

May 14, 2007

Judge Ellen Segal Huvelle
United States District Court for the District of Columbia
c/o Barry M. Hartman and Brian W. Stolarz
K & L Gates
1601 K. Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006

Re: J. Steven Griles

Dear Judge Huvelle:

I am writing in support of J. Steven Griles, who is scheduled to be sentenced before you on June 26, 2007. I am writing you personally to urge leniency for Steve when you determine his sentence.

I have known Steve for many years. Our relationship began in the early 1980's at the Department of the Interior (DOI) where we both worked in separate land management agencies. In 1985, Steve was nominated by the President and confirmed by the United States Senate to become the Assistant Secretary-Land and Minerals Management. I joined him as his Deputy Assistant Secretary and subsequently became his Principal Deputy. We worked together, as public servants, in these capacities for several years and became close friends.

Our working lives separated around 1988 (but we stayed in touch socially) and then resumed again in 2001. At that time, the President nominated and the United States Senate confirmed Steve to become the DOI Deputy Secretary. I rejoined him as the Associate Deputy Secretary and worked with him closely in this capacity from 2001 to 2004.

My relationship with Steve has evolved and deepened with the passage of time. We began as casual working colleagues, moved to supervisor/subordinate, evolved into a team with different skills, and became close friends at work and in our private lives. I have lived with him and socialized with him. He was the best man at my wedding more than 17 years ago. From these experiences, I have come to admire and respect Steve greatly and I'd like to share some observations to support my request for leniency.

Steve has been a public servant for most of his life. He has had a noteworthy public service career with the military, Virginia State government and the Federal government.

I have been with Steve on numerous occasions as he wrestled with the complexities of establishing and implementing public policy positions that were inescapably controversial. He is thoughtful, pragmatic, firm, committed, creative and consistent. Over the years, both in the public and private sector, Steve has been an effective advocate for responsible development and use of natural resources in the U.S. As a public servant, he was willing to take on tough issues to improve public policy and processes. Being an advocate in this area necessarily generates public controversy and, with that, a host of critics. Through the years, I have seen many public and press efforts to vilify Steve, but through it all he has remained positive, pleasant and open.

Steve reaches out to people naturally. He has taught me that results improve when people get to know each other and work together to solve problems. For example, as Deputy Secretary, he invested several days a month for almost one year to develop solid working relationships with Indian Tribal leaders across the country. These efforts have created a foundation for a much needed bridge between Indian Tribal communities and officials at DOI. Consistent with this approach, Steve developed relationships with hundreds of people across DOI, within the Administration and Congress and with many individuals (including lobbyists) and organizations in various natural resource arenas. Steve's special gift is his gregarious nature. As his friend, I find it tragic that Steve's good nature and outgoing personality has placed him in jeopardy because he had a minor relationship with an individual who later became notorious.

Steve cares deeply about the people around him and he acts upon it. During our working relationship, I have seen Steve go out of his way on many occasions to help people, both professionally and privately. He has mentored senior employees and has been consistently kind and empathetic in addressing the inevitable traumas and challenges that occur in the lives of people we know and work with. As a personal example, in the mid-1980's I couldn't breathe well and had surgery to correct this problem. I had no family in the area and was nursed back to health for over a week in the Griles family home.

Steve is a devoted father and grandfather. I know his children Kim, Tim, Matt and Megan. I have watched his children grow into fine adults. The older two, Kim and Tim, are parents now. Over the years, I have seen the love and devotion of a dedicated father and have listened to the stories of a proud grandfather. I have seen Steve address, in a mature and thoughtful way, the needs, desires and problems of being a parent of four children. In sharing this part of his life, I have found his experiences to be useful in dealing lovingly with my own two children.

Steve and I have discussed the emotional roller coaster he endured when his former wife moved out of state with his two younger children to pursue another life. More recently, I have been thrilled to know that Sue Ellen Woodridge

and Steve, who had been golfing buddies for years, had been dating and had fallen in love. I was even more delighted when they married. Those who know Sue Ellen hold her in the highest regard and know her to be a person of great integrity. I am so proud for both of them. I believe that their commitment to each other in this trying time demonstrates the tremendous strength of character that they share. In this marriage, Steve can have no doubt that Sue Ellen will be there at his side during the difficulties of life and Sue Ellen has come to know Steve's character and loving nature when he is most vulnerable.

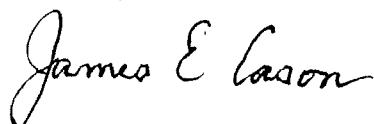
Your Honor, I have seen Steve in hundreds of circumstances that provide the opportunity to see the character of a man. I worked directly for him and closely with him during the period of time in question. Knowing all that I know of these circumstances directly, what I have seen in the press, having discussed these issues with the DOI Inspector General, the Department of Justice and a federal Grand Jury, my faith, confidence and trust in Steve remain unshaken.

In more than twenty years, I have not had the occasion to question my trust in him and, on many occasions I have had my trust reaffirmed. I have chosen to commit major parts of my working life to follow his leadership. I believe that he has significant public service accomplishments. I would trust him with the care of my family or my finances. And, if the occasion arose to work with him again, I would do so with great enthusiasm.

Your Honor, I hope that in the course of deciding an appropriate conclusion to this matter that you will come to know Steve as I do. I also hope that the wrong admitted will be examined for what it truly was and will be balanced against the credit due a long and fruitful public service career. Steve is a good man who has given much. This matter has exhausted him physically, emotionally and financially. He has lived under constant investigation and has been vilified in the press. He has seen his reputation tarnished and lost his business. Public service should not exact such a price. The price for his admitted failure to answer personal questions fully has already been paid. I urge you to be the first person to start him on a pathway of recovery from the pain caused by this prosecution and public spectacle.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James E. Cason". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

James E. Cason