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Sep 18 2024

S.C. SUPREME COURT

# Exhibit A

Declaration of Steven Golden

I, Steven Golden, being over the age of eighteen and competent, declare as follows:

1. Freddie Owens is not the person who shot Irene Graves at the Speedway on November 1, 1997. Freddie was not present when I robbed the Speedway that day.
2. I was eighteen years old on November 11, 1997, which was the day I got arrested for robbing the Speedway. I spent the day before I got arrested drinking, smoking marijuana, and sniffing cocaine. I also sniffed cocaine right before I was arrested, when the police were outside the house. I was high when I got arrested and when the police questioned me.
3. The detectives told me they knew Freddie was with me when I robbed the Speedway. They told me I might as well make a statement against Freddie, because he already told his side to everyone and they were just trying to get my side of the story. I was scared that I would get the death penalty if I didn't make a statement. I signed a waiver of rights form and then signed a statement on November 11, 1997.
4. The statement I signed said that Freddie and I robbed the Speedway together. It said that I entered the Speedway first and Freddie came in behind me. It said that Freddie went behind the counter, and when Irene Graves did not open the safe, Freddie shot her in the head.
5. In that statement, I substituted Freddie for the person who was really with me in the Speedway that night. I did that because I knew that's what the police wanted me to say, and also because I thought the real shooter or his associates might kill me if I named him to the police. I am still afraid of that. But Freddie was actually not there.
6. I was indicted for murder and possession of a firearm during the commission of a crime for what happened in the Speedway. I was facing the death penalty. Freddie and I were going to be tried together. The prosecutors offered me a deal right before Freddie's 1999 trial. They said that if I testified that what I said about Freddie in my written statement was true, they would drop the death penalty and life in prison. I took the deal. I testified at Freddie's 1999 trial that my 1997

statement was true. After Freddie's 1999 trial, I was sentenced to 30 years for my role in the murder.

7. I'm coming forward now because I know Freddie's execution date is September 20 and I don't want Freddie to be executed for something he didn't do. This has weighed heavily on my mind and I want to have a clear conscience.

Steven U. Golden

Steven Undra Golden

9/18/24

Date

Sworn to and subscribed before  
me this 18 day of September, 2024.

Perry W. S.  
NOTARY PUBLIC FOR SOUTH CAROLINA  
My Commission Expires: 10/24/33

