

Good morning Governing Body,

I am writing you this letter to request that you consider the release of Lavon Johnson based on the understanding that whatever actions he was convicted of or implicated in. He was a juvenile, who was drawn into a situation that went beyond his understanding and reasoning and followed others because he lacked the proper guidance, leadership, family support, education and experience to make a sound decision on his actions. When you lack the proper resources, support and options to have a better understanding of right and wrong, you increase the probability of making the wrong decision especially when all the examples provided are not what most people are use to. Lavon Johnson did not come from humble beginnings, and was never given an option to be a child or live life as those who have these options usually would. As a youth, and even more detrimental a minority his options for help, support, reason or understanding was not there and put him in a place where he could only act based on what was presented. I am not excusing the actions, but I am asking for understanding that you can only punish someone for so long when you see that they have done everything within there power to turn there situation around and do better to be better. Not only for himself put for others around him because he understands how his actions impacts others on a more profound setting. As we see what is happening in society around us, and the media is actually bringing attention to this disparity, please understand he was a part of that group that was caged without options or resources and given no second thought as to who he really is and the people he belongs to. Lavon Johnson is my older brother....When he was free he was my father figure....and when he was taken away.....he was the motivation to be everything that were meant to be. I stand before you to attest that the person that is incarcerated, the image of the individual this crime has created is not the person standing before you in that court room. Lavon Johnson is a human being that cares for others, and wants to give back to the world from which he has taken so much from. If given the opportunity to be free from these constraints, I can only imagine the positive impact he can have on the youth and the community he belongs to. When you consider the amount of time he has been sentenced for, does it seem logical? Compare his case to any similar case, was it far? When he was brought in for questioning, was he given due diligence and adult representation? The answer to these questions are no, but in a judicial system set up to systematically process minorities into incarceration it is easy to see he never had a chance at freedom, a chance to succeed. Lavon Johnson has made his mistake and has paid dearly since his youth. As a man, he can now move forward and make the right decisions and be a productive member of society. Please release Lavon Johnson DOC# 187406.

Thank you,

Jonathan Sharpe Sr.  
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