

December 22, 1998

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Re:*State of Missouri v. George S. Revelle*

M. Shawn Askinosie
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To Whom It May Concern:

George Revelle was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole in February 1996 in connection with the death of his wife. The prosecution claimed that Mr. Revelle shot and killed his wife while she lay sleeping so he could obtain insurance money to pay debts. Mr. Revelle said that an intruder broke into their home and shot his wife in a botched extortion attempt. I did not represent Mr. Revelle in his first trial but handled his appeal and we ultimately obtained a new trial on his behalf. Mr. Revelle was essentially convicted in his first trial by evidence associated with his home security alarm system. The Revelle's alarm system, according to the Missouri State Highway Patrol and the person who installed and maintained the system, said that there could not have been an intruder in the home on the morning in question. Essentially, no one independently and completely investigated the alarm system to verify what Mr. Revelle said happened could have actually occurred.

Once Mr. Revelle's new trial was obtained I went about finding the nations preeminent burglar alarm expert. Jeffrey Zwirn was the first expert we retained on behalf of George Revelle. We built our defense around the work that Jeffrey Zwirn performed in our case. Mr. Zwirn spent the time investigating the Revelle home alarm system in a manner that the State of Missouri should have done to begin with. Mr. Zwirn ultimately concluded that the possibility of an intruder could not be excluded based on his investigation and findings of serious defects and irregularities with respect to the system and investigation.

I am pleased to report that Mr. Revelle was found not guilty in trial number two and is now a free man. I do not think that it is overly dramatic to state that George Revelle owes his freedom to Jeffrey Zwirn. Mr. Zwirn conducted an objective, complete, and professional investigation. Mr. Zwirn's attention to detail is unmatched by any expert witness I have ever had the occasion to work with or against.

Mr. Zwirn was able to effectively communicate with the jury to the point that after his testimony the State decided not to call it's own expert. I have not worked with an expert like Mr. Zwirn who has been able to talk to the jury and keep their attention while explaining such complicated issues as were present in this case. Mr. Zwirn was confident enough to step out of the witness chair and literally teach the jury about this alarm system and it's impact on this case during direct testimony. The conclusion of direct testimony was, in my opinion, where the case was won. Mr. Zwirn set up the actual security system that was in the Revelle home to a door in the courtroom. He showed the jury the alarm keypad on a big screen TV and walked them though a demonstration of how an intruder could have come into the home exactly the way Mr. Revelle said it occurred.

One of the most important things to me in an expert witness is integrity and objectivity. Mr. Zwirn was able to withstand cross-examination by one of the toughest prosecutors in this state. This particular prosecutor has put so many defendants on death row that his nickname (statewide) is "Dr. Death." Mr. Zwirn answered the prosecutors questions just as he had answered mine without a change in demeanor or body language. He was not combative or argumentative with this prosecutor. Mr. Zwirn's overall testimony was a grand display of effective communication with a jury.

I can not recommend Jeffrey Zwirn highly enough to any lawyer who is considering his expertise. I hope that anyone who reads this letter will feel free to contact me at the above number with any questions whatsoever about Jeffrey Zwirn and his abilities in both investigation and testimony.

Sincerely,



M. Shawn Askinosie

MSA:skh