



Gregory Christopher
President

June 9, 2010

Tom Hilyard
1st Vice President

Governor Gregoire and the Clemency and Pardons Board,

Maurice Wright, Sr.
2nd Vice President

On behalf of the Pierce County Chapter of the NAACP, I write to urge you to grant Barry Massey's request for clemency. Here in Pierce County and on a national level, the NAACP has taken on the sentencing of youth to life in prison without the possibility of parole as a key issue, because we believe that every child—including those who commit serious crimes—should have the opportunity to demonstrate his or her capacity for rehabilitation. Barry Massey has done just that.

Ellen Smith
3rd Vice President

Gail Alexis Ray
Secretary

Mr. Massey has spent nearly twenty-four years in prison, beginning at the tender age of thirteen. While we understand that he had some behavioral issues early in his prison term, for over fourteen years he has been free of all major infractions. During that time he has also engaged in numerous positive activities, including serving as a leader in the Black Prisoners Caucus and other groups, obtaining his education and work experience, and developing a program to work with at-risk youth. This work has garnered him praise from correctional officers and community members alike.

Marie Payne
Treasurer

Mr. Massey's history of community involvement and dedication to improving his environment would be impressive for someone who was in the community, and he has managed to do this important work from behind prison walls. I can only imagine how much more he could accomplish on the outside.

In particular, we believe that Mr. Massey could be an enormous asset in our work to better the lives of at-risk youth. Our communities are in desperate need of young men of character, including Mr. Massey, to stem the tide of youth of color moving from poverty to incarceration without hope. The message that Mr. Massey can uniquely tell these youth is that regardless of one's background, regardless of one's lot in life, each of us can contribute, and grow, and change, and not just hope for, but also achieve a brighter future. This is a message we must give our children, and we are pleased that Mr. Massey intends to dedicate his time and energy to that cause. We at the NAACP of Pierce County look forward to having the opportunity to work with him on these endeavors. As such, we respectfully request that you grant Mr. Massey clemency.

Sincerely,

Gregory Christopher,
Tacoma Branch President, NAACP