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Other than as provided in paragraph 3 above and paragraph 24 below, defendant and the USAO agree not to seek, argue, or suggest in any way, either orally or in writing, that any other specific offense characteristics, adjustments, or departures relating to the offense level be imposed. Defendant agrees, however, that if, after signing this agreement but prior to sentencing, defendant were to commit an act, or the USAO were to discover a previously undiscovered act committed by defendant prior to signing this agreement, which act, in the judgment of the USAO, constituted obstruction of justice within the meaning of U.S.S.G. § 3C1.1, the USAO would be free to seek the enhancement set forth in that section and to argue that defendant is not entitled to a downward adjustment for acceptance of responsibility under U.S.S.G. § 3E1.1.

- 13. Defendant understands that there is no agreement as to defendant's criminal history or criminal history category.
- 14. Defendant and the USAO reserve the right to argue for a sentence outside the sentencing range established by the Sentencing Guidelines based on the factors set forth in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a)(1), (a)(2), (a)(3), (a)(6), and (a)(7).

WAIVER OF CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

- 15. Defendant understands that by pleading guilty, defendant gives up the following rights:
 - a. The right to persist in a plea of not guilty.
 - b. The right to a speedy and public trial by jury.
- c. The right to be represented by counsel -- and if necessary have the court appoint counsel -- at trial. Defendant understands, however, that, defendant retains the right to be represented by counsel -- and if necessary have the court appoint counsel -- at every other stage of the proceeding.
- d. The right to be presumed innocent and to have the burden of proof placed on the government to prove defendant guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.
- e. The right to confront and cross-examine witnesses against defendant.
- f. The right to testify and to present evidence in opposition to the charges, including the right to compel the attendance of witnesses to testify.
- g. The right not to be compelled to testify, and, if defendant chose not to testify or present evidence, to have that choice not be used against defendant.

h. Any and all rights to pursue any affirmative defenses, Fourth Amendment or Fifth Amendment claims, and other pretrial motions that have been filed or could be filed.

WAIVER OF APPEAL OF CONVICTION

16. Defendant understands that, with the exception of an appeal based on a claim that defendant's guilty plea was involuntary, by pleading guilty defendant is waiving and giving up any right to appeal defendant's conviction on the offense to which defendant is pleading guilty.

LIMITED MUTUAL WAIVER OF APPEAL OF SENTENCE

- 17. Defendant agrees that, provided the Court imposes a total term of imprisonment on all counts of conviction of no more than 30 months, defendant gives up the right to appeal all of the following:

 (a) the procedures and calculations used to determine and impose any portion of the sentence; (b) the term of imprisonment imposed by the Court; (c) the fine imposed by the court, provided it is within the statutory maximum; (d) the amount and terms of any restitution order, provided it requires payment of no more than \$609,764.84; (e) the term of probation or supervised release imposed by the Court, provided it is within the statutory maximum; and (f) any of the following conditions of probation or supervised release imposed by the Court: the conditions set forth in General Orders 318, 01-05, and/or 05-02 of this Court; the drug testing conditions mandated by 18 U.S.C. \$\$ 3563(a)(5) and 3583(d).
- 18. The USAO agrees that, provided (a) all portions of the sentence are at or below the statutory maximum specified above and (b) the Court imposes a term of imprisonment of no less than 24 months, the USAO gives up its right to appeal any portion of the

sentence, with the exception that the USAO reserves the right to 1 2 3

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agreement.

appeal the following: (a) the amount of restitution ordered if that amount is less than \$609,764.84.

RESULT OF WITHDRAWAL OF GUILTY PLEA

Defendant agrees that if, after entering a] guilty plea pursuant to this agreement, defendant seeks to withdraw and succeeds in withdrawing defendant's guilty pleas on any basis other than a claim and finding that entry into this plea agreement was involuntary, then (a) the USAO will be relieved of all of its obligations under this agreement; and (b) should the USAO choose to pursue any charge that was either dismissed or not filed as a result of this agreement, then (i) any applicable statute of limitations will be tolled between the date of defendant's signing of this agreement and the filing commencing any such action; and (ii) defendant waives and gives up all defenses based on the statute of limitations, any claim of pre-indictment delay, or any speedy trial claim with respect to any such action, except to the extent that such defenses existed as of the date of defendant's signing this

EFFECTIVE DATE OF AGREEMENT

This agreement is effective upon signature and execution of all required certifications by defendant, defendant's counsel, and an Assistant United States Attorney.

BREACH OF AGREEMENT

Defendant agrees that if defendant, at any time after the signature of this agreement and execution of all required certifications by defendant, defendant's counsel, and an Assistant United States Attorney, knowingly violates or fails to perform any of defendant's obligations under this agreement ("a breach"), the USAO may declare this agreement breached. All of defendant's obligations are material, a single breach of this agreement is sufficient for the USAO to declare a breach, and defendant shall not be deemed to have cured a breach without the express agreement of the USAO in writing. If the USAO declares this agreement breached, and the Court finds such a breach to have occurred, then: (a) if defendant has previously entered a guilty plea pursuant to this agreement, defendant will not be able to withdraw the guilty plea, and (b) the USAO will be relieved of all its obligations under this agreement.

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- 22. Following the Court's finding of a knowing breach of this agreement by defendant, should the USAO choose to pursue any charge that was either dismissed or not filed as a result of this agreement, then:
- a. Defendant agrees that any applicable statute of limitations is tolled between the date of defendant's signing of this agreement and the filing commencing any such action.
- b. Defendant waives and gives up all defenses based on the statute of limitations, any claim of pre-indictment delay, or any speedy trial claim with respect to any such action, except to the extent that such defenses existed as of the date of defendant's signing this agreement.
- c. Defendant agrees that: (i) any statements made by defendant, under oath, at the guilty plea hearing (if such a hearing occurred prior to the breach); (ii) the agreed to factual basis statement in this agreement; and (iii) any evidence derived from such statements, shall be admissible against defendant in any such action against defendant, and defendant waives and gives up any claim under

the United States Constitution, any statute, Rule 410 of the Federal Rules of Evidence, Rule 11(f) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, or any other federal rule, that the statements or any evidence derived from the statements should be suppressed or are inadmissible.

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COURT AND PROBATION OFFICE NOT PARTIES

- 23. Defendant understands that the Court and the United States Probation Office are not parties to this agreement and need not accept any of the USAO's sentencing recommendations or the parties' agreements to facts or sentencing factors.
- 24. Defendant understands that both defendant and the USAO are free to: (a) supplement the facts by supplying relevant information to the United States Probation Office and the Court, (b) correct any and all factual misstatements relating to the Court's Sentencing Guidelines calculations and determination of sentence, and (c) argue on appeal and collateral review that the Court's Sentencing Guidelines calculations and the sentence it chooses to impose are not error, although each party agrees to maintain its view that the calculations in paragraph 12 are consistent with the facts of this case. While this paragraph permits both the USAO and defendant to submit full and complete factual information to the United States Probation Office and the Court, even if that factual information may be viewed as inconsistent with the facts agreed to in this agreement, this paragraph does not affect defendant's and the USAO's obligations not to contest the facts agreed to in this agreement.
- 25. Defendant understands that even if the Court ignores any sentencing recommendation, finds facts or reaches conclusions different from those agreed to, and/or imposes any sentence up to the

maximum established by statute, defendant cannot, for that reason, withdraw defendant's guilty plea, and defendant will remain bound to fulfill all defendant's obligations under this agreement. Defendant understands that no one -- not the prosecutor, defendant's attorney, or the Court -- can make a binding prediction or promise regarding the sentence defendant will receive, except that it will be within the statutory maximum.

NO ADDITIONAL AGREEMENTS

26. Defendant understands that, except as set forth herein and in the Proffer Agreement signed by the parties on May 24, 2017, there are no promises, understandings, or agreements between the USAO and defendant or defendant's attorney, and that no additional promise, understanding, or agreement may be entered into unless in a writing signed by all parties or on the record in court.

PLEA AGREEMENT PART OF THE GUILTY PLEA HEARING

27. The parties agree that this agreement will be considered part of the record of defendant's guilty plea hearing as if the entire agreement had been read into the record of the proceeding.

AGREED AND ACCEPTED

UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

SANDRA R. BROWN Acting United States Attorney

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CASSANDRA ALEXANDER

Defendant ,

15 Attorney for Defendant CASSANDRA

ALEXANDER

9/15/2017

Date

Date

8/28/17

Date

CERTIFICATION OF DEFENDANT

I have read this agreement in its entirety. I have had enough time to review and consider this agreement, and I have carefully and thoroughly discussed every part of it with my attorney. I understand the terms of this agreement, and I voluntarily agree to those terms. I have discussed the evidence with my attorney, and my attorney has advised me of my rights, of possible pretrial motions that might be filed, of possible defenses that might be asserted either prior to or at trial, of the sentencing factors set forth in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a), of relevant Sentencing Guidelines provisions, and of the consequences of entering into this agreement. No promises, inducements, or representations of any kind have been made to me other than those

contained in this agreement. No one has threatened or forced me in any way to enter into this agreement. I am satisfied with the representation of my attorney in this matter, and I am pleading guilty because I am guilty of the charges and wish to take advantage of the promises set forth in this agreement, and not for any other

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8/28/17

CASSANDRA ALEXANDER Defendant

CERTIFICATION OF DEFENDANT'S ATTORNEY

I am CASSANDRA ALEXANDER's attorney. I have carefully and thoroughly discussed every part of this agreement with my client. Further, I have fully advised my client of her rights, of possible pretrial motions that might be filed, of possible defenses that might be asserted either prior to or at trial, of the sentencing factors set forth in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a), of relevant Sentencing Guidelines provisions, and of the consequences of entering into this agreement. To my knowledge: no promises, inducements, or representations of any kind have been made to my client other than those contained in this agreement; no one has threatened or forced my client in any way to enter into this agreement; my client's decision to enter into this agreement is an informed and voluntary one; and the factual basis set forth in this agreement is sufficient to support my client's entry of a quilty plea pursuant to this agreement.

8/20/17

J. TOOSON

Attorney for Defendant CASSANDRA ALEXANDER

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT 8 FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA 9 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CR No. 17-10 Plaintiff, INFORMATION 11 [18 U.S.C. § 666(a)(1)(A): Theft 12 v. From Organization Receiving CASSANDRA ALEXANDER, Federal Funds] 13 Defendant. 14 15 The Acting United States Attorney charges: 16 [18 U.S.C. § 666(a)(1)(A)] 17 The City of Glendale, California ("Glendale") was a local 18 1. government located within Los Angeles County that received Federal 19 assistance benefits in excess of \$10,000 for each of the years 2001 20 through 2017 under a Federal program. 21 At all times relevant to this Information, defendant. 22 2. CASSANDRA ALEXANDER ("ALEXANDER") was an agent of Glendale employed 23 in the position of Claims and Litigation Support Supervisor at the 24 Glendale City Attorney's Office. 25 26 // 27 // 28 PD

3. As part of her duties, defendant ALEXANDER was responsible for assembling "Settlement Packets," which contained records memorializing the settlement of claims brought against Glendale for personal injury or property damage, including the documents showing that an assistant City Attorney and the City Council had approved the settlement and payment to the claimant. Defendant ALEXANDER was also responsible for submitting the Settlement Packets to the City Attorney's Office Finance Department for issuance of checks payable to the claimants. The Settlement Packets included a "Request for Demand" form, which authorized the Finance Department to issue the check payable to the claimant in the approved amount. Defendant ALEXANDER had authority to sign the Request for Demand form, without limit as to the amount. Defendant also had the authority to take possession of the checks issued by the Finance Department, for the purpose of providing the checks to claimants' attorneys.

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Beginning in or about July 2001, and continuing through on 4. or about March 2017, in Los Angeles County, within the Central District of California, defendant ALEXANDER knowingly and willfully embezzled, stole, and obtained by fraud approximately \$692,764.84 in funds owned by, and under the care, custody, and control of Glendale.

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SANDRA R. BROWN Acting United States Attorney

LAWRENCE S. MIDDLETON Assistant United States Attorney Chief, Criminal Division

MACK E. JENKINS Assistant United States Attorney Chief, Public Corruption & Civil Rights Section

PATRICIA A. DONAHUE Assistant United States Attorney Public Corruption & Civil Rights Section

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Sandy Ear, declare:

That I am a citizen of the United States and a resident of or employed in Los Angeles County, California; that my business address is the Office of United States Attorney, 312 North Spring Street, Los Angeles, California 90012; that I am over the age of 18; and that I am not a party to the above-titled action;

That I am employed by the United States Attorney for the Central District of California, who is a member of the Bar of the United States District Court for the Central District of California, at whose direction the service by mail described in this Certificate was made; that on September 21, 2017, I deposited in the United States mail at the United States Courthouse in the above-titled action, in an envelope bearing the requisite postage, a copy of:

Plea Agreement for Defendant Cassandra Alexander

16 service was:

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- ☐ Placed in a closed envelope for collection and interoffice delivery, addressed as follows:
 - ☐ By hand delivery, addressed as follows:
 - \square By messenger, as follows:
- □ Placed in a sealed envelope for collection and mailing via United States mail, addressed as follows:
- \square By facsimile, as follows:
- ☐ By Federal Express, as follows:

J. Tooson

Lessem Newstat & Tooson 4515 Sherman Oaks Ave.

24 Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

at his/her last known address, at which place there is a delivery service by United States mail.

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This Certificate is executed on September 21, 2017, at Los Angeles, California. I certify under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

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SANDY EAR Legal Assistant