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THE SENATE
STATE OF MICHIGAN

FINANCE, MINORITY VICE-CHAIR
INSURANCE, MINORITY VICE-CHAIR
JUDICIARY, MINORITY VICE-CHAIR
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND
INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT
CAPITOL COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
MICHIGAN COMMISSION ON
UNIFORM STATE LAWS

September 14, 2018

Governor Rick Snyder
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Governor Snyder:

I am writing in strong support of the clemency application of Frederick Freeman. I believe, as any reasonable individual who has looked at the record of his case must believe, that Mr. Freeman is fully innocent of the crime for which he has spent over 30 years in prison. I encourage you to use your clemency power to help wipe this unfortunate black mark off of Michigan's record of criminal justice.

I am aware the specifics regarding Mr. Freeman's innocence have been presented to you through his attorneys' materials, so I will not repeat them here. I do wish to stress, however, that this is a case where justice was not done, and it is unfortunate that our state courts proved incapable of correcting the wrongful conviction once it occurred. And now, after decades of fighting to prove his innocence, Mr. Freeman has unfortunately fallen into ill health, due to many significant ailments which are rooted in his long years of inadequate medical care within our prisons.

The thought of an innocent man dying in prison from health issues that built up over 30 years of wrongful incarceration should shock and appall every decent person. No one can give Mr. Freeman his years or his health back. I implore you, however, to effectuate much-delayed justice, as your clemency authority empowers you to do.

I have been proud to work on many criminal justice reform initiatives in my time in the state legislature. I was very pleased to have your support on many of them, including the monumental passage of the Wrongful Conviction Compensation Act. I believe you and I share the view that, while our criminal justice system is largely good, there have been significant mistakes and injustices. In granting clemency to Frederick Freeman, you would help undo decades of injustice, and prove to our citizenry once again that our Constitution's last failsafe for justice, the executive pardon power, remains an effective tool for justice, where all other tools fail.

In an era when so many wrongful convictions and miscarriages of justice have been revealed, it is no longer defensible to ignore the moral impetus of situations such as this one. I hope you are the governor who will finally act for justice in Mr. Freeman's case, where so many before you have failed to act.

I thank you for considering this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Bieda".

Steve Bieda
State Senator
9th District

SB:mp