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BEFORE THE HEARING EXAMINER  
FOR THE CITY OF SEATTLE

In the Matter of the Appeals of END ) Hearing Examiner File No.: **MUP-17-001**  
PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX, et al. )  
)  
) DPD Project No. 3020845  
From a decision by the Director, )  
Department of Planning and Development, ) **DECLARATION OF SENAIT BROWN**  
on a Master Use Permit )  
\_\_\_\_\_ )

I, Senait Brown, being over the age of eighteen and competent to testify to these fact,  
hereby declare the following under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington:

1. I am a member and organizer with Ending the Prison Industrial Complex (EPIC).  
EPIC was founded by Youth Undoing institutional Racism in 2012 as an anti-racist, multicultural  
and intergenerational organizing collective with the goal of ending the prison industrial complex  
(surveillance, policing, and incarceration) and building stronger communities.

2. EPIC is registered as a Washington not-for-profit corporation. It is membership-  
based.

3. EPIC's work on the "No New Youth Jail" Campaign is centered around investing  
in our youth, providing meaningful community led alternatives to incarceration, and integrating  
an anti-racist lens by promoting an analysis of local government's decisions on communities of  
color.

4. EPIC is based in Seattle and focused on the King County area. Some of EPIC's  
members live in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Children and Family Justice Center, the  
location of the proposed new youth jail. I am personally familiar with many of EPIC's members,  
**BROWN DECLARATION - 1**

1 and several members of other organizations that have joined this appeal. Some of our members  
2 live within a few blocks of the jail. Many other groups in our coalition that joined this appeal also  
3 have members in the immediate vicinity of the proposed jail. Other members are part of a  
4 displaced Africatown-Central District community, meaning that they have close ties to the  
5 historically-Black Central District-Africatown area around the proposed jail site, but are no longer  
6 able to reside there due to gentrification.  
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8 5. EPIC, its members, and coalition members will suffer specific harm from the  
9 construction of the jail. Once the jail is built, we will also suffer impacts from the jail itself.  
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11 6. Our members will suffer impacts from years of major construction if the project  
12 goes forward. Our members and the neighboring community would suffer additional traffic and  
13 parking impacts, noise, and dust. All of these impacts are admitted in the environmental  
14 documents. For example, the construction will require over 13,140 truck trips and will push  
15 parking into the neighborhoods due to the loss of the existing parking and construction parking.  
16 EPIC has brought these issues to light in its MUP appeal. Construction impacts like this can  
17 significantly harm our members' interests in minority owned businesses in the area, as seen by the  
18 example of the 23rd Avenue corridor construction. There is a reasonable fear of risk from  
19 contamination as well, since the project would demolish buildings with asbestos and do grading in  
20 contaminated soils and groundwater, which are also issues in our appeal.  
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22 7. Our members will also suffer ongoing impact from the facility. For example,  
23 EPIC members do not support the building of a mega facility in the residential L3 zone. Our  
24 members benefit from the enforcement of the setback and maximum width regulations in the  
25 residential zone. Waiving these requirements for this project would lead to a development that is  
26 out of scale with the neighborhood. They would bring the facility so close to 14th Avenue that it  
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1 would impose an institutional character on the otherwise residential neighborhood, negatively  
2 impacting our members who routinely walk and drive on that street. These members will be also  
3 be negatively impacted by a building hundreds of feet long, directly adjacent to public streets and  
4 the community open space along 14th Avenue and East Remington Court. EPIC's members are  
5 challenging the waivers of these standards to bring the facility into scale with the L3 zone, where  
6 many of us live, work, and/or go to school.  
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8           8.       Having a mega-jail in the neighborhood for the next 50 years will also negatively  
9 impact members by undermining the sense of place of Africatown Central District. The jail would  
10 harm the aesthetics and property values in the neighborhood, even apart from the ongoing traffic  
11 and parking impacts from the facility on an ongoing (post construction) basis. I understand that  
12 King County is claiming that a new jail will have a pretty new façade, but nothing in the plans  
13 looks attractive to me. The outside appearance won't mask the harm generated within. I see the  
14 neighborhood getting stuck with a huge youth lock-up facility for decades to come. A  
15 neighborhood built around a facility for locking up Black and Brown children will feel  
16 unwelcoming to communities of color and will increase gentrification. The project will become a  
17 symbol that we are investing in another 50 years of youth incarceration despite the harm to  
18 communities of color.  
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21           9.       In addition to members who are neighbors, we have members who work within the  
22 existing jail and families who are involved in the juvenile detention system. For over a year,  
23 EPIC taught a Freedom School in the facility and we intend to continue the project in the future.  
24 Our members will continue to be at the project site during the planned construction and  
25 excavation and demolition of toxic hazards. Some of them have no option to avoid the area during  
26 construction. All of these members will be placed at risk by the project, including the City's  
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1 refusal to enforce the toxic cleanup standards set in the Mitigated Determination of Non-  
2 Significance. The exposure of contamination through construction and lack of cleanup will result  
3 in more pollution in the neighborhood, which increases the health and property risks for these  
4 members.

5           10. Our members are also seeking to preserve the character of the neighborhood by  
6 increasing the availability of reasonably priced and low-income housing in the neighborhood.  
7 Housing struggles and displacement are risk factors for youth. The County's proposal would use  
8 important residential land for a jail rather than building housing for the people. If the MUP  
9 permit were to be overturned because the waiver of development standards has been improperly  
10 granted, land along 14th Avenue would become available for residential uses better fitting the L3  
11 Zone, including hopefully increased low-income housing.

12           11. Most of our members are taxpayers in King County and it is their money that  
13 would be used for this construction project. They are opposing this project in part to ensure that  
14 limited government funds are not spent on this unwise project. The project is already \$15 million  
15 over budget before even breaking ground, and it is reported that the contractor has refused to  
16 honor the agreed upon maximum price for the construction project. In other words, if this project  
17 goes forward, it will suck tens of millions of dollars from King County's general fund, on top of  
18 the County's already projected \$50 million budget deficit. Many of our members work for, or  
19 rely upon, other King County services. In addition, EPIC members are seeking to reclaim King  
20 County funds for anti-racist, holistic, community-owned and restorative solutions to juvenile  
21 incarceration. The jail project would reduce or eliminate funding for these programs and  
22 solutions, stripping youth of opportunities to live free of the prison industrial complex.  
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1           12.     Obviously, all of EPIC’s members are also concerned about the impacts of the  
2 project on children and families. Some of our members who are directly involved in the justice  
3 system have seen are negatively impacted by the incarceration of their family members. Jailing  
4 youth has little or no relationship with reduction of crime in the community. It actually increases  
5 recidivism instead of reducing it, and it pulls youth deeper into the system, causing additional  
6 harm to youth who have already experienced historical trauma due to institutional racism and now  
7 are exposed to secondary trauma through incarceration. These members certainly have a right to  
8 oppose a project that will facilitate the increased incarceration of Black and Brown children.  
9 EPIC is an organization led by youth and families of color who are seeking to eliminate the over-  
10 incarceration of youth of color and especially Black youth.  
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12           13.     EPIC has played a “pivotal role” in protesting, organizing and influencing local  
13 government to reduce the incarceration of youth, in particular the mass incarceration of Black  
14 youth in the youth jail. The City of Seattle has recognized EPIC’s leadership in the fight for  
15 juvenile justice reform, and the important community dialogue around this project. In 2015, we  
16 worked with Seattle City Council and for the betterment of King County to establish  
17 commitments to reducing the number of children sent to jail. Seattle City Council signed a  
18 resolution committing the City to zero-detention of youth and the use of community based  
19 alternatives to detention instead. On the day of the resolution, Seattle City Council Member Nick  
20 Licata said that the Council “wouldn’t be here today if it wasn’t for the youth activists” – adding  
21 that “[t]hey’re the ones who created the huge pressure on the county and also the city.” In March,  
22 2016, motivated by EPIC’s constant pressure, the Seattle City Council authorized \$600,000 (less  
23 than 0.3% of the cost of the proposed youth jail) to fund anti-racist, holistic, community-owned  
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1 and restorative solutions to juvenile incarceration and gave EPIC and the Social Justice Fund NW  
2 a role in disbursing those funds through the EPIC Giving Circle Project.<sup>1</sup>

3           14. Our leadership on this issue has been having an impact. Recently the Mayor and  
4 two Councilmembers have come out in opposition to the jail. Their letters echoed the EPIC and  
5 our coalition’s critique of the project. These leaders agree that the alternatives to incarceration are  
6 working and bringing the average jail population so low (under 30) that it makes no sense to build  
7 a new jail to hold as many as 156 kids at a time. Our leadership on this issue has sparked a  
8 paradigm shift around incarceration of youth of color in Martin Luther King County.  
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28 <sup>1</sup> *Youth jail opponents land two victories*, The Seattle Globalist, at <http://www.seattleglobalist.com/2016/03/16/youth-jail-opponents-land-two-victories/48830> (March 16, 2016).

1 STATED under oath this 13 th day of February, 2017, at Seattle, Washington

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