Electronically Filed 08/15/2016 10:48:51 AM

CLERK OF THE COURT

804 South Sixth Street Las Vegas, Nevada 89101 Telephone: (702) 383-1006 Facsimile: (702) 383-8118 e mail: johngwatkins@hotmail.com

JOHN G. WATKINS, ESQ.

ELLEN J. BEZIAN, ESQ, Nevada Bar No. 6225 804 South Sixth Street Las Vegas, Nevada 89101 (702) 471-7741

Facsimile: (702) 383-8118

Electronically Filed Aug 22 2016 08:47 a.m. Tracie K. Lindeman Clerk of Supreme Court

WILLIAMS, JESSICA,

Petitioner.

VS.

3

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

. 15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF **CORRECTIONS (NDOC);** JO GENTRY, WARDEN, (JEAN CONSERVATION CAMP),

Respondent,

STATE OF NEVADA,

Real Party in Interest.

Case No.: A-16-735072-W

Dept. No.: XXIV

NOTICE OF APPEAL

DISTRICT COURT

CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Petitioner JESSICA WILLIAMS appeals to the Supreme Court of Nevada, the "ORDER DENYING PETITIONER'S WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS (POST CONVICTION)¹" entered in the Eighth Judicial District Court of the State of Nevada in and for the County of Clark, Department

Attached as Exhibit.

No. 24 on August 5, 2016 (Notice Of Entry Of Order on August 11, 2016). 2 Ellen J. Bezian, Esq. /s/ John G. Watkins, Esq. 3 ELLEN J. BEZIAN, ESQ. JOHN G. WATKINS, ESQ. 4 Nevada Bar No. 1574 Nevada Bar No. 6225 804 South Sixth Street 804 South Sixth Street 5 Las Vegas, Nevada 89101 Las Vegas, Nevada 89101 Telephone: (702) 471-7741 Telephone: (702) 383-1006 Facsimile: (702) 383-8118 Facsimile: (702) 383-8118 7 e mail: johngwatkins@hotmail.com 8 9 **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE BY MAIL** 10 I, Sheila Varga, hereby certify pursuant to N.R.A.P. 3(d)(1), that on this 14th 11 day of August, 2016 I mailed a true and correct copy of the foregoing NOTICE OF 12 13 APPEAL addressed to: 14 Nevada Department Of Corrections 15 Jo Gentry, Warden 16 Jean Conversation Camp 3 Prison Road 17 PO Box 19859 18 Jean, Nevada 89019 19 Adam Laxalt, Attorney General 20 Dennis C. Wilson, Esq. 21 555 East Washington # 3900 Las Vegas, Nevada 89101 22 23 Jessica Williams # 68716 Jean Conservation Camp Box 19859 . 25 Jean, Nevada 89019 26 /s/ Sheila Varga 27 28 Sheila Varga an employee of John G. Watkins, Esq.

Electronically Filed 08/11/2016

NEOJ 1

2

3

4

5 6 JESSICA WILLIAMS,

VS.

CONSERVATION CAMP),

STATE OF NEVADA,

7

8

9

10 11

12

13

14 15

16 17

18

19

20

21 22

23

24

25 26

27

28

DISTRICT COURT CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA

Petitioner,

Case No: A-16-735072-W

Dept. No: XXIV

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS (NDOC); JO GENTRY, WARDEN, (JEAN

Respondent,

Real Party in Interest

NOTICE OF ENTRY OF ORDER

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on August 5, 2016, the court entered a decision or order in this matter, a true and correct copy of which is attached to this notice.

You may appeal to the Supreme Court from the decision or order of this court. If you wish to appeal, you must file a notice of appeal with the clerk of this court within thirty-three (33) days after the date this notice is mailed to you. This notice was mailed on August 11, 2016.

STEVEN D. GRIERSON, CLERK OF THE COURT

/s/ Chaunte Pleasant

Chaunte Pleasant, Deputy Clerk

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that on this 11 day of August 2016. I placed a copy of this Notice of Entry in:

☑ The bin(s) located in the Regional Justice Center of: Clark County District Attorney's Office Attorney General's Office - Appellate Division☐ The United States mail addressed as follows:

Jessica Williams # 68716 P.O. Box 19859 Jean, NV 89019 John G. Watkins, Esq. 804 South Sixth Street Las Vegas, NV 89101

2 Jean, NV 89

/s/ Chaunte Pleasant

Chaunte Pleasant, Deputy Clerk

-2-

23

24

25

26

27

28

ORDR

VS.

DISTRICT COURT
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA

CLERK OF THE COURT

CASE NO.

A-16-735072-W

DEPT NO. 24

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS (NDOC); JO GENTRY, WARDEN, (JEAN CONSERVATION CAMP), Respondent,

Petitioner,

WILLIAMS, JESSICA,

STATE OF NEVADA,

Real Party in Interest.

ORDER DENYING PETITIONER'S WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS (POST CONVICTION)

Petitioner asks this Court to order that Petitioner is entitled to have NRS 209.4465 Statutory Credits deducted from her minimum sentences as well as her maximum sentences.¹

Petitioner argues that "[t]he law until June 24, 2015 precluded NRS Chapter 209 'good time' credits being deducted from a person's minimum sentence. See *Breault v. State*, 116 Nev. 311, 314, 996 P. 2d 888, 889 (2000) ("... credits earned to reduce his sentence pursuant to NRS Chapter 209 may only reduce the maximum term.")²

Petitioner contends that the law has been changed by an unpublished Nevada Supreme Court disposition, *Vonseydewitz vs. Robert LeGrand*³ and that, as a result, the Nevada Department of Corrections (hereafter NDOC) must apply NRS Chapter 209 Credits to Petitioner's minimum sentences as well as her maximum sentences.⁴

The State opposes this petition contending that Petitioner's reliance upon Vonseydewitz is

⁴ Petition, p. 9:2-6.

¹ Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus (Post Conviction) (hereafter, "Petition"), filed April 14, 2016, p. 9:10-12.

² Petition, p. 8:1-4. Emphasis supplied by petitioner.

³ Vonseydewitz vs. LeGrand, "Order of Reversal and Remand", No 66159 (June 24, 2015); En banc reconsideration denied, February 19, 2016.

misplaced because it is an unpublished, three-judge panel decision with no value as a legal precedent.⁵ The state further points out that the analysis and reasoning in *Vonseydewitz* directly contradicts another earlier unpublished, three-judge panel decision, decided the year before *Vonseydewitz*, which reached the opposite conclusion – i.e. no application of credits to minimum term sentences — under similar legal circumstances.⁶ None of the justices on the *Vonseydewitz* panel were also on the *Kille* panel.

This Court concludes *Vonseydewitz* has not, in fact, changed the law and there is, therefore, no error in the way that Petitioner's incarceration times have been calculated. For that reason, the petition is denied.

ANALYSIS

The unpublished dispositions in *Kille* and *Vonseydewitz* are of no assistance to the Court in its analysis other than to provide some insight into what three of our seven Supreme Court Justices thought of the facts and circumstances presented in *Kille* and what three <u>other</u> members of the Court thought of the facts and circumstances in *Vonseydewitz*. Since both cases reached opposite results under legal circumstances which, on their face, appear to be comparable, little is gained from reviewing either of these cases. The fact that the cases were not chosen for publication only underscores their lack of value in considering <u>this</u> case.⁷

The statutes in question all have one thing in common: they are legislative enactments. As such, it is crucially important to determine what the legislative intent was when the statues were enacted. Our goal is not to evaluate whether we agree or disagree with their intent, nor is it for those of us in the judiciary to second-guess the wisdom of the legislature, regardless of how strongly we may feel about the collective wisdom or lack thereof. Instead, our purpose in reviewing a statute must be to consider what the legislature's goals and purposes were; what they were trying to accomplish, not based upon what we might later substitute as our own rationale, but based upon what was in the contemplation of the legislators at the time of enactment.

⁵ Response to Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus (hereafter, "Response"), filed 6/28/16, p. 2:11-13. ⁶ Response, p. 2:13-17).

⁷ "An unpublished disposition, while publically available, does not establish mandatory precedent" NRAP 36(c)(2).

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

It is understood that the statutes that were in effect at the time the offense was committed, govern.8

Petitioner was convicted and sentenced under NRS 484.3795, which stated that a person who violated the statute was "guilty of a category B felony and shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison for a minimum term of not less than 2 years and a maximum term of not more than 20 years." (Emphasis added.)9

The Vonseydewitz Court said that "...the lack of reference to parole eligibility in a minimummaximum statute suggests that the minimum term imposed was not the minimum term that must be served before an offender was eligible for parole."10 This Court disagrees.

The legislative intent could not be more clearly expressed: the minimum term that a person shall serve when convicted under NRS 484.3795 is two years. The Petitioner offers nothing to suggest that a sentencing judge would be permitted to impose a minimum sentence of anything less than two years. In this case, the sentencing Judge's compliance with the statute is clear and the Judgment of Conviction lacks no clarity in sentencing the Petitioner to a "MAXIMUM term of NINETY-SIX (96) MONTHS with a MINIMUM parole eligibility of THIRTY-SIX (36) MONTHS" for Count I through Count VI.

In considering the application of NRS 209.4465(7) and NRS 213.120(2) relevant to Petitioner's conviction, this Court concludes that these statutes are consistent and may be interpreted in a manner which does not create a conflict.

At the time of Petitioner's offense in 2000, NRS 209.4465(7) provided that:

Credits earned pursuant to this section:

- (a) Must be deducted from the maximum term imposed by the sentence; and
- (b) Apply to eligibility for parole unless the offender was sentenced pursuant to a statute which specifies a minimum sentence that must be served before a person becomes eligible for parole.

⁸ Weaver v. Graham, 450 U.S. 24, 31-33 (1981).

⁹ It is true that there are some statues which *emphasize* or state somewhat differently that a certain number of years must be served before a person becomes eligible for parole, e.g. NRS 200.030(4)(b)(2); NRS 200.366(2)(a)(2) but, in terms of analyzing legislative intent, the difference in phraseology does not, in this court's opinion, reflect any meaningful difference.

¹⁰ Vonseydewitz, p. 4.

NRS 213.120(2) provided, in part, that:

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

24

25

26

"a prisoner who was sentenced to prison for a crime committed on or after July 1, 1995, may be paroled when he has served the minimum term to imprisonment imposed by the Court. Any credits earned to reduce his sentence pursuant to chapter 209 of NRS while the prisoner serves the minimum term of imprisonment may reduce only the maximum term of imprisonment imposed and must not reduce the minimum term of imprisonment."

It is this Court's opinion that the legislature's expression of "minimum term" means "minimum term" and that, by definition, a "minimum term" is not to be further diminished by credits that would reduce the minimum term. Indeed, a "minimum term" is, by its nature, irreducible: it is the minimum term.

Are we to conclude that when the legislature enacts a statute which states a convicted person must serve a minimum term, and implements a provision for good-time credits which excludes application toward minimum sentences, the legislature envisioned anything other than the convicted person serving their required minimum term in prison? To attribute that kind of subliminal thinking to the legislature would require jumping through imaginary hoops that depart from the trajectory of logic and reason.

Accordingly, the petition for habeas corpus is denied.

DATED: August 5, 2016

TT, District Judge

I hereby certify that on or about the date filed, a copy of this Order was served upon the parties as follows:

JOHN G. WATKINS, ESQ DENNISC. WILSON

GELA MCBRYDE Judicial Executive Assistant



EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT Clark County, Nevada

Jim Crockett District Court Judge

Department 24 ph: 702-671-0591 fax: 702-671-0598

TO: JOHN G. WATKINS, ESQ. @ 702-383-8118 TO: DENNIS C. WILSON, ESQ. @ 702-486-3768 FROM: ANGELA MCBRIDE, JEA – DC24 RE: Williams v. NDOC A-16-735072-W DATE: August 5, 2015

See attached order re; Williams v. NDOC filed this date.

JOHN G. WATKINS, ESQ. 804 South Sixth Street 1 Las Vegas, Nevada 89101 Telephone: (702) 383-1006 Facsimile: (702) 383-8118 **CLERK OF THE COURT** 2 e mail: iohngwatkins@hotmail.com 3 ELLEN J. BEZIAN, ESQ, 4 Nevada Bar No. 6225 5 804 South Sixth Street Las Vegas, Nevada 89101 6 (702) 471-7741 Facsimile: (702) 383-8118 7 **DISTRICT COURT** 8 **CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA** 9 WILLIAMS, JESSICA, 10 Petitioner, VS. 11 Case No.: **A-16-735072-W** 12 Dept. No.: XXIV NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF 13 **CORRECTIONS (NDOC)**; JO GENTRY, WARDEN, 14 (JEAN CONSERVATION CAMP), 15 Respondent, 16 STATE OF NEVADA, 17 Real Party in Interest. 18 19 **CASE APPEAL STATEMENT** 20 21 1. Name of appellant filing this case appeal statement. 22 Jessica Williams 23 Identify the judge issuing the decision, judgment or order appealed from: 2. 24 25 Honorable Judge Jim Crockett 26 Identify all parties to the proceedings in the district court (the use of et al. 3. 27 28

1	to denote parties is prohibited):							
2								
3	Jessica Williams							
4		Warden Jo Gentry						
5		State of Nevada						
6		State of Nevada						
7 8	4. Identify all parties involved in this appeal (the use of et al. to denote partie is prohibited:							
9		Jessica Williams						
10		Warden Jo Gentry						
11								
12		State of Nevada						
13	5.	Set forth the name, law firm, address and telephone number of all counsel						
14	on appeal and identify the party or parties whom they represent:							
15		John G. Watkins, Esq. Ellen J. Bezian, Esq.						
16		Nevada Bar No. 1574 Nevada Bar No. 6225						
17		804 South Sixth Street 804 South Sixth Street Las Vegas, Nevada 89101 Las Vegas, Nevada 89101						
18		Telephone: (702) 383-1006 Telephone: (702) 472-7741						
19		Facsimile: (702) 383-8118 Facsimile: (702) 383-8118						
20		E mail: johngwatkins@hotmail.com						
21		Adam Laxalt, Attorney General						
22		(Dennis C. Wilson, Esq.)						
23		555 East Washington # 3900 Las Vegas, Nevada 89101						
24								
25	6.	Indicate whether appellant was represented by appointed or retained counsel in the district court:						
26		in the district court.						
27		Pro Bono: John G. Watkins, Esq.; Ellen J. Bezian, Esq.						
28								

1 7. Indicate whether appellant was represented by appointed or retained counsel 2 in the district court: 3 Pro Bono: John G. Watkins, Esq.; Ellen J. Bezian, Esq. 4 8. Indicate whether appellant was granted leave to proceed in forma pauperis, 5 and the date of entry of the district court order granting such leave: 6 7 Jessica Williams is applying for *in forma pauperis* status. 8 Indicate the date the proceedings commenced in the district court (e.g. date 9. 9 of complaint, indictment, information or petition was filed): 10 Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus (Post Conviction) 11 filed April 14, 2016 requesting an Order that Jessica Williams is entitled to have NRS 209.4465 Statutory 12 Credits deducted from her minimum sentences as well 13 as her maximum sentences. 14 10. Whether the case has previously been the subject of an appeal to or original 15 writ proceeding in the Supreme Court or Court of Appeals: 16 Yes, the State Supreme Court: No. 37785; No. 41109. 17 18 DATED this 15th day of August, 2016. 19 /s/ John G. Watkins, Esq. /s/ Ellen J. Bezian, Esq. 20 21 John G. Watkins, Esq. Ellen J. Bezian, Esq. Counsel for Petitioner Counsel for Petitioner 22 23 24 25 26 27 28

CERTIFICATI	COESE	DVICE	$\mathbf{p}\mathbf{v}$	MATI
CERTIFICATI	TOL OF	KVICE	DI	WIALL

I, Sheila Varga, hereby certify that on this 15th day of August, 2016 I mailed a true and correct copy of the foregoing CASE APPEAL STATEMENT addressed to:

Nevada Department Of Corrections

Jo Gentry, Warden

Jean Conversation Camp

3 Prison Road

PO Box 19859

Jean, Nevada 89019

Adam Laxalt, Attorney General Dennis C. Wilson, Esq. 555 East Washington # 3900 Las Vegas, Nevada 89101

> Jessica Williams # 68716 Jean Conservation Camp Box 19859 Jean, Nevada 89019

> > /s/ Sheila Varga

Sheila Varga an employee of John G. Watkins, Esq.

DEPARTMENT **24**

CASE SUMMARY CASE NO. A-16-735072-W

Jessica Williams, Plaintiff(s)

VS.

Nevada Department of Corrections, Defendant(s)

Location: Department 24
Judicial Officer: Crockett, Jim
Filed on: 04/14/2016

Case Number History:

Cross-Reference Case A735072

Number:

Defendant's Scope ID #: 1534178

CASE INFORMATION

Case Type: Writ of Habeas Corpus

Case Flags: Appealed to Supreme Court

DATE CASE ASSIGNMENT

Current Case Assignment

Case Number Court Date Assigned Judicial Officer A-16-735072-W Department 24 04/25/2016 Crockett, Jim

PARTY INFORMATION

Plaintiff Williams, Jessica Lead Attorneys
Watkins, John

Watkins, John G.
Retained
7023831006(W)

Defendant Gentry, Jo Wilson, Dennis C.

Retained 7024863126(W)

Nevada Department of Corrections

Adams, Danae

Retained 7024554727(W)

DATE **EVENTS & ORDERS OF THE COURT** INDEX 04/14/2016 Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus Filed by: Plaintiff Williams, Jessica Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus (Post Conviction) 04/15/2016 Notice of Hearing Filed By: Plaintiff Williams, Jessica Notice of Hearing 04/25/2016 Minute Order (8:00 AM) (Judicial Officer: Bell, Linda Marie) Minute Order Re: Recusal 04/25/2016 Notice of Department Reassignment 05/11/2016 Countermotion Filed By: Defendant Nevada Department of Corrections Response and Countermotion to Vacate/Continue Hearing and Issue Order Directing Response 05/16/2016 Motion

DEPARTMENT 24

CASE SUMMARY CASE No. A-16-735072-W

	CASE 110. A-10-/350/2-11	1
	Filed By: Plaintiff Williams, Jessica Motion To Amend Verification	
05/17/2016	Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus (9:00 AM) (Judicial Officer: Crockett, Jim) 05/17/2016, 07/21/2016 Events: 04/14/2016 Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus Petitioner Jessica Williams' Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus	
05/17/2016	Response and Countermotion (9:00 AM) (Judicial Officer: Crockett, Jim) Response and Countermotion to Vacate/Continue Hearing and Issue Order Directing Response	
05/17/2016	All Pending Motions (9:00 AM) (Judicial Officer: Crockett, Jim)	
05/17/2016	Media Request and Order Media Request And Order Alllowing Camera Access To Court Proceedings.	
06/28/2016	Response Filed by: Defendant Gentry, Jo Response to Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus	
07/08/2016	Reply Filed by: Plaintiff Williams, Jessica Petitioner's Reply To The State's Response To Petition For Writ Of Habeas Corpus	
08/05/2016	Order Denying Order Denying Petitioner's Writ of Habeas Corpus (Post Conviction)	
08/08/2016	Notice of Appeal Filed By: Plaintiff Williams, Jessica Notice Of Appeal	
08/08/2016	Case Appeal Statement Filed By: Plaintiff Williams, Jessica Case Appeal Statement	
08/11/2016	Notice of Entry of Order	
08/15/2016	Notice of Appeal Filed By: Plaintiff Williams, Jessica Notice of Appeal	
08/15/2016	Case Appeal Statement Filed By: Plaintiff Williams, Jessica Case Appeal Statement	
DATE	FINANCIAL INFORMATION	_
	Plaintiff Williams, Jessica Total Charges Total Payments and Credits Balance Due as of 8/17/2016	71.00 48.00 23.00

DISTRICT COURT CIVIL COVER SHEET

County, Nevada

A-16-735072W

	Case No. (Assigned by Clerk)	x Office)
l. Party Information (provide both ho	me and mailing addresses if different)	
Plaintiff(s) (name/address/phone):	Jessica	Defendant(s) (narne/address/phone): THE STATE of NEVAL
Attorney (name/address/phone): John & WA	-Kin	Attorney (name/address/phone):
204 South sixth	Street	
LV NV 8910	/	
(701) 383-1006		
1. Nature of Controversy (please so		below)
Civil Case Filing Types		
Real Property		Torts
Landlord/Tenant	Negligence	Other Torts
Unlawful Detainer	Auto	Product Liability
Other Landlord/Tenant	Premises Liability	Intentional Misconduct A-16-735072 W
Title to Property	Other Negligence	CC8
Judicial Foreclosure	Malpractice	Insurance Tort Civil Cover Sheet
Other Title to Property	Medical/Dental	Other Tort 4639411
Other Real Property	Legal	
Condemnation/Eminent Domain	Accounting	
Other Real Property	Other Malpractice	1 3 1 1 1 2 1 4
Probate Probate (select case type and estate value)	Construction Defect & Cont Construction Defect	ract Judicial Review/Appeal Judicial Review
Summary Administration	Chapter 40	Foreclosure Mediation Case
General Administration	Other Construction Defect	Petition to Seal Records
Special Administration	Contract Case	Mental Competency
Set Aside	Uniform Commercial Code	Nevada State Agency Appeal
Trust/Conservatorship	Building and Construction	Department of Motor Vehicle
Other Probate	Insurance Carrier	Worker's Compensation
Estate Value	Commercial Instrument	Other Nevada State Agency
Over \$200,000	Collection of Accounts	Appeal Other
Between \$100,000 and \$200,000	Employment Contract	Appeal from Lower Court
Under \$100,000 or Unknown	Other Contract	Officer Judicial Review/Appeal
Under \$2,500		
Civi	Writ	Other Civil Filing
Civil Writ		Other Civil Filing
Writ of Habeas Corpus	Writ of Prohibition	Compromise of Minor's Claim
Writ of Mandamus	Other Civil Writ	Foreign Judgment
Writ of Quo Warrant		Other Eivil Matters
	ourt filings should be filed using th	1 = 2 / /

See other side for family-related case filings.

Signature of initiating party or representative

Date

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

1

2

3

ORDR

DISTRICT COURT CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA

CASE NO.

DEPT NO.

CLERK OF THE COURT

A-16-735072-W

WILLIAMS, JESSICA, Petitioner,

vs.

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS (NDOC); JO GENTRY, WARDEN, (JEAN CONSERVATION CAMP), Respondent,

STATE OF NEVADA, Real Party in Interest.

ORDER DENYING PETITIONER'S WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS (POST CONVICTION)

Petitioner asks this Court to order that Petitioner is entitled to have NRS 209.4465 Statutory Credits deducted from her minimum sentences as well as her maximum sentences.¹

Petitioner argues that "[t]he law until June 24, 2015 precluded NRS Chapter 209 'good time' credits being deducted from a person's minimum sentence. See *Breault v. State*, 116 Nev. 311, 314, 996 P. 2d 888, 889 (2000) ("... credits earned to reduce his sentence pursuant to NRS Chapter 209 may only reduce the maximum term.")²

Petitioner contends that the law has been changed by an unpublished Nevada Supreme Court disposition, *Vonseydewitz vs. Robert LeGrand*³ and that, as a result, the Nevada Department of Corrections (hereafter NDOC) must apply NRS Chapter 209 Credits to Petitioner's minimum sentences as well as her maximum sentences.⁴

The State opposes this petition contending that Petitioner's reliance upon Vonseydewitz is

⁴ Petition, p. 9:2-6.

¹ Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus (Post Conviction) (hereafter, "Petition"), filed April 14, 2016, p. 9:10-12.
² Petition, p. 8:1-4. Emphasis supplied by petitioner,

³ Vonseydewitz vs. LeGrand, "Order of Reversal and Remand", No 66159 (June 24, 2015); En banc reconsideration denied, February 19, 2016.

misplaced because it is an unpublished, three-judge panel decision with no value as a legal precedent.⁵ The state further points out that the analysis and reasoning in *Vonseydewitz* directly contradicts another earlier unpublished, three-judge panel decision, decided the year before *Vonseydewitz*, which reached the opposite conclusion – i.e. no application of credits to minimum term sentences — under similar legal circumstances.⁶ None of the justices on the *Vonseydewitz* panel were also on the *Kille* panel.

This Court concludes *Vonseydewitz* has not, in fact, changed the law and there is, therefore, no error in the way that Petitioner's incarceration times have been calculated. For that reason, the petition is denied.

ANALYSIS

The unpublished dispositions in *Kille* and *Vonseydewitz* are of no assistance to the Court in its analysis other than to provide some insight into what three of our seven Supreme Court Justices thought of the facts and circumstances presented in *Kille* and what three <u>other</u> members of the Court thought of the facts and circumstances in *Vonseydewitz*. Since both cases reached opposite results under legal circumstances which, on their face, appear to be comparable, little is gained from reviewing either of these cases. The fact that the cases were not chosen for publication only underscores their lack of value in considering *this* case.⁷

The statutes in question all have one thing in common: they are legislative enactments. As such, it is crucially important to determine what the legislative intent was when the statues were enacted. Our goal is not to evaluate whether we agree or disagree with their intent, nor is it for those of us in the judiciary to second-guess the wisdom of the legislature, regardless of how strongly we may feel about the collective wisdom or lack thereof. Instead, our purpose in reviewing a statute must be to consider what the legislature's goals and purposes were; what they were trying to accomplish, not based upon what we might later substitute as our own rationale, but based upon what was in the contemplation of the legislators at the time of enactment.

⁵ Response to Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus (hereafter, "Response"), filed 6/28/16, p. 2:11-13.

⁶ Response, p. 2:13-17).

⁷ "An unpublished disposition, while publically available, does not establish mandatory precedent" NRAP 36(c)(2).

It is understood that the statutes that were in effect at the time the offense was committed, govern.8

Petitioner was convicted and sentenced under NRS 484.3795, which stated that a person who violated the statute was "guilty of a category B felony and shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison for a minimum term of not less than 2 years and a maximum term of not more than 20 years." (Emphasis added.)⁹

The *Vonseydewitz* Court said that "...the lack of reference to parole eligibility in a minimum maximum statute suggests that the minimum term imposed was not the minimum term that must be served before an offender was eligible for parole."

This Court disagrees.

The legislative intent could not be more clearly expressed: the minimum term that a person **shall** serve when convicted under NRS 484.3795 is two years. The Petitioner offers nothing to suggest that a sentencing judge would be permitted to impose a minimum sentence of anything less than two years. In this case, the sentencing Judge's compliance with the statute is clear and the Judgment of Conviction lacks no clarity in sentencing the Petitioner to a "MAXIMUM term of NINETY-SIX (96) MONTHS with a MINIMUM parole eligibility of THIRTY-SIX (36) MONTHS" for Count I through Count VI.

In considering the application of NRS 209.4465(7) and NRS 213.120(2) relevant to Petitioner's conviction, this Court concludes that these statutes are consistent and may be interpreted in a manner which does not create a conflict.

At the time of Petitioner's offense in 2000, NRS 209.4465(7) provided that:

Credits earned pursuant to this section:

- (a) Must be deducted from the maximum term imposed by the sentence; and
- (b) Apply to eligibility for parole unless the offender was sentenced pursuant to a statute which specifies a minimum sentence that must be served before a person becomes eligible for parole.

⁸ Weaver v. Graham, 450 U.S. 24, 31-33 (1981).

It is true that there are some statues which *emphasize* or state somewhat differently that a certain number of years must be served before a person becomes eligible for parole, e.g. NRS 200.030(4)(b)(2); NRS 200.366(2)(a)(2) but, in terms of analyzing legislative intent, the difference in phraseology does not, in this court's opinion, reflect any meaningful difference.

¹⁰ Vonseydewitz, p. 4.

NRS 213.120(2) provided, in part, that:

"a prisoner who was sentenced to prison for a crime committed on or after July 1, 1995, may be paroled when he has served the minimum term to imprisonment imposed by the Court. Any credits earned to reduce his sentence pursuant to chapter 209 of NRS while the prisoner serves the minimum term of imprisonment may reduce only the maximum term of imprisonment imposed and must not reduce the minimum term of imprisonment."

It is this Court's opinion that the legislature's expression of "minimum term" means "minimum term" and that, by definition, a "minimum term" is not to be further diminished by credits that would reduce the minimum term. Indeed, a "minimum term" is, by its nature, irreducible: it is the minimum term.

Are we to conclude that when the legislature enacts a statute which states a convicted person must serve a minimum term, and implements a provision for good-time credits which excludes application toward minimum sentences, the legislature envisioned anything other than the convicted person serving their required minimum term in prison? To attribute that kind of subliminal thinking to the legislature would require jumping through imaginary hoops that depart from the trajectory of logic and reason.

Accordingly, the petition for habeas corpus is denied.

DATED: August 5, 2016

JIM CKOCK PTT, District Judge

I hereby certify that on or about the date filed, a copy of this Order was served upon the parties as follows:

JOHN G. WATKINS, ESQ. DENNIS C. WILSON ESO.

ANGELA MCBRIDE, Judicial Executive Assistant

Electronically Filed
08/11/2016

CLERK OF THE COURT

NEOJ

JESSICA WILLIAMS,

VS.

CONSERVATION CAMP),

STATE OF NEVADA,

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

(NDOC); JO GENTRY, WARDEN, (JEAN

2

1

3

4

5

6

7

8

10

11

12

13

1415

16

17

17

18

19

2021

22

23

24

25

2627

28

28

DISTRICT COURT CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA

Petitioner,

Respondent,

Real Party in Interest

Case No: A-16-735072-W

Dept. No: XXIV

NOTICE OF ENTRY OF ORDER

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on August 5, 2016, the court entered a decision or order in this matter, a true and correct copy of which is attached to this notice.

You may appeal to the Supreme Court from the decision or order of this court. If you wish to appeal, you must file a notice of appeal with the clerk of this court within thirty-three (33) days after the date this notice is mailed to you. This notice was mailed on August 11, 2016.

STEVEN D. GRIERSON, CLERK OF THE COURT

/s/ Chaunte Pleasant

Chaunte Pleasant, Deputy Clerk

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that on this 11 day of August 2016, I placed a copy of this Notice of Entry in:

☐ The bin(s) located in the Regional Justice Center of:
Clark County District Attorney's Office
Attorney General's Office – Appellate Division-

☑ The United States mail addressed as follows:

Jessica Williams # 68716
P.O. Box 19859
Jean, NV 89019
John G. Watkins, Esq. 804 South Sixth Street
Las Vegas, NV 89101

/s/ Chaunte Pleasant

Chaunte Pleasant, Deputy Clerk

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

1

2

3

ORDR

DISTRICT COURT CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA

CASE NO.

DEPT NO.

CLERK OF THE COURT

A-16-735072-W

WILLIAMS, JESSICA, Petitioner,

vs.

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS (NDOC); JO GENTRY, WARDEN, (JEAN CONSERVATION CAMP), Respondent,

STATE OF NEVADA, Real Party in Interest.

ORDER DENYING PETITIONER'S WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS (POST CONVICTION)

Petitioner asks this Court to order that Petitioner is entitled to have NRS 209.4465 Statutory Credits deducted from her minimum sentences as well as her maximum sentences.¹

Petitioner argues that "[t]he law until June 24, 2015 precluded NRS Chapter 209 'good time' credits being deducted from a person's minimum sentence. See *Breault v. State*, 116 Nev. 311, 314, 996 P. 2d 888, 889 (2000) ("... credits earned to reduce his sentence pursuant to NRS Chapter 209 may only reduce the maximum term.")²

Petitioner contends that the law has been changed by an unpublished Nevada Supreme Court disposition, *Vonseydewitz vs. Robert LeGrand*³ and that, as a result, the Nevada Department of Corrections (hereafter NDOC) must apply NRS Chapter 209 Credits to Petitioner's minimum sentences as well as her maximum sentences.⁴

The State opposes this petition contending that Petitioner's reliance upon Vonseydewitz is

⁴ Petition, p. 9:2-6.

¹ Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus (Post Conviction) (hereafter, "Petition"), filed April 14, 2016, p. 9:10-12.
² Petition, p. 8:1-4. Emphasis supplied by petitioner,

³ Vonseydewitz vs. LeGrand, "Order of Reversal and Remand", No 66159 (June 24, 2015); En banc reconsideration denied, February 19, 2016.

misplaced because it is an unpublished, three-judge panel decision with no value as a legal precedent.⁵ The state further points out that the analysis and reasoning in *Vonseydewitz* directly contradicts another earlier unpublished, three-judge panel decision, decided the year before *Vonseydewitz*, which reached the opposite conclusion – i.e. no application of credits to minimum term sentences — under similar legal circumstances.⁶ None of the justices on the *Vonseydewitz* panel were also on the *Kille* panel.

This Court concludes *Vonseydewitz* has not, in fact, changed the law and there is, therefore, no error in the way that Petitioner's incarceration times have been calculated. For that reason, the petition is denied.

ANALYSIS

The unpublished dispositions in *Kille* and *Vonseydewitz* are of no assistance to the Court in its analysis other than to provide some insight into what three of our seven Supreme Court Justices thought of the facts and circumstances presented in *Kille* and what three <u>other</u> members of the Court thought of the facts and circumstances in *Vonseydewitz*. Since both cases reached opposite results under legal circumstances which, on their face, appear to be comparable, little is gained from reviewing either of these cases. The fact that the cases were not chosen for publication only underscores their lack of value in considering *this* case.⁷

The statutes in question all have one thing in common: they are legislative enactments. As such, it is crucially important to determine what the legislative intent was when the statues were enacted. Our goal is not to evaluate whether we agree or disagree with their intent, nor is it for those of us in the judiciary to second-guess the wisdom of the legislature, regardless of how strongly we may feel about the collective wisdom or lack thereof. Instead, our purpose in reviewing a statute must be to consider what the legislature's goals and purposes were; what they were trying to accomplish, not based upon what we might later substitute as our own rationale, but based upon what was in the contemplation of the legislators at the time of enactment.

⁵ Response to Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus (hereafter, "Response"), filed 6/28/16, p. 2:11-13.

⁶ Response, p. 2:13-17).

⁷ "An unpublished disposition, while publically available, does not establish mandatory precedent" NRAP 36(c)(2).

It is understood that the statutes that were in effect at the time the offense was committed, govern.8

Petitioner was convicted and sentenced under NRS 484.3795, which stated that a person who violated the statute was "guilty of a category B felony and shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison for a minimum term of not less than 2 years and a maximum term of not more than 20 years." (Emphasis added.)⁹

The *Vonseydewitz* Court said that "...the lack of reference to parole eligibility in a minimum maximum statute suggests that the minimum term imposed was not the minimum term that must be served before an offender was eligible for parole."

This Court disagrees.

The legislative intent could not be more clearly expressed: the minimum term that a person **shall** serve when convicted under NRS 484.3795 is two years. The Petitioner offers nothing to suggest that a sentencing judge would be permitted to impose a minimum sentence of anything less than two years. In this case, the sentencing Judge's compliance with the statute is clear and the Judgment of Conviction lacks no clarity in sentencing the Petitioner to a "MAXIMUM term of NINETY-SIX (96) MONTHS with a MINIMUM parole eligibility of THIRTY-SIX (36) MONTHS" for Count I through Count VI.

In considering the application of NRS 209.4465(7) and NRS 213.120(2) relevant to Petitioner's conviction, this Court concludes that these statutes are consistent and may be interpreted in a manner which does not create a conflict.

At the time of Petitioner's offense in 2000, NRS 209.4465(7) provided that:

Credits earned pursuant to this section:

- (a) Must be deducted from the maximum term imposed by the sentence; and
- (b) Apply to eligibility for parole unless the offender was sentenced pursuant to a statute which specifies a minimum sentence that must be served before a person becomes eligible for parole.

⁸ Weaver v. Graham, 450 U.S. 24, 31-33 (1981).

It is true that there are some statues which *emphasize* or state somewhat differently that a certain number of years must be served before a person becomes eligible for parole, e.g. NRS 200.030(4)(b)(2); NRS 200.366(2)(a)(2) but, in terms of analyzing legislative intent, the difference in phraseology does not, in this court's opinion, reflect any meaningful difference.

¹⁰ Vonseydewitz, p. 4.

NRS 213.120(2) provided, in part, that:

"a prisoner who was sentenced to prison for a crime committed on or after July 1, 1995, may be paroled when he has served the minimum term to imprisonment imposed by the Court. Any credits earned to reduce his sentence pursuant to chapter 209 of NRS while the prisoner serves the minimum term of imprisonment may reduce only the maximum term of imprisonment imposed and must not reduce the minimum term of imprisonment."

It is this Court's opinion that the legislature's expression of "minimum term" means "minimum term" and that, by definition, a "minimum term" is not to be further diminished by credits that would reduce the minimum term. Indeed, a "minimum term" is, by its nature, irreducible: it is the minimum term.

Are we to conclude that when the legislature enacts a statute which states a convicted person must serve a minimum term, and implements a provision for good-time credits which excludes application toward minimum sentences, the legislature envisioned anything other than the convicted person serving their required minimum term in prison? To attribute that kind of subliminal thinking to the legislature would require jumping through imaginary hoops that depart from the trajectory of logic and reason.

Accordingly, the petition for habeas corpus is denied.

DATED: August 5, 2016

JIM CKOCK PTT, District Judge

I hereby certify that on or about the date filed, a copy of this Order was served upon the parties as follows:

JOHN G. WATKINS, ESQ. DENNIS C. WILSON ESO.

ANGELA MCBRIDE, Judicial Executive Assistant

DISTRICT COURT CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA

Writ of Habeas Corpus

COURT MINUTES

April 25, 2016

A-16-735072-W

Jessica Williams, Plaintiff(s)

VS.

Nevada Department of Corrections, Defendant(s)

April 25, 2016

8:00 AM

Minute Order

HEARD BY: Bell, Linda Marie

COURTROOM: RJC Courtroom 03B

COURT CLERK: Sylvia Perez

RECORDER:

Renee Vincent

REPORTER:

PARTIES PRESENT:

JOURNAL ENTRIES

- Based on the Court's personal knowledge of the case and to avoid the appearance of impropriety and implied bias, this Court hereby disqualifies itself and ORDERS, this case be REASSIGNED at random.

DISTRICT COURT **CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

Writ of Habeas Corpus

COURT MINUTES

May 17, 2016

A-16-735072-W

Jessica Williams, Plaintiff(s)

Nevada Department of Corrections, Defendant(s)

May 17, 2016

9:00 AM

All Pending Motions

HEARD BY: Crockett, Jim

COURTROOM: Phoenix Building Courtroom -

11th Floor

COURT CLERK: Theresa Lee

RECORDER:

REPORTER:

PARTIES

PRESENT:

Bezian, Ellen J.

Attorney

Watkins, John G.

Attorney

JOURNAL ENTRIES

- PETITIONER JESSICA WILLIAMS' PETITION FOR WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS...RESPONSE AND COUNTERMOTION TO VACATE/CONTINUE HEARING AND ISSUE ORDER DIRECTING RESPONSE

APPEARANCES CONTINUED: Dennis Wilson, DAG, present and representing the Attorney's General's Office.

Mr. Watkins advised the Court he filed a Motion to Amend since he left something out. He copied the Attorney General on this matter. Court noted that its Law Clerk printed out the Verification, and ORDERED, the Motion to Amend is GRANTED.

FURTHER ORDERED, the Court will pass this matter 45 days for the Attorney General's Office to file a Response. This motion has to do with calculation of credit for time served pursuant to the recent Nevada Supreme Court case. Court queried Mr. Watkins if that is the focus of his petition. Mr. Watkins concurred. Mr. Wilson stated that he does not necessarily agree because it is an unpublished opinion, but agreed with the Counsel's representations that it is the issue before the Court.

PRINT DATE: 08/17/2016 Page 2 of 4 April 25, 2016 Minutes Date:

A-16-735072-W

COURT ORDERED, AG's office to file their response in 45 days by 6/28/16, Mr. Watkins to file a reply in 10 days by 7/13/16, and the matter is CONTINUED to 7/21/16 at 9:00 A.M.

7/21/16 @ 9:00 A.M. CONTINUED SAME

PRINT DATE: 08/17/2016 Page 3 of 4 Minutes Date: April 25, 2016

DISTRICT COURT **CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

Writ of Habeas Corpus

COURT MINUTES

July 21, 2016

A-16-735072-W

Jessica Williams, Plaintiff(s)

Nevada Department of Corrections, Defendant(s)

July 21, 2016

9:00 AM **Petition for Writ of Habeas**

Corpus

HEARD BY: Crockett, Jim

COURTROOM: Phoenix Building Courtroom -

11th Floor

COURT CLERK: Shelley Boyle

RECORDER:

REPORTER:

Robert Cangemi

PARTIES

PRESENT: Bezian, Ellen J.

Attorney Watkins, John G. **Attorney** Wilson, Dennis C. Attorney

JOURNAL ENTRIES

- Mr. Wakins argued there is nothing in the Statute that says Deft. has to serve a particular amount of time before she is released; Deft. is entitled to the minimum as well as maximum good time credits. Mr. Wilson argued the purpose of a minimum period is to set a parole eligibility date; no credits can be applied to accelerate or move up a parole date. Following additional argument, COURT ORDERED, a DECISION WILL ISSUE in two (2) weeks; the Court RESERVES THE RIGHT to request additional briefs. Additional argument and colloquy on the merits of the Motion.



EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT CLERK'S OFFICE NOTICE OF DEFICIENCY ON APPEAL TO NEVADA SUPREME COURT

JOHN G. WATKINS, ESQ. 804 SOUTH SIXTH STREET LAS VEGAS, NV 89101

> DATE: August 17, 2016 CASE: A-16-735072-W

RE CASE: JESSICA WILLIAMS vs. NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS (NDOC);

JO GENTRY, WARDEN, (JEAN CONSERVATION CAMP)

NOTICE OF APPEAL FILED: August 15, 2016

YOUR APPEAL HAS BEEN SENT TO THE SUPREME COURT.

PLEASE NOTE: DOCUMENTS NOT TRANSMITTED HAVE BEEN MARKED:

- \$250 − Supreme Court Filing Fee (Make Check Payable to the Supreme Court)**
 If the \$250 Supreme Court Filing Fee was not submitted along with the original Notice of Appeal, it must be
 - mailed directly to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court Filing Fee will not be forwarded by this office if submitted after the Notice of Appeal has been filed.
- \$24 District Court Filing Fee (Make Check Payable to the District Court)**
- - NRAP 7: Bond For Costs On Appeal in Civil Cases
- ☐ Case Appeal Statement
 - NRAP 3 (a)(1), Form 2
- □ Order
- ☐ Notice of Entry of Order

NEVADA RULES OF APPELLATE PROCEDURE 3 (a) (3) states:

"The district court clerk must file appellant's notice of appeal despite perceived deficiencies in the notice, including the failure to pay the district court or Supreme Court filing fee. The district court clerk shall apprise appellant of the deficiencies in writing, and shall transmit the notice of appeal to the Supreme Court in accordance with subdivision (e) of this Rule with a notation to the clerk of the Supreme Court setting forth the deficiencies. Despite any deficiencies in the notice of appeal, the clerk of the Supreme Court shall docket the appeal in accordance with Rule 12."

Please refer to Rule 3 for an explanation of any possible deficiencies.

^{**}Per District Court Administrative Order 2012-01, in regards to civil litigants, "...all Orders to Appear in Forma Pauperis expire one year from the date of issuance." You must reapply for in Forma Pauperis status.

Certification of Copy

State of Nevada	٦	CC.
County of Clark	}	SS:

I, Steven D. Grierson, the Clerk of the Court of the Eighth Judicial District Court, Clark County, State of Nevada, does hereby certify that the foregoing is a true, full and correct copy of the hereinafter stated original document(s):

NOTICE OF APPEAL; CASE APPEAL STATEMENT; DISTRICT COURT DOCKET ENTRIES; CIVIL COVER SHEET; ORDER DENYING PETITIONER'S WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS (POST CONVICTION); NOTICE OF ENTRY OF ORDER; DISTRICT COURT MINUTES; NOTICE OF DEFICIENCY

JESSICA WILLIAMS,

Petitioner,

VS.

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS (NDOC); JO GENTRY, WARDEN, (JEAN CONSERVATION CAMP),

Respondent,

STATE OF NEVADA.

Real Party in Interest.

now on file and of record in this office.

Case No: A-16-735072-W

Dept. No: XXIV

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto Set my hand and Affixed the seal of the Court at my office, Las Vegas, Nevada This 17 day of August 2016

Steven D. Grierson, Clerk of the Court

Chaunte Pleasant, Deputy Clerk