

Statement on Behalf of Michael Pennel, Jr.

Issued by Kaleo Legal

On June 18, 2026, ESPN published a story about Michael Pennel, Jr. and an investigation into the death of a woman in the Dominican Republic who disappeared on September 5, 2021. The story was cited by numerous other websites and print journals. Michael Pennel, Jr. retained Kaleo Legal after these news stories were published. Kaleo Legal is issuing this Statement on behalf of Mr. Pennel and it is not intended to speak for ESPN.

Mr. Pennel had nothing to do with the death or disappearance of Ms. Roche and was never a suspect or person of interest in that investigation. He did not know her.

Mr. Pennel's personal records including his passport and other travel documents, banking records and photographs along with their geotracking locations confirm Mike was not in the Dominican Republic in September, 2021 at the time of Ms. Roche's disappearance, or in the weeks before or after it. Mike was in Denver, Colorado being treated for a sports injury at the time and was signed by the Atlanta Falcons on September 15, 2021.

Mr. Pennel's Dominican attorney, Cesar A. Duran, never told anyone he expected Mr. Pennel to be arrested.

Mr. Pennel owned but never lived in the property where the remains of Ms. Roche were found. Mr. Pennel's video surveillance system captured several people unlawfully trespassing on the property the night Ms. Roche disappeared. Mr. Pennel saved the video surveillance and shared it with the Dominican authorities who did not know it existed.

“These past few weeks have been a nightmare for Mike. He is relieved to have all this behind him and is excited to resume his football career.”

— Brian Wainger, Kaleo Legal

ISSUED BY

Kaleo Legal

Brian Wainger, Esq. · Mobile: 757.621.3887
bwainger@kaleolegal.com