

7/17/2020

To The Governor Of The State Of North Carolina

Governor Roy Cooper

The world, the nation, this state will never be the same again. This is the end of institutional racism in this state. The biggest perpetrator of racism in North Carolina is the criminal legal system. From the first instance, blacks are more likely to be discriminated against.

We are hoping with this letter you will immediately release all people who have been wrongly convicted and wrongfully imprisoned. The racial equity task force was formed on June 9 2020 for North Carolina, because racial disparities exist in the criminal legal system. Governor Cooper, you said "We must acknowledge racial inequities in our systems of law enforcement and criminal justice, and then work to eliminate them."

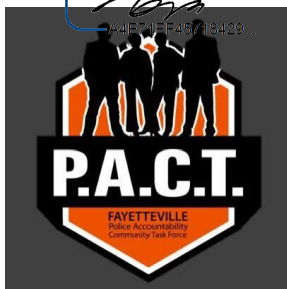
In the last 30 years, 85 people who were wrongfully convicted in North Carolina have been exonerated of the crimes for which they were convicted. However, 85 exonerations are just a fraction of the number of women and men who have been wrongfully convicted in this state. Research indicates, it's likely that up to 2,000 people currently incarcerated in North Carolina state prisons are serving time for something that they did not do. In addition to those 2,000 people, we know that there are innocent people currently confined in jails throughout the state who haven't had their day in court yet. They will be found not guilty; however, that won't erase the time and everything else they lost while in jail.

Unfortunately, the criminal legal system is unforgiving. The reality is that most innocent people who are in prison won't be able to prove their innocence and win their freedom. To do so requires a lot of money and an attorney willing to take on the arduous task. Most people don't have the amount of money required for the fight, and there aren't enough attorneys in North Carolina to represent the estimated 2,000 wrongfully convicted women and men in the state. Sadly, when an individual is able to prove their innocence and regain their freedom, then they have to fight to be compensated. The road to compensation is long and winding, and compensation is not a guaranteed end.

The constitutional, civil and human rights violations continue to this moment. Inhumane acts and civil liberties violations on the incarcerated must end. The irreparable harm done when human beings are wrongfully incarcerated, we believe, is tantamount to a state of emergency. Even more so now that the government has acknowledged that it is riddled with racial injustices in the criminal legal system. End the suffering of innocent people today.

Parents of innocent and wrongfully incarcerated:

Coalition of organizations:



DocuSigned by:

Elizabeth C. Culp

DocuSigned by:

Deborah De Poo

Carolyn G. Graham

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Carmel

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Kimberly Muktarian

DocuSigned by:

Sonya Bennetone-Patrick, NBLC

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