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#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### ACADEMY OF ADOPTION AND ASSISTED REPRODUCTION ATTORNEYS REACTS TO PAUL PETERSEN INDICTMENT FOR ADOPTION FRAUD

(GREENWOOD, INDIANA, OCTOBER 10, 2019) – As President of the Academy of Adoption and Assisted Reproduction Attorneys (“AAAA”), we feel it imperative to comment on the case of Paul Petersen, the Maricopa County Assessor and private attorney who was indicted in Arizona on 29 counts of fraudulent schemes and three counts of conspiracy, theft and forgery related to an adoption fraud scheme. We applaud the Arizona Attorney General for reviewing and enforcing the state’s laws governing adoption practices. Every state has statutes that criminalize improper actions taken by any person involved in adoption matters and AAAA supports local efforts to have these laws enforced for the protection of all involved in adoption matters.

The exploitation of Marshallese women, children, and families is not in any way representative of adoptions in the United States and results in damage to the community, families and children. AAAA strives to protect all parties involved in adoption and assisted reproduction family building efforts. This case illustrates how important it is for prospective adoptive families to work with reputable professionals in the field of adoption and assisted reproduction.

AAAA is an organization of credentialed attorneys, judges, and law professors throughout the world who are bound by a strict code of ethics that does not permit such conduct as is alleged in the Arizona matter. AAAA Fellows have distinguished themselves in the fields of assisted reproduction technology, adoption and family building. AAAA Fellows work tirelessly and ethically to create families every day and to assist those placing children for adoption, but those stories don’t typically make headlines.

With many resources available to check on the background and experience of agencies and adoption attorneys, it is important to be a knowledgeable consumer. Due diligence is required to insure that those who will help on the path of building one’s family through adoption and assisted reproduction are reputable and experienced. AAAA fellows can assist prospective adoptive parents and birth parents in finding qualified, experienced service providers to make their journey through their family building process a safe, legal and ethical journey.

