

Hello, my name is Drew Culberth. Thank you for giving me the chance to speak to you today in support of Caleb Stegall.

Before explaining how my family came to know Caleb a little bit of my history is necessary. In January of 2010 there was a large earthquake in Haiti. I went to Haiti in response to an overwhelming need as a result. A group of 10 of us went to assist in relocating children who had no parents. We picked up 33 children from two separate orphanages and were in the process of moving them to a closed down resort hotel in the Dominican Republic. This hotel was being renovated by a second team awaiting the arrival of the children. After spending several days meeting with government officials and gathering paperwork we made our way to the Haitian/Dominican Republic border. We were told we didn't have all of the necessary paperwork, the exact opposite of what we had been told earlier that day, and we would not be able to cross. We stayed the night at the border and the next day we were escorted back to Port-au-Prince. We were taken back to the same building we were at the day before. The same building that housed the officials that told us we had what we needed and to go ahead to the border. At one point we were led to believe that the whole ordeal was taken care of and we were going to be released and sent on our way with the children. Shortly after that UNICEF entered the picture and things took a dramatic turn. In an attempt to keep this brief I will conclude this part of the story by just saying we were formally arrested and charged with 33 counts kidnapping and child trafficking. Many people have characterized this as an event where 10 Americans acted rashly and made terrible mistakes. This is actually a story of 10 people who were where God wanted them, when God wanted them there, doing what God wanted them to do.

This was the first time in my life that I was ever in need of a lawyer. My views on lawyers were largely based on TV shows, movies and the few high profile cases that I had seen on the news. With this being said I had always been under the assumption that all lawyers were arrogant and out for personal gain. I mean no offense to any lawyers that are here today. As my case progressed it did nothing to change my views. Our first lawyer told us he was going to work for us for free because he knew we were doing the right thing. He sat there as we were being questioned by the judge and never said anything to us or the judge. We were later told that the interpreter was telling the judge things that were totally different than what we were saying. Even going so far as admitting guilt for a couple members of the team. Our lawyer did nothing to stop this. In his dealings with our families here in the states he started asking for money. Every time he spoke to them the cost of our release was getting higher and higher. It was clear that he was asking for bribe money and eventually he was fired. Our next lawyer turned out to not be a lawyer and ran off with \$30,000 that our families sent him. Our third lawyer was preoccupied with fame and it seems as though his motivating factor was getting to meet Oprah Winfrey. These were all Haitian lawyers and at the time I didn't even know that our families were looking for lawyers here in America.

The first time I hear Caleb Stegall's name it was written on a small note passed from the women's cell to ours through a crack in an adjoining door. Part of the time we were in jail the women had a cell phone and were able to send and receive a few texts. We were informed that Caleb would be working for our release on the US side. He took on my brother-in-law Paul, nephew Silas, good friend Steve and me as clients. I don't know what all Caleb did but I do know that it was shortly after he came into the picture that things started happening. I haven't spent much time thinking about his actions. What I have spent a lot of time thinking about were

his motives. What would cause a man, a lawyer nonetheless, to come to our aid at this time? My first thought was money. Then I realized the joke was on him because none of us had any. In conversations with my wife and sister, who did most of the talking with Caleb, I have since found out that he never asked for nor expected any kind of financial return for his services. My second thought was political gain. Perhaps we were just a stepping stone to get him to bigger and better places. This thought was quickly dismissed because at the time it seemed that most people of influence were distancing themselves from us. The secretary of state at the time stated that we were “a group of Americans that took matters into our own hands” and through some of her comments seemed to question our motives in what we were doing. The media had been reporting numerous lies about what we were doing and our case in general. The local authorities had charged us with kidnapping and child trafficking. There were even reports that we had taken the children in order to harvest and sell their organs. Caleb had much more to lose by siding with us than he had to gain. Since we have been back he has never asked us to do anything for him. Even today I am not here because he asked me to come.

After finally meeting Caleb and spending some time with him after our return I finally found out why he did what he did. He simply did it because it was right. He saw people in need that were being wronged and he used his knowledge and abilities to help. I know that I will never be able to repay him not only for what he did for the four of us in Haiti but for what he did for our families. He seemed to bring peace to a chaotic scene and helped put my family at ease and relieve my wife and sister of many burdens while they were dealing with this whole situation.

I believe this is what makes Caleb an excellent choice for the Kansas Court of Appeals. From my experiences I have found that he is not motivated by fame or money. I truly believe

that he is motivated by doing what is right and he is not afraid to stand up for those who have been wronged and seek justice for them.