TIMSC 11/15/21

JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE 2021

Court, Position, and Seat # for which you are applying: Court of Appeals, Chief Judge, Seat 5

1. Name:

Mr. Harris Bruce Williams

Mrs. Ms.

Name that you are known by if different from above (Example: A Nickname): Bruce

Are you currently serving in some capacity as a judge? If part-time, please note. (Includes Municipal, Magistrate, Etc.) Yes, Judge, SC Court of Appeals

Home Address:



Business Address:

P.O. Box 11629 1220 Senate Street Columbia, SC 29211

E-Mail Address:

Telephone Number:

(home):

(office): 803-734-2159

(cell):

2. Date of Birth:

1956

Place of Birth: Columbia, SC

Social Security Number:

- 3. Are you a citizen of South Carolina? Yes
 Have you been a resident of this state for at least the immediate past five years? Yes
- 4. SCDL# or SCHD#: Voter Registration Number:
- 5. Have you served in the military? If so, give the dates, branch of service, highest rank attained, serial number (if applicable), present status, and the character of your discharge or release. Please provide a copy of your DD214 concerning your discharge. No

- 6. Family Status:
 - (a) State whether you are single, married, widowed, divorced, or separated. Married
 - (b) If married, state the date of your marriage and your spouse's full name and occupation. November 17, 1984 Sharon C. Williams, Consultant SC Bar
 - (c) If widowed, list the name(s) of spouse(s). N/A
 - (d) If you have ever been divorced or are in the process of obtaining a divorce, state the date, name of the moving party, court, and grounds. N/A
 - (e) State the names of your children and their ages. If your children are old enough to work, include the occupation of each child.
- 7. List each college and law school you attended, including the dates of your attendance, the degrees you received, and if you left an institution without receiving a degree, the reason for your departure.
 - (a) Wofford College 1974-1978, Bachelor of Arts in English and Government
 - (b) University of South Carolina Summers 1976 and 1977, Summer Classes
 - (c) Cumberland School of Law, Samford University 1979-1980 Transferred to USC
 - (d) University of South Carolina, School of Law 1980-1982, Juris Doctor Degree
- 8. List the significant activities in which you took part during your attendance at law school. Give the years you were involved in these activities and list any leadership positions you held.
 - (a) Mock Trial Competition Finalist, USC School of Law 1982
- 9. List the states in which you have been admitted to practice law and the year of each admission. Also list any states in which you took the bar exam but were never admitted to the practice of law. Please indicate the number of times you took the exam in each state.
 - (a) South Carolina Admitted in 1982
 - (b) Took bar exam once, 1982
- 10. Describe chronologically, since graduation from law school, your legal experience. Please include a list of all positions held in which you worked in a legal capacity. Describe the general character of your practice and divide it into periods with dates if its character changed over the years. Please also describe the extent to which you were involved with the administrative and financial management of each of these entities, including management of trust accounts.
 - (a) 1982-1995 General practice with primary emphasis on family law and personal injury law.

- (b) 1982-1995 Scott, Matthews & Williams: Administrative and financial management of the firm was the responsibility of the senior partners.
- (c) 1991-1995 Trotter and Williams: Administrative and financial management of operating and trust accounts.
- (d) 1991-1995 Part-time municipal judge for Irmo, SC.
- (e) 1995-2004 Judge, South Carolina Family Court
- (f) 1997-2019 Presiding Judge Richland County Juvenile Drug Court
- (g) 2000-2002 Presiding Judge Richland County Adult Drug Court
- (h) 2004-present Judge, South Carolina Court of Appeals

Justices/judges applying for re-election to their <u>current</u> position may omit Questions 11–17. <u>If you are a full-time judge seeking a judgeship different than your current position, Questions 11-17 should be answered based on your experience *prior to serving on the bench*.</u>

11. Please answer the following:

- (a) If you are a candidate for Family Court, please provide a brief written description of your experience within each of the following Family Court practice areas: divorce and equitable division of property, child custody, adoption, abuse and neglect, and juvenile justice. Include information about cases you have handled in each of these practice areas, or if you have not practiced in an area, describe how your background and procedural knowledge has prepared you to preside over such matters as a Family Court judge. Please also indicate the frequency of your appearances before a Family Court judge within the past five years.
- (b) If you are a candidate for Circuit Court, please provide a brief written description of your experience in criminal matters, including any cases handled over the past five years, and include a brief description of the issues involved. Further, please provide a brief written description of your experience in civil matters, including any cases handled over the past five years, and include a brief description of the types of matters handled, issues involved, and procedural history. Please include information such as the primary areas in civil court in which you practice, and whether you represent plaintiffs or defendants, or both. You may go back further than five years if you feel it would assist the Commission with its assessment of your experience. If you lack experience in an area, describe how your background and procedural knowledge has prepared you to preside over such matters as a Circuit Court judge, or how you would compensate for your lack of experience in this area. Please also indicate the frequency of your appearances before a Circuit Court judge within the past five years.
- (c) If you are a candidate for Master-In-Equity, please provide a brief written description of your experience in the Master's court, including any cases handled over the past five years, and include a brief description of the issues involved.

Please include the frequency of your appearances before a Master-In-Equity or a Circuit Court judge within the past five years.

- (d) If you are a candidate for Administrative Law Court, please provide a brief written description of your experience before an Administrative Law Judge, including any issues discussed and the frequency of your appearances before the Administrative Law or Circuit Court within the past five years.
- 12. What was the frequency of your court appearances during the past five years or in the five years prior to your election to the bench?
 - (a) federal: low
 - (b) state: high
- What percentage of your practice involved civil, criminal, domestic, and other matters during the past five years or in the five years prior to your election to the bench?
 - (a) civil: 30%
 - (b) criminal: 5%
 - (c) domestic: 65%
 - (d) other:
- 14. What percentage of your practice in trial court during the past five years or in the five years prior to your election to the bench involved matters that went to a jury, including those that settled prior to trial?
 - (a) jury: 5%
 - (b) non-jury: 95%

During the past five years, did you most often serve as sole counsel, chief counsel, or cocounsel? Sole counsel

- 15. List five of the most significant litigated matters you have personally handled in either trial or appellate court, or before a state or federal agency. Give citations if the cases were reported and describe why these matters were significant.
 - (a) Melvin v. Melvin a contested divorce case in which the parties had a long term marriage and disputed equitable distribution of military retirement benefits
 - (b) Inman v. Inman a custody case involving a mother who moved out of state
 - (c) Oswald v. Oswald a contested custody case involving child support visitation, equitable distribution, and attorney's fees
 - (d) Jackson v. Jackson a domestic case in which custody was obtained for the mother who had initially given up custody and visitation with her children
 - (e) Bullard v. Ehrhardt, 283 S.C. 557, 324, S.E.2d 61 (1984) in this case, our Supreme Court established the duty a store owner owes to invitees for criminal acts of third parties in negligence actions
- 16. List up to five civil appeals you have personally handled. Give the case name, the court, the date of decision, and the citation if the case was reported.

- (a) Bullard v. Ehrhardt, 283 S.C. 557, 324, S.E.2d 61 (1984) In this case, our supreme court established the duty a store owner owes to invitees for criminal acts of third parties in negligence actions
- (b) Oyler v. Oyler 293 S.C. 4, 358 S.E.2d 170 (Ct. App. 1987) Participation limited to oral argument and assisting and preparing brief.
- (c) Francis June Rawl v. Roy Edwin Rawl, Sr. Participation limited to oral argument.
- 17. List up to five criminal appeals you have personally handled. Give the case name, the court, the date of decision and the citation if the case was reported. None.
- 18. Have you ever held judicial office? If so, list the periods of your service, the courts involved, and whether you were elected or appointed. Describe the jurisdiction of each of the courts and note any limitations on the jurisdiction of each court.
 - (a) Assistant Town Judge, Irmo, South Carolina October, 1991-June, 1995 Appointed by Town Council. Jurisdiction is limited to magistrate level criminal and traffic offenses. Duties included setting bonds for criminal defendants
 - (b) South Carolina Family Court Judge, 5th Judicial Circuit, Richland County, Seat 1, June 1995-June, 2004. Elected. Jurisdiction includes but is not limited to divorce, adoption, abuse and neglect, and juvenile cases. I also presided over the Richland County Juvenile Drug Court from its inception until 2019.
 - (c) South Carolina Court of Appeals, Seat 2, 2004-present. Elected. Jurisdiction over all appeals, except those reserved by statute to the original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of South Carolina
 - (d) I was appointed a special circuit court judge to preside over Richland County Adult Drug Court, (2000-2002)
- 19. If the answer to question 18 is yes, describe or list five of your most significant orders or opinions and give the citations if they were reported. Also, list citations to any appellate review of these orders or opinions.
 - (a) S.C. Dep't of Soc. Servs. v. Truitt, 361 S.C.272,603 S.E.2d 867 (Ct. App. 2004)
 - (b) State v. Lynch, 375 S.C. 628, 654 S.E.2d 292 (Ct. App. 2007)
 - (c) Melton v. Medtronic, Inc., 389 S.C. 641, 698 S.E. 2d 886 (Ct. App. 2010)
 - (d) Miranda C. v. Nissan Motor Co., Ltd., 402 S.C. 577, 741 S E. 2d 34 (Ct. App. 2013)
 - (e) Shelley v. South Carolina Highway Patrol, 432 S.C. 335, 852 S.E.2d 220 (Ct. App. 2020)
- 20. List all courts in which you have been admitted to practice and list the dates of your admission. Give the same information for administrative bodies that require a special admission to practice.
 - (a) Admitted to practice before the State Courts of South Carolina in 1982

- (b) Admitted to practice before the U. S. District Court for the District of South Carolina in 1982
- 21. Have you taught law-related courses or lectured at bar association conferences, educational institutions, or continuing legal or judicial education programs? If so, briefly describe each course or lecture.
 - (a) I am an adjunct professor at the University Of South Carolina School Of Law, teaching Family Law from 2012 to present.
 - (b) I lectured at the SC Bar Program "Bridge the Gap" for new lawyers.
 - (c) I have given presentations on the topics of appellate advocacy and domestic relations at the annual SC Bar meeting, as well as numerous presentations at SC Bar CLE events.
 - (d) I have given presentations in the areas of appellate law and domestic relations for the SC Association for Justice's annual meetings.
 - (e) I have lectured to University of South Carolina School of Law classes related to the following topics: alternative sentencing/drug court, abuse and neglect cases, domestic relations, and fundamentals of law practice and professionalism. I have also presented professionalism seminars to first-year students on the courts and civility.
 - (f) I have lectured to undergraduate and graduate level classes at the University of South Carolina regarding juvenile crime, drug court, and courtroom procedures in South Carolina.
 - (g) I have participated as a group leader in drug court training for new courts in programs sponsored by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals.
 - (h) I have given numerous presentations at SC Solicitors' annual conferences concerning juveniles, case law updates, drug court, and civility in the courts. In addition, I have presented at the SC Public Defenders' Conference.
 - (i) I have had the opportunity to speak at locally sponsored CLE events on appellate advocacy, abuse and neglect cases, and guardian ad litem training.
- 22. Provide, as a separate attachment, your continuing legal or judicial education report from the past five years. Attachments included
- 23. List all published books and articles you have written and give citations and the dates of publication for each. None
- 24. Please furnish as a separate attachment, two examples of legal articles, briefs, orders, or other legal writings for which you can claim sole or primary authorship. If you cannot claim sole authorship, please explain the extent to which you are the primary author, to include a description of the other authors and their contributions. The writing samples are for the Commission's use only and will not be published. (If you are a judge and are not seeking a different type of judgeship, this question is inapplicable.)

- 25. What is your rating or membership status, if any, by any legal rating organization; such as, Best Lawyers, Chambers, Legal 500, Martindale-Hubbell, Who's Who Legal, Super Lawyers, Million Dollar Advocates Forum, etc.? If you are currently a member of the judiciary, list your last available rating, if any. Martindale-Hubbell BV.
- 26. List all bar associations and professional organizations of which you are a member and give the titles and dates of any offices you have held in such groups.
 - (a) South Carolina Bar, 1982-present
 - (b) Richland County Bar, 1982-present; Family Law Chair, 1993; Family Law Committee, 1991-1993
 - (c) South Carolina Conference of Family Court Judges, 1995-2004; President, 1999-2000 President-Elect, 1998-1999; Secretary-Treasurer, 1997-1998
 - (d) South Carolina Association of Drug Court Professionals; President, 2000-2001; 2008-2014; Board Member, 2006-present
 - (e) John Belton O'Neall Inn of Court, 2007-present
 - (f) Board Member, National Association for Drug Court Professionals, 7/2015-present
 - (g) Chairman of the Board, National Association for Drug Court Professionals, 2019-2021
- 27. Have you ever held public office other than judicial office? If so, list the periods of your service, the office or offices involved, and whether you were elected or appointed. Also, state whether or not you have timely filed your report with the State Ethics Commission during the period you held public office. If not, were you ever subject to a penalty? If so, give details, including dates. No
- 28. For sitting or former judges, list all employment you had while serving as a judge (whether full-time or part-time, contractual or at will, consulting or otherwise) other than elected judicial office. Specify your dates of employment, employer, major job responsibilities, and supervisor.
 - (a) Adjunct Professor, USC School of Law -2012 to present
- 29. Have you ever been an unsuccessful candidate for elective, judicial, or other public office? If so, give details, including dates.
 - (a) In 1994, I was a candidate for Family Court Judge. I was found qualified by the South Carolina Bar and Judicial Merit Selection Commission. I withdrew prior to the election. I was then elected to the Family Court in 1995.
 - (b) In 2003, I was found qualified by the South Carolina Bar in my effort to serve on the South Carolina Court of Appeals. I was further found qualified and nominated by the Judicial Merit Selection Commission. Another candidate was elected. I was then elected to the Court of Appeals in 2004.
 - (c) In 2007, I was found qualified by the South Carolina Bar in my effort to serve on the Supreme Court of South Carolina. I was also found qualified and nominated by the Judicial Merit Selection Commission. Another candidate was elected.
 - (d) In 2009, I was found qualified by the South Carolina Bar in my effort to serve on the Supreme Court of South Carolina. I was found qualified but not nominated by the Judicial Merit Selection Commission.

- (e) In 2016, I was found well qualified by the South Carolina Bar in my effort to serve on the Supreme Court of South Carolina. I was found qualified and nominated by the Judicial Merit Selection Commission. Another candidate was elected.
- 30. Have you ever been engaged in any occupation, business, or profession other than the practice of law, teaching of law, or holding judicial or other public office? If so, give details, including a description of your occupation, business, or profession, the dates of your employment, and the name of your business or employer. No
- 31. Are you now an officer or director or involved in the management of any business enterprise? Explain the nature of the business, your duties, and the term of your service. No
- Are you now or have you ever been employed as a "lobbyist," as defined by S.C. Code § 2-17-10(13), or have you acted in the capacity of a "lobbyist's principal," as defined by S.C. Code § 2-17-10(14)? If so, give the dates of your employment or activity in such capacity and specify by whom you were directed or employed.
 - (a) South Carolina Funeral Directors Association, 1990
 - (b) South Carolina Society of Ophthalmology, 1990
- 33. Provide, as a separate attachment, a complete, current financial net worth statement that itemizes in detail:
 - (a) the identity and value of all financial assets held, directly or indirectly, including, but not limited to, bank accounts, real estate, securities, trusts, investments, and other financial holdings; and
 - (b) the identity and amount of each liability owed, directly or indirectly, which is in excess of \$1,000, including, but not limited to, debts, mortgages, loans, and other financial obligations.

(A net worth statement form is provided with this questionnaire and you must use this format for submission of your financial statement.)

NOTE: The Commission may require written confirmation that financial obligations have been satisfied or that the parties have agreed upon a payment schedule.

- 34. Has a tax lien or other collection procedure ever been instituted against you by federal, state, or local authorities? Have you ever defaulted on a student loan? Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? If so, give details. Also, proof of satisfaction of any liens or defaults must be submitted with your application package. No
- 35. Since filing with the Commission your letter of intent to run for judicial office, have you accepted lodging, transportation, entertainment, food, meals, beverages, money, or any other thing of value as defined by S.C. Code § 2-17-10(1) from a lobbyist or lobbyist's principal? If so, please specify the item or items you received, the date of receipt, and the lobbyist or lobbyist's principal involved. No

- 36. Itemize (by amount, type, and date) all expenditures, other than those for travel and room and board, made by you, or on your behalf in furtherance of your candidacy for the position you seek. If you have spent over \$100, have you reported your expenditures to the House and Senate Ethics Committees? None
- 37. List the recipient and amount of all contributions made by you, a member of your immediate family, or by a business with whom you are associated, to members of the General Assembly within the past four years.
- 38. Have you or has anyone acting on your behalf solicited or collected funds to aid in the promotion of your candidacy? If so, please specify the amount, solicitor, donor, and date of the solicitation. No
- 39. Describe any financial arrangements or business relationships you have, or have had in the past, that could constitute or result in a possible conflict of interest in the position you seek or currently hold. Explain how you would resolve any potential conflict of interest. None
- 40. Describe any interest you or a member of your immediate family has in real property:
 (a) in which there is a potential conflict of interest with your involvement in a South
 Carolina state or local public agency;
 - (c) in which there have been public improvements of \$200 or more that adjoins property in which there have been public improvements of \$200 or more; or
 - (d) which was sold, leased, or rented to a state or local public agency in South Carolina.

List the interest you hold and the value and location of the property. Identify as applicable the:

- (a) nature of any potential conflict of interest;
- (b) nature and value of any public improvements; and
- (c) South Carolina state or local public agency which purchased or is leasing or renting such property. Attach a copy of any contract or agreement.

 None.
- 41. Identify any personal property interest you or a member of your immediate family sold, leased, or rented to a South Carolina state or local public agency. Identify the property, its amount or value, and the name of the agency. Attach a copy of any contract or agreement. None
- 42. For sitting judges, if you currently hold an interest in stock or other securities or have held such an interest, list each stock you currently own or owned during the prior calendar year. If you prefer, you may attach broker or account records containing the requested information instead of listing it here. Schedule B attached
- 43. For sitting judges, have you ever accepted anything of value from an attorney or litigant in a matter currently or previously before you or your court? If so, please give the details, including the name of the attorney or litigant and the thing of value you received. No

- 44. For sitting judges, have you used the services of your staff, for which you did not pay, while campaigning for this office? No
- 45. Have you ever been arrested, charged, or held by federal, state, or other law enforcement authorities for violation or for suspicion of violation of any federal law or regulation, state law or regulation, or county or municipal law, regulation, or ordinance, or any other law, including another country's law? If so, give details but do not include traffic violations subject to a penalty of \$125 or less. You must include any and all arrests, including, but not limited to, offenses for driving under the influence or similar traffic offenses. Include all arrests that resulted in expungement, which will be redacted. If you have questions regarding whether to include an offense, please contact the Commission.

[All answers have been received and considered by the Commission, and as noted above, any expunged matters are redacted from the record.]

- 46. Have you, to your knowledge, ever been under federal, state, or local investigation for possible violation of a criminal statute? If yes, explain. No
- 47. Have you ever been sued by a client? No.

Have you ever been a named party (personally or professionally) in or had a pecuniary interest in any civil or criminal proceedings? If so, give details, including, but not limited to, dates, and resolutions.

I was named a defendant creditor in a foreclosure due to a family court order awarding me attorney's fees owed by the defendant debtor.

The following two cases were filed by self- represented litigants who had cases before the South Carolina Court of Appeals. The plaintiffs sued all three appellate judges on the panel as well as others.

2015-002518 Glenda Couram v. SC Dept. of Motor Vehicles: The district court dismissed the case, and the appeal was dismissed by the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals.

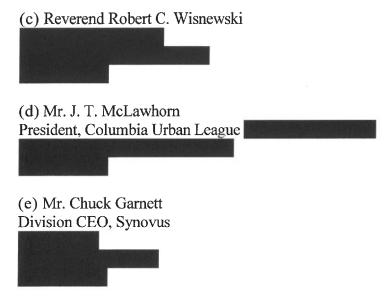
2015-001334 Regina M. Hunter v. Nikki Haley, et. Al. The district court dismissed the case, and the appeal was dismissed by the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals.

- 48. If you are in private practice, are you covered by malpractice insurance and, if so, how long have you carried malpractice insurance? If applicable, have you ever been covered by a tail policy? Yes, I purchased a tail policy upon my election to the Family court. If so, please explain when you were covered by a tail policy. Also, if applicable, indicate your coverage and deductible for your current malpractice policy. N/A
- 49. Have you ever, in South Carolina or any other jurisdiction, as a lawyer, judge, or other professional, been cautioned with or without a finding of misconduct, sanctioned, or disciplined for lawyer, judicial, or other professional misconduct or has any jurisdiction found that you committed any misconduct? If so, give the details and describe any final disposition. Include any and all confidential and public sanctions, disciplines, letters of caution, or findings of misconduct of any kind. Private or confidential dispositions will be redacted.

[Yes and no responses are redacted for all candidates unless there is a public discipline.]

- 50. Have you ever been investigated by the Department of Social Services? If so, give the details and the resolution. Has your name ever been enrolled on the Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect? If so, give the details. No
- Assembly as to your election for the position for which you are being screened, or have you been offered a conditional pledge of support by any legislator pending the outcome of your screening? Have you received the assurance of any public official or public employee that they will seek the pledge of any member of the General Assembly as to your election for the position for which you are being screened? If so, give details. No
- 52. Have you requested any third parties to contact members of the General Assembly on your behalf before the final and formal screening report has been released? Describe the campaigning you have done for this election and include a list of those individuals you have asked to campaign on your behalf and, to the best of your knowledge, those who have campaigned for you on their own initiative. No
- 53. Are you familiar with the 48-hour rule, which prohibits a candidate from seeking pledges until after the draft report becomes final, which occurs on the day and time specified on the Commission's published screening schedule? Yes
- 54. Since submitting your letter of intent to become a candidate, have you or has anyone acting on your behalf contacted any member of the Judicial Merit Selection Commission about your candidacy or intention to become a candidate? If so, give details. No
- 55. List the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of five (5) persons from whom you are providing references. Also, provide the Commission with <u>original letters</u> of recommendation from each person listed herein, including their signature (preferably in blue ink). The Commission will not accept a photocopy or electronic submission of a <u>letter of recommendation and failure to include all five (5) original letters of recommendation in your packet when you submit it will render your packet incomplete</u>. Please <u>do not</u> have references mail your reference letters to the Commission directly. You must return the five (5) original letters of recommendation to the Commission with your application.
 - (a) John E. Montgomery, Dean Emeritus and Professor of Law University of South Carolina School

(b) S. Alan Medlin, David W. Robinson Professor of Law University of South Carolina School of Law



56. Are you active on or a member of a social media or Internet site such as, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, etc.? No

If so, please list the account names for each account and the relevant platform.

How would your use of social media or other similar types of Internet sites be affected if you were serving in a judicial capacity?

- 57. List all civic, charitable, educational, social, and fraternal organizations of which you are or have been a member during the past five years and include any offices held in such a group, and any professional honors, awards, or other forms of recognition received and not listed elsewhere.
 - (a) Matthew J. Perry Civility Award, presented by the Richland County Bar Association 2012
 - (b) Columbia Urban League Ethel M. Bolden Community Service Award, 2011
 - (c) Palmetto Club
 - (d) Wildewood Club -Full Golf Member
- Provide any other information that may reflect positively or negatively on your candidacy, or which you believe should be disclosed in connection with consideration of you for nomination for the position you seek. This information may include how your life experiences have affected or influenced the kind or type of judge you have been or plan to be.

In 1997, I, along with the Solicitor, initiated the implementation of the Richland County Juvenile Drug Court Program, a comprehensive drug treatment court for juvenile offenders with serious drug problems. I presided over drug court on Monday evenings until 2019. We are currently working on a new juvenile treatment court program for the 5th Circuit.

I am gratified and appreciative of the support and encouragement received from members of the Bar since serving on the Bench. I will continue in my efforts to serve the people of South Carolina to the best of my ability.

My thirteen years of experience as a practicing lawyer, nine years of experience on the Family Court bench, and seventeen years of experience on the Court of Appeals has been invaluable. I believe this experience, along with my service and involvement in the community, has given me a significant perspective to serve as Chief Judge of the South Carolina Court of Appeals.

YOUR SIGNATURE WILL BE HELD TO CONSTITUTE A WAIVER OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF ANY PROCEEDING BEFORE A GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE OR ANY INFORMATION CONCERNING YOUR CREDIT.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT MY ANSWERS ARE TRUE AND COMPLETE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

Signature:	
Sworn to before me this day	of, 2021.
(Notary Signature)	
(Notary Printed Name)	
Notary Public for South Carolina	
My Commission Expires:	