IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA Page 1

CASE NO. 23-02935-CF

STATE OF FLORIDA,

Plaintiff,

vs.

TOMASZ KOSOWSKI,

Defendant.

VIDEOCONFERENCE GEORGE COZZI DEPOSITION OF:

DATE TAKEN: August 2, 2024

TIME: 9:37 a.m. to 10:08 a.m.

PLACE: Via Zoom

STENOGRAPHICALLY REPORTED BY: Tami Cline, RMR, CRR Notary Public, State of Florida at Large

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Page 4 The deposition of GEORGE COZZI was taken 1 2 pursuant to notice by counsel for the Defendant on 3 the 2nd day of August, 2024, commencing at 9:37 a.m., via Zoom videoconference. 4 Said 5 deposition was stenographically reported by Tami 6 Cline, RMR, CRR, Notary Public, State of Florida at 7 Large. 8 9 GEORGE COZZI, a witness, having been duly sworn to tell the truth, 10 was examined and testified upon his oath as follows: 11 12 THE WITNESS: Yes, I do. 13 DIRECT EXAMINATION 14 BY MR. BRUNVAND: Good morning, Mr. Cozzi. 15 This is Bjorn Ο. 16 Brunvand. I represent Tom Kosowski, and we're here to take your deposition. If you could please state 17 your full name. 18 19 Α. My name is George Robert Cozzi, Jr. 20 And, Mr. Cozzi, in doing the deposition, it's Ο. 21 important that you verbally answer questions that I 22 have and -- meaning nonverbal responses, it's 23 difficult for the court reporter to take down. So 24 nodding of the head and that type of thing or 25 uh-huh, uh-uh generally is hard to interpret. So

Page 5 yes and no and other audible responses would be the 1 Is that fine? 2 best. 3 Α. Yes. Okay. And I want to also tell you that it's 4 Q. 5 not my intent to cause you additional pain, and it's 6 not my intent to make things difficult for you. Ι 7 do have to ask some questions. And, you know, if 8 you need a break at any point in time, just let me know. 9 10 As I said to you the first time I met you, Α. Counselor, I understand you're just doing your job. 11 12 Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Q. 13 And it looks like Willengy Ramos, who's another lawyer in my office, just joined the 14 15 deposition. 16 So, Mr. Cozzi, you are the father of Steven 17 Cozzi; is that correct? Α. Yes. 18 19 And where was he raised? Ο. 20 Α. He was raised in New Hampshire. 21 In New Hampshire? Okay. At some point in Q. 22 time, he was living in New York City? That's correct. 23 Α. 24 Tell us, what was he doing when he was living Q. 25 in New York City?

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1 Α. My son, Steven, worked on Broadway. 2 Q. In what capacity? 3 Α. He did behind-the-scenes work mostly, stage 4 crew and costuming, that sort of thing. 5 Okay. All right. And when you first spoke Ο. with Detective Compton back on March 21, 2023, you 6 7 had referenced a serious problem between him and his 8 roommate while he was living in New York City. Do you recall that? 9 10 Α. Yes. Could you tell us a little bit more about 11 Ο. that? 12 13 Α. Well, I came home from work one day, and my wife said that Steven and his roommate had some 14 15 issues and that we were going to go and get Steven 16 and bring him to live with us. At that time we had 17 moved from New Hampshire to Virginia. So we went, 18 picked up my son and brought him to live with us. 19 Ο. Okay. And when -- when was that, if you recall? 20 I would say probably 15 to 18 years ago. 21 Α. 22 Ο. Okay. And what were -- what did you learn 23 about the circumstances that gave rise to you and your wife going there, to picking him up and moving 24 25 him in with the two of you in Virginia?

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		Page 7
1	A. He apparently was having issues with his	
2	roommate, and they were not getting along. There	
3	were physical confrontations, and he needed to be	
4	removed from that situation.	
5	Q. Was he from what you understood, was he	
6	the victim of domestic violence or was he the one	
7	that was accused of engaging in domestic violence?	
8	A. To the best of my understanding and	
9	recollection, he was the victim.	
10	Q. He was the victim. Okay. Do you know if the	
11	person who was the abuser and I assume was the	
12	one he was in a relationship with and living with at	
13	the time?	
14	A. Yes.	
15	Q. And what would that what was that person's	
16	name?	
17	A. I used to know, but I can't remember.	
18	Q. Okay.	
19	A. I don't I don't have a recollection of	
20	that. I'm sorry.	
21	Q. That's okay. All right. Do you think your	
22	wife might remember?	
23	A. Yes.	
24	Q. Okay. Sometimes wives remember things that	
25	husbands may not remember as well, so we'll see if	

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Page 8

1 she knows.

You also discussed with Detective Compton that at some point in time Steven Cozzi, your son, had a serious drinking problem.

5 A. That's correct.

Q. Could you elaborate on that? When did you
become aware of it? And tell us a little bit about
8 that.

9 A. I became aware of it, I would say, when10 Steven came to live with us in Virginia.

11 Q. Okay.

A. I only saw him when he worked in New York City on a couple of occasions, and he didn't appear to be, you know, suffering, you know, from a drinking problem at that time.

16 Q. Okay.

A. But when he came to live with us in Virginia,
I became more aware of the fact that he was drinking
too much.

Q. Okay. And if you could tell us, how did you
become aware of it and how significant of a problem
was it from what you were able to observe?
A. Well, I would -- I would say that it was
noticeable in his, you know -- you know, in his
behavior. You know, he would -- he would, you know,

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		Page
1	be very intoxicated from time to time, and that's	
2	how that's you know, you're a parent. You	
3	know these things.	
4	Q. Okay. All right. Did it affect him in such	
5	a manner that, for example, he was not able to	
6	maintain employment?	
7	A. Oh, no.	
8	Q. Okay.	
9	A. No, no. He worked. He no. It was	
10	never it was never a problem from that	
11	standpoint.	
12	Q. Okay. Were there times when he wouldn't come	
13	back home because when anticipated because of the	
14	drinking?	
15	A. I can't I can't really say with any	
16	certainty about that.	
17	Q. Okay. All right. But would it be fair to	
18	say it was a serious enough problem that when you	
19	were interviewed by Detective Compton, I believe, on	
20	March 21, 2023, you brought it to his attention	
21	that, you know, maybe maybe there was an issue	
22	related to the drinking?	
23	A. Well, in fairness, I was in a very highly	
24	agitated and anxious state	
25	Q. Sure.	

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1 -- when I spoke to the detective, and I at Α. 2 that point was still unaware that Steven had been, 3 you know, murdered. It was my understanding that he 4 was just missing, and so I was attempting to come up 5 with any possible thing that I could say to the 6 detective that might be of any, you know, help 7 whatsoever. But it's also important to know that at 8 that point Steven had been sober for probably ten 9 years.

10 Q. Okay.

A. So, you know, you say -- when you -- when you're a parent and your child has -- you have been told that your child has gone missing and you have police interviewing you and you're trying to come up with anything, any lead that you can possibly give them --

17 Q. Sure.

A. -- you know, that's -- but I -- at that time
I believe I said to the detective that it was very,
very unlikely that this had happened.

21 Q. Okay.

A. That Steven had turned back to drinking. But
I was saying it because I was trying to give them
every possible bit of information that I could.
Q. Sure. Sure. And -- yes. So you -- at the

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Page 11 1 time you knew that he had had ten years, from what 2 you knew, without any alcohol. Is that a fair 3 statement? 4 Α. Yes. He had gotten -- he had gotten involved 5 with Alcoholics Anonymous. He had, you know, 6 straightened his life out. He had gone to law 7 school. He was a practicing attorney. He had, you 8 know -- and he was also a mentor for other people at 9 AA. So he had come, you know, pretty much full 10 circle. Sure. Sure. And you knew this because he 11 0. 12 had -- he would talk to you about it from time to time? 13 14 I knew -- I knew about it because he talked Α. 15 about it. I also knew, you know, through 16 observation. 17 Q. Right. When we would -- whenever we would go out or 18 Α. 19 whenever he would come for dinners or anything that 20 had to do with the family, there was no question he 21 had nothing to do with alcohol. 22 Ο. Okay. And I don't mean to pry, but at these 23 family gatherings, would other people have alcohol 24 and consume alcohol? 25 Α. Yes.

		Page 12
1	Q. Okay. All right.	
2	A. Not in not you know, you're talking	
3	about a glass of wine with dinner.	
4	Q. Sure.	
5	A. Not anybody, you know, abusing alcohol in any	
6	way.	
7	Q. Understood. Not to excess.	
8	A. Exactly.	
9	Q. Okay. All right. Would it be fair to say	
10	when you're speaking with do you recall the name	
11	of the officer you were speaking to?	
12	A. No.	
13	Q. Okay.	
14	A. I was	
15	Q. Would it be fair to say when you were	
16	speaking to law enforcement on March 21st and it's	
17	being investigated as a missing person investigation	
18	that you're being truthful? You're upset, but	
19	you're being truthful and you're exploring any and	
20	all possibilities. Would that be a fair statement?	
21	A. Yes.	
22	Q. Okay. And have you listened to the interview	
23	that you had with law enforcement?	
24	A. Yes, I have.	
25	Q. Okay. All right. And in listening to the	

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Page 13 interview, the things that you say, you know, apart 1 2 from "I was upset" and what have you, I mean, they 3 were still truthful, right? It was you exploring 4 every possible scenario as to what may have happened 5 with your son. 6 Α. Yes. With the caveat, as I have said, that I 7 was very, very upset and probably, you know, not 8 in -- not in full possession of my, you know --9 my -- all my mental faculties. 10 Q. Sure. You know, if that makes sense. 11 Α. 12 And I'm going to suggest to you that Q. Sure. 13 the fact that someone at some point in their life had a struggle with alcohol or drugs and then are 14 15 able to conquer that speaks volumes, as far as I'm 16 concerned, about that person. I mean, I don't think 17 it's a negative thing. Does that make sense? Α. Yeah. 18 19 Okay. All right. You had also mentioned, I Q. 20 believe, to law enforcement that maybe Steven had started a relationship with someone else. Could you 21 22 elaborate on that? 23 Α. Pure speculation. 24 Q. Okay. 25 Α. It goes -- it goes down the same path as my

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Page 14 conversation with the detective about the drinking. 1 2 Ο. Okay. 3 Α. Just trying as a parent to come up with some direction, some sort of an explanation. Just, you 4 5 know -- I'm in a panic. You know, my kid's missing. 6 Right. Right. It doesn't make any sense, Q. 7 right --8 Α. Right. 9 -- that he's not there? Q. 10 Α. Right. Were you living -- you and your wife, 11 Q. Yeah. 12 were you living in Florida at that time? 13 Α. Yes. And how long had you lived in Florida 14 Ο. Okay. at that time? 15 16 Α. A little more than 11 years. 17 Okay. And were you living in Pinellas Q. 18 County? 19 We lived in Hillsborough County. Α. No. 20 Hillsborough County. Okay. And did you move Ο. 21 here in part because your son had moved down to 22 Florida or --23 We moved here when I retired, and Steven Α. No. 24 came with us, because we were all living in Virginia 25 at the time. And Steven came with us.

1 Q. Okay. Okay. And what did you do prior to 2 your retirement?

- 3 A. I was a salesman.
- 4 Q. In what field?

5 A. At the time I retired, I was a representative 6 for a wholesale company that sold heating and 7 air-conditioning equipment.

Q. Okay. All right. The -- you indicated that at some point you learned that it was -- that we were dealing with your son's murder instead of a missing person investigation. Can you elaborate on how that comes about, how you were advised, what you were being told about what happened or didn't

14 happen?

A. Well, several days after I had the interview
with the detective and we were discussing it --

17 Q. Right.

A. -- it was about 4:00 in the morning my phone rang, and it was Michael. And Michael said that I had to come over, that myself and Lois had to come over to his house right away.

22 Q. Okay.

A. So we went over to his house, and apparently
prior to our having been there, the police had been
to his home and had informed him that Steven was

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Page 16 1 dead and that they were -- and they had arrested 2 your client. 3 Ο. Okay. So this is the early morning hours after Tom Kosowski's been arrested? 4 5 Α. Yes. 6 Ο. Okay. And did -- so you were informed by 7 Michael Montgomery, not by law enforcement? 8 Α. No, I was not informed by law enforcement. Ι 9 was informed by Michael. 10 Okay. And beyond -- beyond indicating that Ο. Steven Cozzi, your son, was deceased and that Tom 11 12 Kosowski had been arrested for murdering your son, was anything else shared by Michael Montgomery as 13 14 far as what law enforcement had told him about what 15 happened? Michael -- Michael was in a state of 16 Α. No. 17 complete emotional collapse, as you can imagine. 18 Ο. Right. 19 All we did was try to comfort one another Α. and, you know -- that -- you know, there was no 20 21 substantive discussion that I can remember, anything 22 as to who -- other than, you know, your client had 23 been arrested. Facts to it, no, pertaining -- in 24 fact, to this day I am not fully aware of it. 25 Q. Understood. Understood. You may recall -- I

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Page 17 believe you sat in on the July -- I think it was 1 2 July 11, 2023, hearing involving bond and various 3 matters. I think you testified briefly during that 4 hearing. Do you recall that? 5 Α. No, I did not testify, sir. 6 Ο. Okay. But you sat --7 Α. I was present. I was present in the 8 courtroom. 9 Q. I apologize. 10 I think you're talking about the Arthur Α. hearing. 11 12 That's correct. Okay. Michael Montgomery at 0. 13 that time was asked about whether or not he had 14 checked to see if there was any credit card activity 15 post arrest during the time period leading up to 16 that. Do you recall that? 17 Α. No. Okay. Well, he was, and then I think he 18 Q. 19 indicated the last time he had checked was, like, the previous weekend and there was no activity. 20 21 There hadn't been any activity that he could -- that 22 he could see. This may sound like an odd question, 23 but have you had any contact since March 21, 2023, via phone, email, or any other type of 24 25 communications with your son, Steven Cozzi?

			Page
1	Α.	Oh, do I wish that could be true.	
2	Q.	I understand. I understand.	
3	Α.	No. The answer is no.	
4	Q.	The answer is no.	
5		And had had Steven Cozzi ever talked to	
6	you ab	oout being a lawyer and how he felt about being	
7	a lawy	ver?	
8	Α.	Sure.	
9	Q.	Tell us about that.	
10	Α.	Well, he had good days and bad days, like	
11	everyb	oody else in your profession	
12	Q.	Sure.	
13	Α.	Or in any other professional endeavor. You	
14	know,	that you know, he would he didn't he	
15	didn't	share a lot with me about his day-to-day	
16	work.		
17	Q.	Okay.	
18	Α.	But that was true all the time. He was	
19	Steven	was much closer to my wife, in truth, than he	
20	was to	me.	
21	Q.	Okay. Okay.	
22	Α.	Not that we didn't care about one another,	
23	not th	nat we didn't love one another, but it was a	
24	differ	cent dynamic between him and I.	
25	Q.	Sure. Sure.	

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Page 19 He was more likely -- more likely to bring 1 Α. 2 something that was upsetting him to my wife first, 3 and then she would bring it to me. And, you know, 4 that was the dynamic between the three of us. 5 Ο. Okay. Okay. 6 Α. Prior to -- prior to Michael's entry into the 7 relationship. 8 Q. Okay. And how long had he and Michael been in a relationship? 9 10 I want to say six or seven years. Α. Okay. And how long had he --11 Ο. 12 Counselor, you have to bear in mind that I am Α. 13 not -- not good about a lot of dates. Time -- you know, when you retire, time just sort of seems to go 14 15 along. 16 Ο. Sure. 17 Because you don't look at your watch all the Α. time. You don't have stuff that you have to do. 18 19 All I have -- all I really have to do is make sure I 20 get to the golf course on time. 21 There you go. Okay. Understood. Q. 22 Understood. And time goes by --23 When I say something to you about a time Α. 24 frame, just please understand that it's, you know, 25 to the best of my recollection.

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1 I understand. Was he with Ο. I understand. 2 Michael Montgomery the majority of the time that he 3 was a lawyer? 4 Α. Yes. Yes. I'm pretty sure that him and 5 Michael began their relationship after he graduated 6 from law school. 7 Ο. Okay. Again, this is subject to, as we just talked. 8 Α. 9 Understood. Understood. Another issue that Q. 10 came up on March 21st and it's been discussed from 11 time to time was my understanding that Steven Cozzi 12 also had some problems with anxiety. What do you 13 know about that? 14 I would say that when you use the word Α. "anxiety," you can get a context -- or a connotation 15 from that that's not correct. 16 17 Q. Okay. Steven was -- Steven would be anxious like 18 Α. 19 all the rest of us are anxious, okay, about, you 20 know, maybe what's going on at work or something 21 that's going on in your personal life. Not -- not 22 anxious to the point where he would be under the 23 care of a physician or taking -- as far as I know, 24 he didn't take any sort of antidepressant drugs or 25 anything like that. So normal -- normal

Page 21 run-of-the-mill anxiety, as opposed to clinical kind 1 of depression sort of anxiety, if I'm making myself 2 3 clear here. 4 Ο. Sure. Sure. And I guess my question would 5 be, did you ever observe things that would happen 6 that suggest to you that he was having anxiety? 7 Α. No. 8 Q. Okay. Did he ever tell you, you know, 9 that -- you know, "I'm struggling with anxiety"? 10 Α. No. All right. And it can manifest itself 11 Ο. Okav. 12 in many different ways, but as far as what you saw 13 or noticed, you didn't notice anything of 14 significance; is that fair? 15 Α. That would be fair to say. 16 Ο. Okay. You are aware of the fact that my 17 client has been charged with murdering your son, and 18 there are two phases to a case like this once it 19 goes to trial. One is what's called a 20 guilt/innocence or the guilt phase where a jury 21 would determine whether or not Tom Kosowski is 22 guilty or not guilty of the accusation. The second 23 part is -- and we only get there if there's a guilty 24 verdict -- is what's called a penalty phase. In the 25 penalty phase sometimes family members and friends

Page 22 are asked to provide what's called victim impact 1 2 statements or testimony. Is that something that you 3 have discussed with the prosecutor or had any 4 thoughts about? I have not discussed with the prosecutor 5 Α. 6 anything relating to what happens after your client 7 is found guilty. This penalty phase that you talk 8 about, I will cross that bridge when I come to it. 9 Ο. Understood. Understood. Did the -- in 10 general, not specifically to this case, but in general did you ever have discussions with Steven 11 12 Cozzi about the death penalty and his thoughts about 13 the penalty? 14 I would say that Steven was of two minds --Α. 15 Ο. Okay. -- of the death penalty. I think that he 16 Α. 17 probably thought that in some cases it was certainly justifiable --18 19 Ο. Okay. 20 -- and necessary, and I think in other cases, Α. 21 you know, it would -- it would probably be fairer to 22 not execute someone. 23 Okay. Okay. What about you yourself, do you Q. 24 have strong feelings for or against the death 25 penalty?

Page 23 1 I would say that I'm in a -- I'm in the same Α. 2 Now, understand, Counselor, that now we're camp. 3 talking in general. 4 Ο. In general. I understand. In general. 5 Α. Don't ask me specifically about --No. 6 Ο. I'm asking you generally --7 Α. Okay. 8 Q. -- what -- yeah. 9 I would say I'm of two minds about it also. Α. 10 0. Okay. Okay. To think there are people who, you know, 11 Α. 12 probably deserve to be executed because their crimes are so heinous. And I think there are people that, 13 14 you know, perhaps, you know, life in prison would be 15 a more appropriate, but it's, you know -- it's hypothetical. 16 17 I understand. I understand. I'm not asking Ο. 18 you specifically as to this case. 19 Because you have not discussed the potential 20 impact statement with Mr. Vonderheide yet, what I'm 21 going to propose is that -- there's two different 22 ways it can be done. Usually it's prepared in 23 advance and it's shared with us so that we can 24 review it, or you may be called as a witness. So I 25 would probably ask, if Mr. Vonderheide is okay with

1 that, to reserve in the event that you were called 2 as a witness as a victim impact witness and it was 3 going to be beyond just the statement that's written 4 out, that we could have a limited deposition at that 5 time as it relates to that. Obviously if it's just 6 a statement, then that would not be required. 7 MR. BRUNVAND: Nathan, what are your thoughts 8 on that? 9 Can you hear me, Bjorn? MR. VONDERHEIDE: 10 MR. BRUNVAND: Yes. 11 MR. VONDERHEIDE: I have no problem with 12 that. 13 MR. BRUNVAND: Okay. All right. Very good. 14 Could I just get a minute here? THE WITNESS: 15 MR. BRUNVAND: Yes. 16 THE WITNESS: What did we just decide? 17 MR. VONDERHEIDE: So upon conviction, we'll 18 have a second phase, the penalty phase. I can't 19 really delve now into how it works. You would 20 make a statement, draft it. Post-conviction 21 Mr. Brunvand could have additional questions at a 22 later depo for that purpose, so -- as it relates 23 to what you would say. It's a bit premature now 24 to even discuss victim impact statements in my 25 opinion. But once we get there, they have a right

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Page 25 to talk to the folks what they'll say 1 2 post-conviction. 3 THE WITNESS: Are you okay with this? MR. VONDERHEIDE: 4 Yes. 5 THE WITNESS: All right. Then. I'm okay with it. 6 7 BY MR. BRUNVAND: 8 Q. Since you have not had that discussion with 9 Mr. Vonderheide and thought through all that, it 10 just makes more sense to do that at a later stage, 11 so --12 Α. Okay. 13 Ο. All right. Very good. 14 MR. BRUNVAND: I don't have any other 15 questions. 16 Willengy, do you have any questions? 17 MS. RAMOS: I don't have any questions. 18 Thank you. 19 MR. BRUNVAND: All right. 20 I don't have any questions MR. VONDERHEIDE: 21 either. 22 MR. BRUNVAND: All right. Mr. Cozzi, you can 23 request to read the transcript if this is 24 transcribed or you can waive the reading of the 25 transcript. You would be able to view the

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transcript regardless before you would ever 1 2 testify. If you want to read it, that means you 3 will provide an email address or contact 4 information to the court reporter so that the 5 court reporter can then send it to you. You can't 6 change it, but you can write in the back, you 7 know, if there's anything you disagree with. So 8 it's up to you if you want to read or waive or if you want to consult with Mr. Vonderheide about it, 9 10 you may as well. 11 THE WITNESS: I think I'll consult with him. 12 MR. BRUNVAND: Okay. Why don't I -- I'm 13 going to go ahead and turn off the recording, and 14 then I'll let you guys consult. You can mute 15 yourself if you want to mute yourself during your consulting with Mr. Vonderheide. 16 17 (Discussion off the record.) 18 MR. VONDERHEIDE: So he'll waive. 19 (At 10:08 a.m., no further questions were 20 propounded to this witness.) 21 22 23 24 25

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		Page	27
1	CERTIFICATE OF OATH		
2			
3	STATE OF FLORIDA		
4	COUNTY OF PINELLAS		
5			
6	I, Tami Cline, Registered Merit Reporter,		
7	Certified Realtime Reporter, and Notary Public in		
8	and for the State of Florida at large, hereby		
9	certify that GEORGE COZZI virtually appeared before		
10	me on the 2nd day of August, 2024, was duly sworn,		
11	and produced a Florida driver's license as		
12	identification.		
13	WITNESS my hand this December 16, 2024.		
14			
15			
16	DIC.		
17			
18			
19	Janie Cline		
20	Tami Cline, RMR, CRR		
21	Notary Public - State of Florida		
22	My Commission No. HH285917		
23	My Commission Expires: May 19, 2026		
24			
25			

		Page	28
1	CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER		
2	STATE OF FLORIDA		
3	COUNTY OF PINELLAS		
4	I, Tami Cline, Registered Merit Reporter,		
5	Certified Realtime Reporter, Florida Professional		
6	Reporter, do hereby certify that I was authorized to		
7	and did stenographically report the deposition of		
8	GEORGE COZZI; that a review of the transcript was		
9	not requested; and that the foregoing transcript is		
10	a true and complete record of my stenographic notes.		
11	I further certify that I am not a relative,		
12	employee, attorney or counsel for any of the		
13	parties, nor am I a relative or employee of any of		
14	the parties' attorneys or counsel connected with the		
15	action, nor am I financially interested in the		
16	outcome of the action.		
17	Dated this December 16, 2024.		
18			
19			
20			
21			
22	- Jane Cline		
23	Tami Cline, RMR, CRR		
24			
25			