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## **Innocent School Construction CEO Vindicated in Publicly Damaging Investigation**

(Ontario, CA) – Friday, July 30, 2021 - The Riverside County District Attorney’s office dismissed all charges against Ontario-based Neff Construction CEO Edward Mierau after an almost four-year frivolous investigation and persecution. Prosecutors from the Public Integrity Unit filed close to thirty (30) felony counts against Mierau, an innocent man. It took Mierau years to clear his name. Mierau has never been in trouble before and had enjoyed a sterling statewide reputation for school construction that was nearly ruined by the false charges.

A court document called the supplemental factual basis signed by the guilty embezzler admits, “At no time did I ever conspire with, discuss, outline or insinuate any details of my fraud with Ed Mierau. At no time have I ever implicated or suggested any involvement by Ed Mierau, I accept full responsibility for the fraud outlined above, and specifically exonerate Ed Mireau.”

Since the onset of these meritless claims, Neff Construction and Mierau fully cooperated with law enforcement’s investigation and continuously reiterated that Mierau was an unknowing innocent bystander in the schemes of a school administrator who acted alone to embezzle money from the Corona Norco Unified School District. Despite the investigation revealing no evidence to prove Mierau was even aware of the fraud, until it was uncovered, prosecutors filed charges anyway apparently hoping that the number and weight of the charges would convince an innocent man to plead guilty to lesser charges. Mierau, and his lawyer, former District Attorney Rod Pacheco, not only refused any plea bargain but demanded that the charges be dismissed.

“My innocence and that of our company, Neff Construction, have been vindicated,” said Mierau. “It was devastating to be charged with crimes that I did not commit and for our

company to be under suspicion when another individual was solely responsible for the embezzlement. We now have to work on restoring our almost ruined reputation.”

The DA’s office pursuit involved a number of egregious errors and what appeared to be outright deceptions in court documents and statements made in court, which failed to convince a local judge recently when she denied prosecutors a simple preliminary injunction that are routine for prosecutors to secure. The judge found insufficient evidence to grant prosecutors’ request. Prosecutors are also under fire for violating Mierau’s civil rights in collaboration with officials, Michael Fine and Michael Ammermon, from a school audit agency known as FCMAT. “The integrity of our legal system demands accountability from all parties involved,” said Pacheco. “This investigation was riddled with errors and misrepresentations that led to wrongful accusations against an innocent man and company with stellar, untarnished reputations.”

“It is unfortunate that Mierau had to endure an almost two year legal conflict and for the DA to come to the conclusion which we were already aware of: Ed Mierau is innocent,” said Margie Brown, former Facilities Director at Garden Grove USD.

For 40 years, Neff Construction has earned a strong reputation for successfully completing hundreds of projects for school districts by adhering to the highest professional and ethical standards. “Mierau is an integral part of our company,” said Ron Kuehl, Neff Construction VP. “His career of over 30 years proved time and time again that he is a man of integrity and committed to providing the best services and products for our customers. His life has been dedicated to building the infrastructure to house our next generation.

“The district attorney’s office secretly used auditors and investigators from FCMAT that manipulated the process to create a false narrative of Mierau’s guilt. These deceitful tactics publicly damaged the reputation of both Mierau and Neff Construction which will continue to have extreme impacts on their ability to conduct business,” said Pacheco. “The Public Integrity Unit of the DA’s office ought to have integrity. In Mierau’s case they had none.”

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