

June 10, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of Barry Massey to request that he is granted clemency. Barry was one of the lifers I met through the Seattle University Prison Ministry program at the Washington State Reformatory. Out of the 30+ lifers I met in my 3.5 years of visiting, Barry stood out from the rest. Over the years I would come to know Barry as a soft-spoken leader, a man of his word, and someone who always sought the positive in any situation.

From the first time I met Barry, I knew there was something different about him. He was so curious—he wanted to know each class I was taking and asked me in-depth questions about all of my studies. He asked what I was reading and what we discussed in class. It was apparent that Barry was a student of life, naturally curious, and always wanting to learn. Barry emerged as a leader in our group—he was willing to keep the conversation on task and volunteered when it was needed.

When I learned that Barry was incarcerated at 13, it was hard for me to believe, given his maturity, integrity, and leadership. I was personally outraged that as a society we could decide to incarcerate someone for the rest of their life at the young age of 13. Barry shared with me that he could not get caught up in anger and had to choose the high road and sought opportunities to learn and grow in prison. Barry understands the importance of making amends for the crime that he was charged with and I fully believe he will continue to carry this attitude forward whether in prison or in the free world.

Barry has excelled in extremely difficult circumstances and I know he would thrive and be an asset to any community outside of prison. At the same time I met Barry and the Concerned Lifers, I was taking a criminal justice class at Seattle University and learned that it costs the state approximately \$40,000 per year to incarcerate an individual. At this juncture, the state can choose to continue to finance Barry Massey's incarceration or the state can choose to release him to the free world, where I am confident that he will give back to society, just as he has done in prison.

Barry and the Concerned Lifers Organization taught me something that I could never learn in the classroom—human life and relationships are precious and fragile, and we cannot put a price tag on them. I ask you to give Barry Massey a second chance at life in the free world, a chance to fully develop the relationships he has missed while incarcerated, and most importantly, a chance to give back to society in a way he never had the opportunity to while behind bars.

Sincerely,



Maureen Finneran