

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

STATE OF FLORIDA

CRIMINAL DIVISION: "X"

CASE NO.: 502016CF005507AXXXMB

v.

NOUMAN KHAN RAJA,
Defendant.

**ORDER PROHIBITING THE RELEASE OF JURORS' NAMES
UNTIL THE TRIAL IS CONCLUDED**

THIS CAUSE came before the Court *sua sponte* in anticipation of the pending jury trial scheduled to begin on February 22, 2019. This is a case of public interest which has generated significant media attention, both locally and nationally. The State of Florida endeavors to provide unfettered public access to the judicial process as a means to reaffirm and enhance the public's belief in our system of justice. An integral part of this transparency is the ability of the news media to freely cover public proceedings, including that of the instant case.

The Court recognizes that with intense media coverage comes the likelihood for juror influence or harassment during the pendency of such proceedings. *See Sarasota Herald-Tribune v. State*, 916 So. 2d 904, 909 (Fla. 2d DCA 2005). The publishing of names "of jurors could expose them to unwanted telephone calls and visits from abusive and potentially threatening strangers." *Sunbeam TV Corp. v. State*, 723 So. 2d, 275, 278 (Fla. 3d DCA 1998). The fair administration of justice is of the utmost importance to the Court and so, too, is the protection of, and a safe environment for, prospective jurors. *See, e.g., United States v. Ross*, 33 F. 3d 1507, 1519-20 (11th Cir. 1994). The Court finds that this case presents circumstances in which it is necessary to secure the jurors' names until the conclusion of the trial, and the temporary

withholding of the jurors' names to be the least restrictive means of balancing transparency, the fair administration of justice, and the jurors' safety. Accordingly, it is hereby

ORDERED that the members of Court Administration, the Clerk of Court of Palm Beach County, the Palm Beach Sheriff's Office, all attorneys associated with this case, and any member of any media outlet covering this case shall not release to the public the name or any additional identifying information obtained through juror questionnaires or juror information sheets of any potential juror in the venire, including those who have been released from service in this case prior to the start of trial or deliberations, or any juror impaneled in this case until the conclusion of the trial in this case. The news media remains free to report any events surrounding the case, subject to the very limited and specific provisions of this Order.

DONE AND SIGNED, in Chambers at West Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida,
this 22 day of January 2019.


JOSEPH MARX
CIRCUIT JUDGE

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