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## **Statement regarding authenticity of "Breaking News"**

I am writing you in response to your questions regarding "Breaking News," and your reports of fan comments and concerns. There is nothing more important to the Estate than Michael's music, his legacy and his fans. I hope the information below is helpful and responsive to your concerns.

As the Michael album was being put together, it was decided to bring Teddy Riley on board to work on several songs, including "Breaking News," a song Michael recorded with Eddie Cascio and James Porte in late 2007 while living at the Cascio family home with his children. Riley produced and submitted "Breaking News" to Sony for inclusion on the album. At that time, no one ever mentioned that the vocals we heard on the Cascio songs, which were basically in demo format, might not be Michael. It was known, however, that the background vocals were a combination of Michael and James Porte.

After the tracks were submitted to Sony, three of these Cascio songs were selected to be on the album, and "Breaking News" was one of the three. The day after the submission and selection of the album tracks, for the very first time, the authenticity of Michael's vocals on the Cascio tracks was questioned.

Because of these questions, I was immediately asked by co-Executors John Branca and John McClain to conduct an investigation regarding the authenticity of the lead vocals on the Cascio tracks.

Six of Michael's former producers and engineers who had worked with Michael over the past 30 years – Bruce Swedien, Matt Forger, Stewart Brawley, Michael Prince, Dr. Freeze and Teddy Riley – were all invited to a listening session to hear the raw vocals of the Cascio tracks in question. All of these persons listened to the a cappella versions of the vocals on the Cascio tracks being considered for inclusion on the album, so they could give an opinion as to whether or not the lead vocals were sung by Michael. They all confirmed that the vocal was definitely Michael.

Michael's musical director and piano player on many of his records over a 20-year period, Greg Phillinganes, played on a Cascio track being produced for the album, and said the voice was definitely Michael's. Dorian Holley, who was Michael's vocal director for his solo tours for 20 plus years (including the O2 Concert Tour) and is seen in the This Is It film, listened to the Cascio tracks and told me the lead vocal was Michael Jackson.

These are all engineers, producers and musicians who worked on tours and/or in the studio with Michael when he was recording *Bad*, *Thriller*, *Off The Wall*, *Dangerous*, *Invincible*, *HIStory* and *Blood On The Dance Floor*, and they all reconfirmed their belief that the lead vocals were Michael's voice on the Cascio tracks.

The Estate then retained one of the best-known forensic musicologists in the nation to listen to the vocals without any instrumental accompaniment ("a cappella"), and to compare them with a cappella vocals from previous Michael songs. This expert performed waveform analysis, an objective scientific test used to determine audio authenticity, on the Cascio tracks, as well as previously released tracks with Michael's voice, and reported that ALL of the lead vocals analyzed (which included Cascio tracks) were the voice of Michael Jackson.

Sony Music conducted their own investigation by hiring yet a second well-respected forensic musicologist who also compared the a cappella lead vocals from Cascio tracks against previously released vocals of Michael's, and found that it was Michael's voice on all sets of the raw vocals. The Cascio tracks were also played for two very prominent persons in the music industry who played crucial roles in Michael's career. Both of these individuals believed that the lead vocals were Michael's.

Just to be absolutely certain, I also contacted Jason Malachi, a young singer who some persons had wrongfully alleged was a "soundalike" singer that was hired to sing on the Cascio tracks, and I confirmed that he had no involvement with this project whatsoever.

Sony decided that, given the overwhelming objective evidence resulting from the exhaustive investigations outlined above, they wanted to release a record that included three of the Cascio-Porte tracks – because they believed, without reservation, that the lead vocal on all of those tracks were sung by Michael Jackson.

Although there still seem to be concerns being expressed in some quarters about the authenticity of the lead vocals, notwithstanding the opinion of those who worked with Michael, and two independent forensic analysts, ultimately, Michael's fans will be the judges of these songs, as they always are. We take all fan comments very seriously, and as I'd stated above, there is nothing more important to the Estate than Michael's music, his legacy and his fans.

Michael's fans are extraordinary in their quest for accuracy and their passions to raise their voices in a search for truth! We join with them in our care and concern for Michael. We are continuing to follow up with those who have worked in the studio or on tours with Michael, and if any new information comes to light, we will keep you and the fans advised.

Thanks,

Howard

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Source: Email from Howard Weitzman, November 11, 2010, issued contacts including Sony Music, MJ Online Team, media and fans.

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