

Statement of Bob Barton in Support of the Governor's Pardon for Innocence of Thomas Jack, Jr.

I, Bob Barton, declare:

1. In 1964 I joined the U.S. Army and flew combat missions over Southeast Asia. I was awarded the Air Medal, signed by President Johnson. After twelve years in the Army, I continued working for the U.S. Government including time spent in the VIP flight service where I was entrusted with the transportation of high-ranking officials. Altogether, I spent approximately 25 years in service to my country.
2. Around 1990, my wife Kay and I moved to Hoonah, Alaska. We have been residents there for approximately 30 years and have been extremely active in the community. I became the pastor of the United Pentecostal Church in Hoonah a few years after moving there. From time to time I have been called on by Hoonah police officers and local residents to help diffuse domestic violence situations. I have also been a substitute schoolteacher during the winter months for many years.
3. Kay and I became close to Sam & Katherine Hanlon and were adopted by them into their Tlingit family. I knew Mr. and Mrs. Hanlon to be very honest and well-respected elders in Hoonah before they passed away. Their observations of the events surrounding the allegations against Thomas that were documented in the transcript dated May 18, 2009, should be given the upmost accord and credibility by State officials, particularly Mrs. Hanlon's view that Thomas was innocent and someone was coaching his accuser ("TT") to lie, and Mr. Hanlon's view that there was no truth to the allegations and that Thomas was "honest" and "upright."
4. Kay and I came to know Thomas Jack Jr., and Angela Jack extremely well. We first met Angela when she was a young girl attending the church with her mother, who was the piano player and the church secretary for many years before our arrival. Angela soon became like a daughter to us.
5. We came to know Thomas many years later as a young man when he started coming to church services with Angela. It was during one of those services that Thomas decided to step forward and accept Christ into his life. I later conducted the marriage ceremony between Thomas and Angela and became very close to Thomas. We hunted and fished together and spent a lot of time together. I knew both his resolve to follow a morally straight path and his commitment to his wife Angela to be genuine. I agree completely with the prior observations of Mr. and Mrs. Hanlon, who knew Thomas to be honest and of excellent character.
6. Thomas and Angela went out of their way to help others. They were a very positive influence on the community in Hoonah. Angela was especially mindful of children, setting a good example, and wanting them to be in good environments. I recall that when the Hoonah City Council was set to approve a license for a bar to be built near the boat harbor, she single-handedly defeated the proposal because of the location's proximity to the town's playground where children hung out.
7. When Thomas and Angela became foster parents to TT and her sister ("ZT"), Kay and I came to know the girls extremely well. We accompanied the family on many occasions to barbecues and gatherings out at Freshwater Bay attended by family and friends, about an hour's drive from Hoonah. Sometimes we camped out there overnight and at times the girls would ride with Kay and I in our car to get there. Some evenings the girls would come over to our house by themselves for pizza, sodas, and games.

8. In addition to our many social activities together, Thomas, Angela and the girls attended services at our church three times a week – Sunday morning, evening, and Wednesday night. In the substantial amount of time that I observed the family together, never did I observe Thomas playing favorites with TT or doing things separately with her to the exclusion of ZT. Not once did I observe any inappropriate behavior by Thomas towards either TT or ZT.
9. Following the foster placement, Thomas and Angela were put under tremendous pressure by certain members of the girls' biological family, who in my opinion were a bad element in the community. I was not in favor of the couple's adoption of the girls because of this pressure. Some of these family members were known in the community as participating in illegal drug usage and even dealing drugs. Once I was called into one of family member's home to help deal with a domestic violence issue that resulted in an occupant being taken to jail. Over the years, Kay and I have observed other troubling matters arising from this household.
10. I had also heard from two reliable sources that the girls' biological mother was known to have introduced their older sisters to prostitution. I knew that the mother's influence on the girls was so bad that the State had restricted her to just one supervised visit with TT and ZT each year. I also knew that certain members of the biological family disregarded this important restriction on multiple occasions by exposing the girls to unsupervised visits with their mother. This refusal to abide with OCS restrictions, created the situation referred to in Mr. Ignell's report where the biological family placed tremendous guilt on ZT for wanting to be adopted by Thomas and Angela and she ran away from home.
11. As any good parents would do, Tom and Angela tried to surround the girls with people who were good influences who could help them make good decisions. They also tried to keep the girls away from bad influences in the community, including those certain members of the biological family and young kids known to be engaging in drugs, alcohol and sexual activity. Their efforts resulted in a huge conflict with those certain members of the girls' biological family, who sought increased visitation rights from the State as much as possible while dishonoring restrictive measures by the State. Tom and Angela were caught directly in the middle of this situation as no young couple should be, and the State's inability to effectively monitor the situation in Hoonah from Juneau put them in a very difficult position.
12. When the "shower incident" occurred, Angela called me from the house that morning and asked me to call Ms. Leah Ogoy with the OCS. Thomas also called me up and told me what had happened. He was extremely upset and told me he had made a big mistake. The girls came to our house after school that day and that evening I took them to another house to spend the night. Not once did TT give Kay or me any indication that Thomas had ever sexually assaulted her.
13. When Thomas was arrested, I was stunned by the news. I did not believe then, and I still don't believe that Thomas sexually assaulted TT in any manner. I expected that the charges against Thomas would be dropped as soon as TT's allegations had been properly investigated. I never expected Thomas' case to go to trial and can't imagine how he could be convicted in a fair trial by an impartial jury. Like Mr. and Mrs. Hanlon, I believe that Thomas is completely innocent of any type of sexual abuse of TT.
14. In addition to my previous statements regarding Thomas' character, Kay and I knew that Angela typically stayed up late at night, sometimes as late as 3am. We also knew that she kept a close eye on anything that went on both inside and outside the house involving her family. It

would have been impossible for the alleged sexual assaults to have occurred in such a small house at night without her knowing.

15. Kay and I also knew Angela to be an extremely moral person and there is no way that she would have put up with any type of behavior by Thomas that was inappropriate, let alone something like sexual assault.
16. Tom was usually at work every morning at 8am, and sometimes got there early around 7:30 when he worked for the local power plant. I would typically stop by the plant and see him when he got to work. I observed that he was always well rested and alert, which would likely not have been the case if the allegations had any truth to them.
17. Following the girls' placement into another home, I heard through kids at the school that TT had become sexually active with a boy her age. However, it was not until reading Mr. Ignell's report that I learned TT was concerned she might be pregnant around the time she raised the allegations against Thomas. Knowing the girls' background and how they had struggled at such an early age before arriving in Hoonah to stay with Tom and Angela, I can easily imagine the tremendous angst that a pregnancy would have generated in TT and for which I believe was likely the motivation for her to lie.
18. I knew TT's sister ZT to be extremely honest and straightforward. She told others what was on her mind and did not mince words. According to Mr. Ignell's report, when ZT was interviewed by the authorities, she was adamant that her sister and Thomas had not had any sexual relations. Her statements also were consistent with Angela's testimony at trial that ZT and TT slept in the same bed after ZT briefly ran away from home following the unauthorized visit by her biological mother. I believe ZT's testimony should have been given far more weight than it was by the State authorities involved in this case.
19. A few months after Thomas was arrested, my wife and I had to move temporarily to Texas to handle my brother's estate and we were gone from Hoonah for about a year. Before our move I was not interviewed by any State authorities despite my close relationship to the family and my personal involvement following the shower incident. **Law enforcement's failure to interview me enforced my belief that there was no merit to the accusations and the case would be dismissed.** If either of Thomas' attorneys had asked me to testify, I would have readily agreed.
20. I recall that one day before leaving to Texas I encountered local Alaska State Trooper Andy Saavland at the Hoonah boat harbor and told him there was no merit to the charges. I also told him that I felt that the biological family was behind the false allegations.
21. In October 2009 I was called by Officer Matt Dobson of the Alaska State Troopers who interviewed me. Mr. Ignell has shown me a copy of Mr. Dobson's report of our interview and it accurately reflects the information I gave him that day, including my opinion that nothing happened between Thomas and T.T.
22. I recall being stunned upon learning that Thomas was convicted of multiple counts of sexual assault of T.T in the Juneau courtroom. I returned to Alaska from Texas to be present in court and testify on Thomas' behalf at his sentencing hearing in the fall of 2010. I recall that when Assistant District Attorney Angie Kemp figured out who I was, she stopped asking me questions and that didn't sit well with me. In my view, prosecutors are obligated to follow the truth regardless of the result it leads to.

23. I have remained in close contact with Thomas since his conviction. We talk on the phone often and I have heard nothing in any of those phone calls that would suggest he is anything but completely innocent of the charges he was convicted of.
24. If requested, I am willing to testify under oath that this statement is true and correct except as to those matters stated on information and belief, and as to those matters, I believe them to be true.

January 31, 2022

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Bob Barton", is written over a horizontal line.

Bob Barton