



Office of the Fifteenth Prosecutorial District of North Carolina

**Jon David**

**District Attorney**

*Proudly serving the people of three great counties*

**Bladen County**

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**Columbus County**

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110 Courthouse Square  
Whiteville, NC 28472

March 4, 2021

Jerome Chestnut  
Acting Town Manager  
Town of Chadbourn  
602 N. Brown Street  
Chadbourn, NC 28431

*Via Hand Delivery*

Dear Mr. Chestnut:

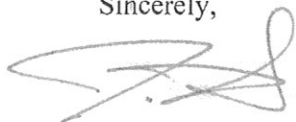
I write you this letter concerning a matter of urgent public importance. Last week, I became aware that a case for a defendant charged with felony drug possession was dismissed because the narcotics were not sent to the State Crime Laboratory by the Chadbourn Police Department for chemical analysis. During the course of our internal review regarding this case and other pending drug cases from your police department, we have unearthed the fact that your police department has neglected to send any narcotics for chemical analysis to the State Crime Lab for a substantial period of time. What makes this revelation particularly disturbing is that I previously instructed [redacted] to establish and utilize an account at the State Crime Lab in May of 2019, following a conversation with him concerning this very topic. I have come to learn that [redacted] inability to follow through with the request to submit narcotics for testing has resulted in the dismissal of a number of felony drug cases.

Last Friday, February 26<sup>th</sup> two of my Assistant District Attorneys responded to the Chadbourn Police Department to discuss a pending homicide investigation and review evidence in several drug cases. During this meeting, [redacted] indicated that he did not have the keys to the evidence locker and asked my prosecutors to return on Monday, March 1<sup>st</sup>. Despite being at your department for over three hours on Monday, [redacted] y, who maintains sole control of the evidence locker, was unable to produce drugs, money, and guns connected to several cases. Acting on this information we subpoenaed [redacted] to come to court on today's date to produce this evidence. [redacted] was over one hour late to this meeting and upon his arrival indicated that he was missing a substantial amount of requested evidence to include a firearm. Moreover, a review of what evidence he brought gave my prosecutors serious concerns about the possibility that the evidence had been tampered.

"Redacted areas are  
evidence custodian"

Given the facts as stated above I have some serious concerns about the integrity of the evidence storage at the Chadbourn Police Department and the breakdown in having drugs tested at the State Crime Lab. I recommend that you immediately suspend \_\_\_\_\_ pending the results of an outside independent review by the State Bureau of Investigation. I welcome the opportunity to have the Town of Chadbourn join me in making a concurrent request for the SBI investigation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jon David", with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

Jon David  
District Attorney

cc: Mayor Phillip Britt