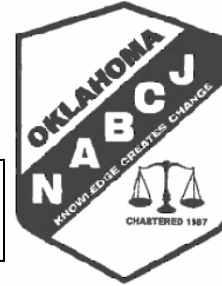


NABCJ

OKLAHOMA CHAPTER
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August 29, 2011

Honorable Mary Fallin
Governor
State of Oklahoma
212 State Capitol Building
2300 North Lincoln Blvd
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Re: Life Without Parole Commutation – Larry Yarborough

Dear Governor Fallin:

As a vehicle for implementing legislation and changing public policies that will have a positive impact on system inequities, the Oklahoma Chapter of the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice (NABCJ) supports the Pardon and Parole Board's recommendation for commutation of the Life Without Parole Sentence for Larry Yarborough. NABCJ is a multi-ethnic, nonpartisan, and nonprofit association of criminal justice professionals and community leaders dedicated to improving the administration of justice.

A decline in recidivism between 1999 and 2004 by the Prisoner Reentry Initiative launched in Michigan indicated a positive trend in higher commutations between 1999 and 2004 under a belief that doing corrections right would result in a smaller prison system and large savings.¹ The Department of Corrections reports a cost of over \$1 million for the care and custody of the 44 prisoners sentenced to Life Without Parole in maximum security in 2010. Nationally, health care costs are rising faster than the general inflation rate. The National Criminal Justice Commission estimates that the cost of care for elderly offenders triples the cost of typical offenders and more states report spending on eldercare is more than 10% of their annual budget.²

The Yarborough consideration is indicative of studies since 2002 that older aged offenders with larger sentences have significant lower recidivism rates. States have reported that recidivism rates decline with age.³

The facts are in. Tough sentences have made tight budgets. A Yarborough Commutation is a low recidivism risk consideration. Any award of justice to modify a judgment and sentence is an act of your executive grace. In this case it is a fiscally conservative alternative as well

NABCJ considers justice as imperative and requires decisive executive action. Your attention and respectful consideration of this matter is in high regard.

Respectfully,

S. A. Alford

Sheila Anita Alford
President

cc: Senator Constance Johnson, Oklahoma State Senate

¹ The Pew Center on the States: *State of Recidivism – The Revolving Door of America’s Prisons*, Public Safety Performance Report April 2011.

^{2, 3} Bureau of Justice Statistics 2007, Office of Justice Programs, United States Department of Justice.