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Press Conference Scheduled to Address Possible Criminal and Unethical Activity Surrounding Sheriff Victor Hill

Questionable Purchase of Billboards in Clayton County at Issue

(Jonesboro, GA, March 31, 2008) – Since taking office in 2005, Clayton County Sheriff Victor Hill has demonstrated that he lacks the necessary leadership and management skills required to effectively serve as Clayton County Sheriff. Victor Hill's questionable disbursement of public funds for his billboards will be discussed at a press conference scheduled for 1:30 p.m. on Monday, March 31, 2008, on the steps of the Clayton County Courthouse, located at 9157 Tara Blvd., Jonesboro.

Hill has cost taxpayers more than $12 million because of his inexperience and poor judgment when he fired workers without just cause, and he has demonstrated that he is incapable of forming key collaborative efforts with the Clayton County Commission, local law enforcement, and even the local media.

Now, many believe a full criminal and ethical investigation should be launched by the State Attorney's Office into the funds Victor Hill is using to purchase billboards he has displayed throughout Clayton County for his re-election campaign and his "Quality of Life" campaign. After numerous public records requests – including an open letter in the Clayton Daily News on Feb. 18, 2008 – Victor Hill has failed to provide information about funding his billboards.

In addition, information provided by Morrow Police Chief Jeff Baker about funds Victor Hill is allegedly using to purchase his billboards is not only disturbing, but is also suspicious enough to warrant a full investigation. Information provided by Chief Baker is incomplete and suspiciously redacted without explanation as required by the Georgia Open Records Act. This information will be disseminated at the press conference.

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College Park Police Lt. Ernest Strozier – a prominent and long-time resident of Clayton County who has announced his candidacy for Clayton County Sheriff in the 2008 election – will also discuss Victor Hill's inability to do an effective job during this press conference. Those issues include the following:

Inexperience/Lack of professionalism

- In a 6-1 decision, the Georgia Supreme Court ruled employees could not be fired without cause after Victor Hill fired 27 employees on his first day in office. This case forced a settlement by a federal judge, and it has been reported that Hill's deliberate actions will cause taxpayers to pay about $7 million out of their hard-earned money.
- Hill lost control over the way he promotes his staff after the Clayton County Commissioners voted 4-0 to narrow Hill's power in his department.
- Hill suffered a blow when U.S. District Court Judge Thomas Thrash said that in four instances, Hill violated a court order restricting personnel moves in the Sheriff's Office. The judge fined Hill $1,000 for each instance – a total of $4,000. The judge said that the willful violations of a federal court order were imposed to protect employees from retaliation stemming from the discrimination case against Hill.
- A Clayton County appeals board overturned Hill's decision to fire Lt. Tina Daniel after Hill unsuccessfully tried to dismiss her in 2005. The Civil Service Board ordered Lt. Daniel reinstated with back pay.

Incapable of forming key collaborative efforts required for the position of Sheriff:

- Hill declared war on the Clayton News Daily by kicking out reporters and photographers during Hill's news conference.
- The Clayton County Commission has gradually chipped away at Hill's power since he took office in 2005. Commissioners have also been preparing to set up a marshal service to handle the courthouse security – a move that would weaken Hill's hold over the courthouse security.
- Hill sent out a mass distribution letter calling Clayton County Chairman Eldrin Bell a liar. The letter was sent to everyone in the Sheriff's Office and everyone employed at the county. The letter was sent from the Sheriff's Office of Public Information.

About Lt. Ernest Strozier, Candidate for Clayton County Sheriff's Office: Ernest W. Strozier is an outstanding law enforcement officer whose hard work and dedication has helped him soar to high ranks at the College Park Police Department. Strozier is a graduate of the FBI National Academy. For more information about Lt. Ernest Strozier, visit his website at www.strozierforsheriff.org.

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