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2		
3		
4	IN THE CIRCUIT COURT C	<b>DF THE STATE OF OREGON</b>
5	FOR THE COUNTY	COF MULTNOMAH
6	JACQUELINE YERBY, an individual,	
7	Petitioner,	No
8	vs.	PETITION FOR REVIEW OF BALLOT TITLE ("INITIATIVE PDX24OL-02")
9	ROBERT TAYLOR, in his official capacity as City Attorney for the City of Portland,	
10	Respondent.	Expedited consideration requested per ORS 250.296(3)
11		
12	INTROE	DUCTION
12		1.
	This is a petition for review of the ballo	t title for prospective City Initiative Petition
14	PDX24OL-02 ("the Initiative"), an initiative pe	tition that its proponents say "increases the
15	number of Portland Police patrol officers." Des	spite this clear focus on expansion of police
16	power and presence, the Initiative's ballot title	
17	effects will be to increase "street response servi	
18		2.
19		cific connotation that excludes police. The City
20	created the widely popular and successful Portla driven vision specifically intended to remove po	
21		
22	PAGE 1 – PETITION FOR REVIEW OF BALLOT	IIILE ("Initiative PDX24OL-02")

I

community members experiencing emergency mental and behavioral healthcare needs. The hope was that this reimagined response would disrupt the history of Portland Police violence against people experiencing mental health crises and ensure that appropriate professionals were dispatched to people needing healthcare not handcuffs.

3.

Portland Street Response and the Portland Police are thus fundamentally and quite intentionally distinct public services provided by the City of Portland through separate programs with separate staff, goals, budgets, and procedures. Yet Respondent Robert Taylor, City Attorney, attempts to inform voters about the prospective ballot measure seeking to expand police patrols, including expanding police involvement in social service responses, by generically describing the Initiative in its ballot title as one that would increase "street response."

4.

None of the Initiative's proposed amendments to the City Charter increase funding or capacity for the Portland Street Response program, the City's "street response" service. And by its terms, the Initiative's amendments *cannot* be reference to Portland Street Response because the Initiative seeks to "increase and maintain street response services that include trained social workers *working with* sworn police officers," (emphasis added) but Portland Street Response "follows the directive to keep this program separate from police."<sup>1</sup>

5.

The Initiative's ballot title misleadingly repeats the phrase "street response services" in every component – the Caption, the Question, and the Summary. To add to the confusion, the

<sup>1</sup> Portland Street Response Frequently Asked Questions, CITY OF PORTLAND, available at https://www.portland.gov/fire/streetresponse/psr-faq.

PAGE 2 – PETITION FOR REVIEW OF BALLOT TITLE ("Initiative PDX24OL-02")

Summary also refers to the Portland Street Response program when describing current City operations in parallel to the resulting increase in "street response services" should the Initiative be approved.

6.

Blurring this line about what "street response services" already exist in the City and what the Initiative seeks to achieve, whether intentionally or not, overtly misleads voters about the provisions and major effect of the proposed Initiative. Worse, it threatens to undermine the very fabric and efficacy of the Portland Street Response program that is built on trust with community members historically targeted by police violence that Portland Street Response will not respond to crisis calls "with sworn police officers." To allow this misinformation to spread via ballot title and the ensuing public discourse would damage "street response service" in Portland, which appears contradictory to the Initiative's own purported purpose. While it may be politically advantageous for proponents of police expansion to couple a call for increased law enforcement presence with phrasing that brings to mind the publicly popular and viable Portland Street Response program, such wording renders the ballot title legally infirm as not concise, unfair, and not conforming to the requirements of ORS 250.035.

This Court is the sole recourse for the public electorate to correct the harmful and misleading ballot title and place accurate information about the Initiative and its major effects before the voters.

7.

8.

This Petition is brought pursuant to ORS 250.296 and Section 2.04.070 of the Portland

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City Code.

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PAGE 3 – PETITION FOR REVIEW OF BALLOT TITLE ("Initiative PDX24OL-02")

1	PARTIES
2	9.
3	Petitioner Jacqueline Yerby ("Petitioner") is an Oregon elector who is registered to vote in
4	Multnomah County and who resides within the city limits of the City of Portland. Petitioner
5	Yerby is also the Director of Community Engagement at the ACLU of Oregon, and was the
	Policy Advisor for Behavioral Health and Health Licensing for former Governor Kate Brown.
6	Petitioner Yerby is dissatisfied with the ballot title for Initiative PDX24OL-02 and seeks a
7	different ballot title.
8	10.
9	Respondent Robert Taylor ("Respondent Taylor") is the City Attorney for the City of
10	Portland. Respondent Taylor prepared the ballot title for Initiative PDX 24OL-02.
11	FACTS
	A. Background on Portland Street Response, a No-Police Crisis Response Service
12	11.
13	In Portland, the phrase "street response" has a specific meaning and refers to a specific
14	public service. In 2021, the City piloted a popular and successful program called Portland
15	Street Response. Initially launched in a single neighborhood in Lents, the Portland Street
16	Response program met with success and community approval, and consistently expanded to
17	now operate throughout the City at all hours, every day. Portland Street Response dispatches
	unarmed mental health professionals, EMTs, and peer support specialists to assist people
18	experiencing mental and behavioral health emergencies in public. Upon information and
19	belief, most of the people working for Portland Street Response are not social workers.
20	///
21	
22	PAGE 4 – PETITION FOR REVIEW OF BALLOT TITLE ("Initiative PDX24OL-02")

1	12.
	Portland Street Response very explicitly and intentionally operates without police. The
2	directive to exclude police from the Portland Street Response program was a conscious choice
3	by the City driven, in part, by the history of a pattern of unconstitutional violence from police
4	in response to people in mental health crises. In the early phases of the program, Mayor Ted
5	Wheeler said that "the core principle is if someone is in crisis on our streets, are we in fact
6	sending the appropriate people to deal with it? And right now, we're predominantly sending
7	armed police officers, and they have said overwhelmingly, they don't think they're the right
8	people to respond to people in crisis." <sup>2</sup>
0	13.
9	Portland Street Response is widely popular. In a Portland Statute University review of the
10	program, people satisfactorily rated their experience with the program at 4.6 of 5. <sup>3</sup> Almost
11	12,000 people have signed a petition to preserve Portland Street Response because the program
12	has become a political target. <sup>4</sup> Despite efforts to defund Portland Street Response, the federal
13	judge overseeing the Settlement Agreement between the City and USDOJ recently said that
14	
	<sup>2</sup> SR Editorial Board, In line with Street Roots' campaign, Wheeler earmarks \$500,000 in contingency
15	funds for an alternative first response to crises on the streets, STREET ROOTS (May 1, 2019), available at https://www.streetroots.org/news/2019/05/01/sr-editorial-mayor-proposes-funding-portland-street-
16	response. <sup>3</sup> Greg Townley, PHD and Emily Leickley PHD, <i>Portland Street Response Year Two Evaluation</i> , PSU HOMELESSNESS RESEARCH AND ACTION COLLABORATIVE (June 2023), <i>available at</i>
17	https://www.pdx.edu/homelessness/sites/homelessness.web.wdt.pdx.edu/files/2023- 07/HRAC%20Portland%20Street%20Response%20Year%20Two%20Evaluation%20Report_FINAL
18	<u>%20FOR%20WEBSITE.pdf.</u> <sup>4</sup> See, e.g., Alexis Zielinski, Portland Street Response, despite successes, faces an uncertain future,
19	OPB (June 27, 2023), available at <u>https://www.opb.org/article/2023/06/27/portland-street-response-citywide-one-year-later-future/;</u> Sophie Peel, <i>Amid Talk of Cuts, Carmen Rubio Proposes Funding</i>
20	Portland Street Response With Earned Interest on Climate Tax, WILLAMETTE WEEK (Feb. 6, 2024), available at https://www.wweek.com/news/city/2024/02/06/amid-talk-of-cuts-rubio-proposes- funding northered street approach with correct on climate tay/
	funding-portland-street-response-with-earned-interest-on-climate-tax/.
21	PAGE 5 – PETITION FOR REVIEW OF BALLOT TITLE ("Initiative PDX24OL-02")
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Portland Street Response "is the best approach I've seen towards dealing with those crisis intervention alternatives."<sup>5</sup>

#### **B.** Proposed Initiatives to Increase Portland Police in 2024 14.

In 2024, three proposed ballot measures were filed with the City of Portland which collectively seek to increase resources and funding for the Portland Police Bureau and expand the degree of influence police exert over various City services. These proposed measures were identified by the City as proposed initiative petitions PDX24OL-01, PDX24OL-02 (the Initiative at issue here), and PDX24OL-03. All three proposed initiatives were filed by Chief Petitioner William B. Aitchison. 15.

being supported by William B. Aitchison and Anil Karia, who are attorneys for the Portland Police Association.

#### 16.

The initial proposed petition, PDX24OL-01, was deemed unconstitutional by the
Portland City Elections Officer because the petition's proposed amendments were
administrative rather than legislative in nature and therefore violated Article IV of the Oregon
Constitution. Petitioner Aitchison withdrew PDX24OL-01 once it was ruled unconstitutional.

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<sup>5</sup> Jonathan Levinson, *Portland, Department of Justice agree to independent monitor of police reforms*, OPB (Nov. 3, 2023), *available at* 

0 <u>https://www.opb.org/article/2023/11/03/portland-department-of-justice-agree-independent-monitor-police-reforms/</u>.

PAGE 6 – PETITION FOR REVIEW OF BALLOT TITLE ("Initiative PDX24OL-02")

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On February 7, 2024, pursuant to ORS 250.265 and Section 2.04.050 of the Portland City Code, Petitioner Aitchison filed the second, related Initiative at issue, PDX24OL-02, with the City entitled "Increases number of Portland Police patrol officers, enhances nonviolent response." A true and correct copy of Initiative PDX24OL-02, as published on the website maintained by the City, is attached as Exhibit 1 and is incorporated by reference herein. 18. Initiative PDX24OL-02 has six sections that propose to amend the Portland City Charter to, among other effects: (1) require an increase in police patrol officers, (2) require the creation of drug/alcohol treatment and detoxification centers run by the City, (3) require increases in social services response that includes police, (4) change current uses of tax and revenue sources to fund the preceding provisions, (5) require annual compliance reporting for the preceding provisions, and (6) a severability clause. 19. The Initiative's proposed social services provision states in full: "Section 2-1103. Social Services. City Council shall increase and maintain street response services that include trained social workers working with sworn police officers and fire medical personnel to reduce violent interactions and connect people in need with social services." Exhibit 1. 20. On February 14, 2024, pursuant to ORS 250.270(1) and Section 2.04.055 of the Portland City Code, the City Elections Official completed the constitutional review of prospective Initiative PDX24OL-02 and determined it preliminarily met the requirements of PAGE 7 – PETITION FOR REVIEW OF BALLOT TITLE ("Initiative PDX24OL-02")

Article IV of the Oregon Constitution, but that the petition "veer[s] towards administrative, and not legislative." A true and correct copy of the constitutional determination, as published on 2 the website maintained by the City, is attached as Exhibit 2 to this Petition and is incorporated 3 by reference herein. 4 21. 5 The City Elections Official forwarded Initiative PDX24OL-02 to City Attorney Respondent Taylor for preparation of the ballot title. 6 22. 7 On February 23, 2024, pursuant to ORS 250.275 and Section 2.04.060 of the Portland 8 City Code, Respondent Taylor prepared the proposed ballot title for Initiative PDX24OL-02 9 and transmitted it to the City Auditor, who inscribed a date of receipt on the ballot title. A true 10 and correct copy of the ballot title indicating the notice and date of receipt, as published on the website maintained by the City, is attached as Exhibit 3 to this Petition and is incorporated by reference herein. 12 23. 13 This Petition is timely pursuant to ORS 250.296(1) and Section 2.04.055 of the Portland 14 City Code because it is filed no later than seven business days after the ballot title for Initiative 15 PDX24OL-02 was filed with the City Elections Officer. 16 **BALLOT TITLE INFIRMITIES** 17 24. The components of the ballot title for Initiative PDX24OL-02 do not meet the legal 18 requirements of ORS 250.035. 19 /// 20 ||| PAGE 8 – PETITION FOR REVIEW OF BALLOT TITLE ("Initiative PDX24OL-02") 22

The Caption prepared by Respondent Taylor for the ballot title for Initiative PDX24OL-02 does not comply with the requirements of ORS 250.035(1) because it does not reasonably identify the subject of the measure. Respondent Taylor's caption incorrectly indicates that the subject of Initiative PDX24OL-02 is to "increase[] police patrol officers, detoxification centers, street response services." This caption does not comply with ORS 250.035 because the caption does not identify key aspects of the Initiative including the maintenance of unknown number of sworn patrol officers, the embedding of police in street response to connect people with social services, and funding implications of the Initiative. As described, "street response" is a misleading phrase in the caption because it implies an increase in a non-police response when the Initiative would effectuate the exact opposite; it would insert and increase the use of police in so-called street response. The phrase "street response" also implies increase in mobile mental and behavioral health emergency response via the service that already exists in Portland, whereas the Initiative describes street response to be about connecting "people in need with social services."

26.

The Question prepared by Respondent Taylor for the ballot title for Initiative PDX24OL-02 does not comply with the requirements of ORS 250.035(1) because it does not plainly phrase the purpose of the measure. Respondent Taylor's question incorrectly indicates that the purpose of Initiative PDX24OL-02 is to "increase and maintain police officers in patrol; create 24-hour drug/alcohol detoxification centers; increase street response services." For the same reasons that the Caption is infirm, the Question also fails. The Question does not name, or at least obfuscates, the purposes of the Initiative. It likewise repeats the misleading use of the phrase "street response services" and fails to inform voters about issues of PAGE 9 – PETITION FOR REVIEW OF BALLOT TITLE ("Initiative PDX24OL-02")

importance, including the required maintenance of an increase of an unknown number of sworn patrol officers, the involvement of police in social services work, and the funding implications of the Initiative.

27.

The Summary prepared by Respondent Taylor for the ballot title for Initiative PDX24OL-02 does not comply with the requirements of ORS 250.035(1) because it does not provide a concise and impartial statement summarizing the measure and its major effect. The summary references the current Portland Street Response program and includes a parallel bullet point that states an approved measure would "increase and maintain street response services..." For reasons previously discussed, this description is misleading, inaccurate, and unfair. This is exacerbated by the same bullet point's use of a comma (",") where the Initiative text does not. The summary is further misleading and confusing because of the lack of parallel structure and language in some places. The summary also lacks clarity about what the county does versus what the City would do upon the Initiative's approval. Finally, the summary also fails to be concise because it emphasizes unnecessary details in some places while leaving out important information in others.

28.

For the reasons stated above, the ballot title for Initiative PDX24OL-02 filed with the City Auditor does not comply with ORS 250.296(1) because it is insufficient, not concise and/or unfair. Blurring the line between the police and street response services undermines the trust and credibility that Portland Street Response has garnered with people experiencing mental health crises and compromises Portland Street Response's effectiveness and ability to serve community members in need. The public has the right to have an independent and

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informed choice about funding the police versus funding non-police emergency response 1 programs. 2 29. 3 This Court should certify a Caption for Initiative PDX24OL-02 that reads: Amends 4 Charter: Requires expanded police patrols, police social services involvement, detoxification 5 centers. 30. 6 This Court should certify a Question for Initiative PDX24OL-02 that reads: "Should 7 Portland maintain an increased number of police; involve police in social services; operate 8 detoxification facilities?" 9 31. 10 This Court should certify a Summary for Initiative PDX24OL-02 that reads: 11 Currently: The Police Chief has discretion to determine the number of patrol officers 12 The County operates drug/alcohol treatment and detoxification centers. There 13 is no detoxification center in the City 14 The County and City operate mobile response programs that involves social service workers co-responding with police 15 The City-through Portland Street Response – operates an emergency response 16 program that dispatches mental/behavioral health specialists to mental health 17 emergencies without involving the police 18 Portland Street Response is funded by marijuana tax, general and other 19 revenues 20 /// 21 PAGE 11 – PETITION FOR REVIEW OF BALLOT TITLE ("Initiative PDX24OL-02") 22

1	If measure is approved, amended City Charter will require the Council to:	
2	• Increase and maintain unspecified number of police officers providing patrol	
3	services	
4	• Create and maintain unspecified number of 24-hour drug/alcohol	
5	detoxification drop-off and treatment centers.	
6	• Increase and maintain co-response services that involve social workers	
	working with police and fire medical personnel separate from Portland Street	
7	Response program	
8	• Take marijuana tax, license, general and other revenue to fund expanded police	
9	services, treatment centers, and co-response services that involve police	
10	• Issue annual public report on compliance with above	
11	• Severability clause included.	
12	32.	
	As required by ORS 250.296(2), no later than 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6, 2024,	
13	Petitioner will give written notice to the City Elections Officer that this Petition has been filed.	
14		
15	WHEREFORE, Petitioner prays for a judgment as follows:	
16	1. Declaring the ballot title for Initiative PDX 2424OL-02 to be insufficient, not	
17	concise, unfair, and not conforming to the requirements of ORS 250.035;	
18	2. Certifying to the City Auditor a ballot title that conforms to the requirements of	
	ORS 250.035;	
19	3. Awarding Petitioner her costs and disbursements; and	
20	///	
21	PAGE 12 – PETITION FOR REVIEW OF BALLOT TITLE ("Initiative PDX24OL-02")	
22		

1	4. Awarding any other relief the Court considers just and equitable.
1 2	DATED: March 5, 2024.
2	AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION FOUNDATION OF OREGON, INC.
4	By:/s/ Kelly Simon
5	Kelly Simon, OSB #154213 Alicia LeDuc Montgomery, OSB #173963 ACLU FOUNDATION OF OREGON
6	PO Box 40585 Portland, Oregon 97240 (503) 227-3186
7	ksimon@aclu-or.org aleducmontgomery@aclu-or.org
8	Attorneys for Petitioner
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21	PAGE 13 – PETITION FOR REVIEW OF BALLOT TITLE ("Initiative PDX24OL-02")
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## City of Portland Initiative No. <u>PDX24</u>OL-02 November 5, 2024 Election

AN ACT

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF PORTLAND

The City Charter of the City of Portland is amended as follows:

1. Amend Chapter 2 by adding a new Article 11 which shall read as follows:

Section 2-1101. Police Services. City Council shall increase and maintain the number of sworn Police Bureau officers in patrol services.

Section 2-1102. Treatment Centers. City Council shall create and maintain 24-hour drug/alcohol detoxification drop-off and treatment centers, and shall seek to partner with the State and/or other local governments in doing so.

Section 2-1103. Social Services. City Council shall increase and maintain street response services that include trained social workers working with sworn police officers and fire medical personnel to reduce violent interactions and connect people in need with social services.

Section 2-1104. Funding. Consistent with other Charter provisions regarding budgeting and expenditure of public funds, City Council should use cannabis/marijuana tax and licensing revenue, general fund revenue, and/or other revenue sources to fund such police services, treatment centers, and social services.

Section 2-1105. Public Reports. City Council shall issue an annual public report that identifies its compliance with this Section.

Section 2-1106. Severability. For the purpose of determining constitutionality, every section, subsection and subdivision thereof of this Section, at any level of subdivision, shall be evaluated separately. If any section, subsection or subdivision at any level is held invalid, the remaining sections, subsections and subdivisions shall not be affected and shall remain in full force and effect. The courts shall sever those sections, subsections and subdivisions necessary to render this Section consistent with the United States Constitution and with the Oregon Constitution. Each section, subsection and subdivision thereof, at any level of subdivision, shall be considered severable, individually or in any combination.



**EXHIBIT 1** 





February 15, 2024

William B. Aitchison 1628 NW 32nd Ave. Portland, OR 97210 **Delivered Electronically** 

wiaitchison@gmail.com anil@pslglawyers.com

## Notice of Determination Constitutional Requirements Met Prospective Initiative Petition PDX24OL-02

Dear Chief Petitioner Aitchison:

On February 7, 2024, you filed a prospective initiative petition with the City Elections Office. As required by ORS 250.270(1) and City Code Section 2.04.055, I have determined that Prospective Initiative Petition ID PDX24OL-02, "Increases number of Portland Police patrol officers, enhances nonviolent response," meets the requirements of Article IV of the Oregon Constitution, section 1 (2)(d) and (5).

As you know, our Office determined that a related prospective petition that you filed on February 7, 2024, PDX24OL-01, "Strengthening Recruitment, Retention, Training, and Accountability for the Portland Police Bureau," did not meet the requirements of Article IV of the Oregon Constitution because certain sections of the prospective petition were administrative, and not legislative, in nature.

We find this petition to be a much closer call. In particular, Section 2-1101 (governing the number of patrol officers, and requiring what could be interpreted as a one-time increase in their numbers), and Section 2-1105 (requiring Council to issue an annual report, which is the type of activity that has historically been assigned to executive or administrative functions in the City), veer towards administrative, rather than legislative.

1221 SW 4th Avenue, Room 130 Portland, OR 97204 portland.gov/elections elections@portlandoregon.gov 503-823-4022

# EXHIBIT 2

Nonetheless, this Office construes elections laws liberally, and these provisions are not so clearly administrative as to result in the denial of this prospective petition.

Please note that this determination is a limited review of constitutional conformity and does not necessarily identify all potential constitutional difficulties that may preclude the proposed measure from proceeding.

## Next Steps

On February 15, 2024, the City Elections Office will deliver your prospective petition to the City Attorney's Office and request preparation of a ballot title. Under state law, the City Attorney's Office will be required to deliver a ballot title to the City Elections Office within 5 business days, or by February 23, 2024. After we have received the ballot title, our Office will reach out to you regarding next steps and the ballot title process.

## **Challenge Rights**

As provided in ORS 250.270(4), any elector dissatisfied with the current constitutionality determination may petition the circuit court of the judicial district in which the City is located for review within 7 business days of the City Attorney filing the ballot title with the City Elections Officer.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to our Office.

Thank you,

Louise Hansen City Elections Officer

## PDX24OL-02 Ballot Title

### **CAPTION**

Amends Charter: Increases police patrol officers, detoxification centers, street response services.

#### QUESTION

Should Portland increase and maintain police officers in patrol; create 24-hour drug/alcohol detoxification centers; increase street response services?

#### **SUMMARY**

Currently:

- The Police Chief has discretion to allocate police bureau resources, including work assignments like patrol duties for members of the police bureau
- County governments are the primary local authorities for behavioral health, which includes both mental health services and substance abuse services. Drug and alcohol treatment centers are available within the City, but not a detoxification drop-off center
- In addition to county programs, the City through Portland Street Response uses criteria to deploy qualified mental health providers via self-dispatch or in response to 911 or 311 calls

If measure is approved, amended City Charter will require Council to:

- Increase and maintain number of sworn police officers in patrol services
- Create and maintain 24-hour drug/alcohol detoxification drop-off and treatment centers
- Increase and maintain street response services, including social workers working with police and fire personnel to reduce violence and connect people with services
- Fund with marijuana tax, license, general and other revenue
- Issue annual public compliance report

Other provisions.



1	CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE
2	I hereby certify that I served a copy of the foregoing PETITION FOR REVIEW OF BALLOT TITLE ("INITIATIVE PDX24OL-02") on:
3	Robert Taylor Maja Haium
4	Office of the City Attorney, City of Portland 1221 SW 4 <sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 430 Portland, OR 97204
5	Email: <u>Maja.Haium@portlandoregon.gov</u>
6	Respondent
7	by emailing a copy thereof to said attorneys at their last-known email addresses as set forth above.
8	AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
9	FOUNDATION OF OREGON, INC.
10	By: <u>/s/ Kelly Simon</u> Kelly Simon, OSB #154213
11	Alicia LeDuc Montgomery, OSB #173963
12	Attorneys for Petitioner
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21	PAGE 1 – CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE
22	