

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA**

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ANNE WHITE HAT, RAMON MEJÍA,
and KAREN SAVAGE,

Plaintiffs,

v.

Civil Action No. 6:20-cv-00983

BECKET BREAUX, in his official
capacity as Sheriff of St. Martin Parish;
BOFILL DUHÉ, in his official capacity as District
Attorney of the 16th Judicial District Attorney's
Office,

JUDGE ROBERT R. SUMMERHAYS

MAGISTRATE JUDGE
CAROL B. WHITEHURST

Defendants.

_____ X

DECLARATION

I, ANNE WHITE HAT, declare and state as follows:

1. I am Sicangu, Lakota, originally from Rosebud, South Dakota.
2. I have been a resident of Louisiana for over 10 years.
3. I am a mother of three, an experienced herbalist, and I am a Plaintiff in this case.
4. I was part of an indigenous-led effort to prevent the Bayou Bridge Pipeline from being built and to call attention to its unlawful activities.
5. I felt moved to this after I witnessed what happened at Standing Rock, where I returned to my homeland to help treat protesters who needed assistance, when I learned that the same company would be seeking to build the tail end of this network of pipelines in the lands where I now live.
6. I never intended or wanted to get arrested during these efforts.

7. I tried to comply with the critical infrastructure law after it was amended earlier in 2018 even though I believe it is unjust and was an attempt to silence us.
8. I am a mother of teenage children, and did not want to incur felony charges or, worse, a conviction.
9. On September 18, 2018, I was at a boat launch with other water protectors and journalist Karen Savage, who was reporting on our protests.
10. I had just led the group through a sacred prayer and blessing when we were approached by sheriff's deputies.
11. They placed Karen under arrest and then they did the same to me shortly after Karen's arrest.
12. They put me in a different car and drove me to the jail which took over half an hour. Along the way, they transferred to me to a different vehicle.
13. I was extremely scared and anxious because we were doing nothing wrong, and I was afraid of where they were going to take me, and they would not tell me why I was being arrested.
14. I knew I had been careful to try not to violate the new critical infrastructure law and was doing nothing wrong when they showed up and arrested us on September 18, 2018.
15. I later found out that the arrest was related to an event that occurred two weeks earlier out on the property in the Atchafalaya Basin on September 3, 2018.
16. On that day, there was a tense encounter between our protestors and construction crews.
17. We had been given permission by some of the landowners to be present on this property.

18. We knew that the pipeline company did not have permission or legal authority to be there, and we were trying to call attention to this fact, especially to law enforcement, that the company was trespassing.
19. But law enforcement did not pay any attention to what we were saying and took instructions from people associated with the pipeline company.
20. I did not remain on the area at issue after the sheriff's deputy said to move off it.
21. I moved off the area, even though the company was trespassing it and it was not a legal form of critical infrastructure, and I did not believe the law applied to that land.
22. The felony charges seriously affected my work and my life.
23. It was very stressful having these charges hanging over me for nearly three years.
24. I have not engaged in protests or actions to the same extent after that.
25. I believe we have an important and sacred responsibility to protect the earth and a moral duty to speak out against projects which we know will do more damage.
26. I believe the critical infrastructure law was intended to dissuade me and others from this duty.
27. I know it has caused some water protectors to err on the side of not protesting so as not to risk an arrest.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated: April 17, 2022


ANNE WHITE HAT