**LETTER TEMPLATES**

Here are two templates to use for writing to media, District Attorneys, Governors, etc. on a prisoner’s behalf.

Tips:

As you’re writing, use prisoner’s first name, it’s more personal.

Be sure to share any personal experience you’ve had, e.g., our relationship, if you’ve worked together, if you’ve been writing each other – the more personal, the better.

Also, make sure you focus on a call to action. What do you want them to do? Ex: pardon, write a story, etc.

**GENERAL LETTER TO MEDIA , DA, ETC**

Dear [MR, MS, MRS, HONORABLE, GOVERNOR]:

The case of [PRISONER NAME] has come to my attention. He has spent nearly 20 years in prison for a crime he did not commit. The evidence in her case proves this. [PRISONER NAME] was convicted in [YEAR] for [CRIME] and given a [SENTENCE]. The following are major points in the case pointing to their innocence:

* LIST POINTS OF INNOCENCE
* NO EYEWITNESSES
* NO DNA
* etc

Given these facts, I respectfully request you [GRANT PRISONER CLEMENCY] [LOOK INTO THIS CASE] [WHATEVER YOU ARE ASKING]. He deserves to start a new life after this grave injustice. Thank you in advance for your immediate attention to this matter. I will be following this case closely, and appreciate your leadership on it.

Sincerely,

[Your name]

[Your title, if applicable]

[Your organization, if applicable]

[Your address] [City] [State] [Zip]

**INNOCENCE LETTER TO GOVERNOR SAMPLE**

RE: Request Pardon for [PRISONER NAME]

Dear Governor [GOV NAME] and members of the [STATE NAME] Prisoner Review Board,

I’m writing in support of a pardon for [PRISONER NAME], who was convicted in [YEAR] for [CRIME]. As you know, [HE,SHE] is currently serving a sentence of [SENTENCE] - although he is innocent. Justice calls for a pardon.

Open the books, open the investigation, open the cell door.

[SPECIFIC CASE INFO EXAMPLE: There is enough confusion in this case that holding a prisoner already incarcerated for seventeen years for even more time is unconscionable. A prosecutor who wants to deny DNA testing which might exonerate a possible innocent man is a prosecutor who should look for a new line of work.

Clearly, the first trial was flawed. New information is available. It must be thoroughly looked at and evaluated.]

We Americans are taught in school that convictions occur when guilt beyond a reasonable doubt is proven to a jury. And we are taught that setting a hundred guilty men free is better than convicting even one innocent person. In this mess of an investigation and trial these fundamental principles have been ignored.

It’s time to set things right.

With a few strokes of your pen, Governor XX, you can correct this injustice, and allow [PRISONER NAME] to be a free man with his family and community. His family, the local community, and your state have all been affected by this wrongful conviction. Please have mercy on [NAME].

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Please do your duty as a public servant, and seriously consider this opportunity to grant a pardon to an innocent man.

Sincerely,

[FIRST AND LAST NAME]

[FULL ADDRESS]

[EMAIL]

[PHONE]