To Whom it May Concern,

This letter is in support of Deputy Dillon Fuston. I met Dillon when he was a San Diego Police Officer at Central Division. I was his second line supervisor. Prior to being assigned to Central Division I was briefed on the personnel issues going on as I took over the service area. Dillon's name came up and I was told he was pending discipline. As his Lieutenant, I would be involved in the discipline process. I familiarized myself with the cases Dillon was involved in. I reviewed the cases prior to meeting Dillon. During my review I was struck by two things. Dillon was motivated and it appeared to me like he was trying too much. The second thing that struck me was that Dillon needed a hands- on supervisor. I have been a police officer for over twenty -three years. My experience has been that officers like Dillon Fuston take this career to heart and believe they must be everywhere and do everything all the time. Eagerness, excitement combined with a lack of experience require direct supervision to harness that eagerness and ensure the young officer understands how to harness their energy into positive outcomes.

I spoke with Dillon's supervisor, who was an experienced officer who had recently been promoted. He had not been supervising Dillon very long, but I asked him for his initial impressions of Dillon as a police officer. I specifically asked him if Dillon was "heavy handed". I was surprised when the sergeant told me, "Dillon is a teddy bear. Dillon's problem is he feels like he must protect everyone, and he happens to be a big guy." He went onto tell me he believed Dillon was a well-intentioned young officer who just needed hands-on supervision to help channel his good traits.

I met with Dillon one on one. During that meeting we spoke about his service as an Officer in the Marine Corps. He described why he wanted to be a police officer and his core belief in helping victims of crime. He spoke about protecting those who could not protect themselves. He recognized that he had been involved in use of force incidents that had less than desirable outcomes. He recognized that the standard by which our actions are judged are much higher than what he expected. He never complained or griped about the process. Dillon told me how much pride he felt in being a police officer and serving the community. I found Dillon to be engaging personable and humble during our first meeting.

Dillon never stopped working hard he was the most productive officer at the division. He handled every type of call and did not dodge any call. He remained proactive and was responsible for more gun recoveries than any officer in the division. What was more impressive to me was his compassion for victims. He was kind to everyone and exercised a great deal of patience. Dillon was always helpful to his fellow officers and very respectful to his supervisors.

In the year that I worked around Dillon I came away very impressed with him as an Officer and equally impressed with him as a person. Dillon accepted responsibility, he is kind, responsible, and passionate about his job. He has a strong drive to protect and serve the community. I was sad to hear he was leaving the San Diego Police Department for the Sheriff's Office. I told his background investigator they were getting an excellent police officer. I believe Dillon Fuston deserves to be a police officer. If I or my family members were victims of a crime, I would want Dillon Fuston to be the responding officer. I believe the incidents that led him to this review were not the actions of a person who purposely inflicts pain on people. His actions were born out of a desire to do the right thing. The incidents in question

took place in a short period of time at the very beginning of his career. Once Dillon was provided with a role model he excelled and understood how to be more effective as a police officer. I have met very few young police officers who have the passion and desire to be better. Dillon demonstrated his character throughout the discipline process. He accepted responsibility and he changed his methods and learned from his previous actions. I believe that all of us who have chosen Law Enforcement as a career have to accept a higher level of scrutiny as part of our job. But I also believe that we all deserve a chance to learn from our actions. This job places us in danger, physically, emotionally, and psychologically. We expect our officers to get it right every time, and it is a steep learning curve. To judge a career in the first twenty-four months seems hasty, especially when the in Dillon's case the lesson was learned. He was disciplined for his actions and the behavior changed. I believe Dillon Fuston is an excellent law enforcement officer and should keep his certification.

Arturo Swadener

Lieutenant, San Diego Police Department