

California Legislative Women's Caucus

Representing Democratic and Republican Women in the California State Legislature

May 22, 2008

Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Christy Camp (W-32687)

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

The undersigned members of the California Legislative Women's Caucus are writing to express our support for the parole of Christy Camp (W-32687). Ms. Camp began serving a sentence of 16 years to life for second degree murder in June of 1989. Her case is currently before you for a thirty-day review. She was granted a parole date by your Board of Parole Hearings on December 30, 2003 and again on February 13, 2008. She had no record of violence, criminal activity or juvenile delinquency prior to this single offense.

Christy Camp was a battered woman who lived a life of isolation and confinement at the demand of her late husband. She was not allowed to work, have access of money, or leave the house without Mr. Camp. When Ms. Camp did act independently, Mr. Camp punished her verbally, physically, and psychologically. He had threatened Ms. Camp's safety on numerous occasions, including her life, and used their two children as leverage for her to stay with him.

During the trial an expert in battering and its effects testified that Ms. Camp fit the profile of a battered woman. However, the expert's testimony was limited and she was unable to discuss whether battering and its effects impacted Camp's state of mind during the incident. The Board of Parole Hearings has confirmed that Ms. Camp does suffer from battering and its effects. She was sentenced 16 years to life for the stabbing of Michael Camp, her husband and abuser. The night of the incident Mr. Camp was embarrassed that the children had gotten sick in front of the guests the couple was entertaining and blamed Ms. Camp for the situation. Mr. Camp began to physically abuse his wife in front of the guests. Ms. Camp attempted to leave the residence but was stopped by Mr. Camp. Neighbors and friends reported witnessing Mr. Camp's jealousy and controlling behavior over Ms. Camp.



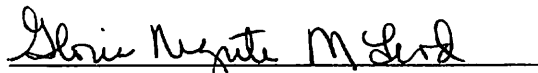
The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation counselor who evaluated Ms. Camp found her to be undoubtedly capable of becoming a useful member to our society. Ms. Camp's psychiatrist concluded that "Ms. Camp's level of dangerousness is estimated to be less than average compared to other inmates," and if released to the community, "her violence potential outside of this controlled setting is considered to be less than average compared to other inmates." Both the psychological report and the Board report are in concurrence that Ms. Camp is of minimal threat to the public.

Most recently, a prison psychologist, Dr. Eric Kunkel, evaluated Ms. Camp in preparation for her parole suitability hearing. In his August 2006 evaluation he determined Ms. Camp "lacks a degree of dangerous selfishness that many inmates exhibit". Additionally, Dr. Kunkel noted that Ms. Camp "comes across with greater insights both into her actions at the time of the crime and to what she might have still done differently," not using Battered Woman's Syndrome as an excuse for her behavior, but taking "appropriate responsibility for her actions." Ultimately, Dr. Kunkel concluded that, if released to the community, Ms. Camp's violence potential "is considered to be the lowest possible."

While incarcerated, Ms. Camp has earned an AA degree in addition to two paralegal degrees and has been selected to receive a full scholarship to Ohio University. Upon Ms. Camp's release she plans to work as a secretary or legal assistant and currently has numerous job offers. Prior to her entrance into the workforce Ms. Camp will participate in a residential program that will assist her with every step of her transition, ensuring she has appropriate housing, employment and support before she leaves the program.

We are confident that if you examine the facts of this case you will support the decision of your Board of Parole Hearings, and conclude that Christy Camp is worthy of being free, never to return to the conditions that once victimized her.

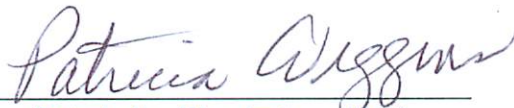
Respectfully,



Gloria Negrete McLeod, Chair
Legislative Women's Caucus
32nd Senate District




Lori Saldaña, Vice-Chair
Legislative Women's Caucus
76th Assembly District



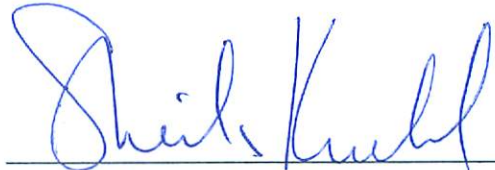
Patricia Wiggins - SD 2



Mary Salas - AD 79



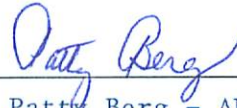
Christine Kehoe - SD 39



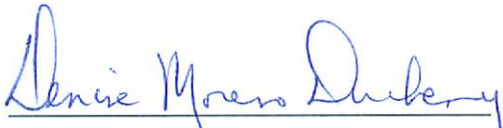
Sheila Kuehl - SD 23



Betty Karnette - AD 54



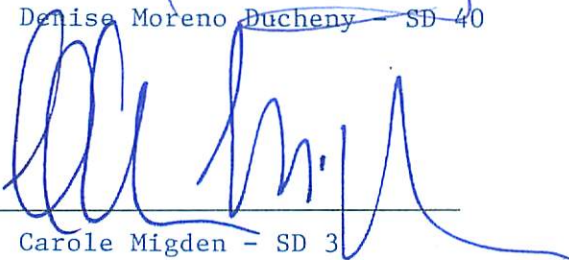
Patty Berg - AD 1



Denise Moreno Ducheny - SD 40



Gloria Romero - SD 24



Carole Migden - SD 3




Ellen Corbett - SD 10



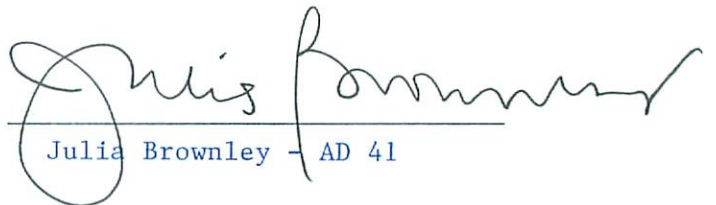
Anna Caballero - AD 28



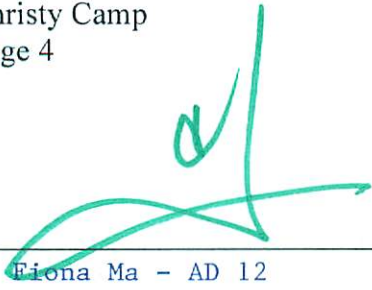
Jenny Oropeza - SD 28



Wilmer Amina Carter - AD 62



Julia Brownley - AD 41



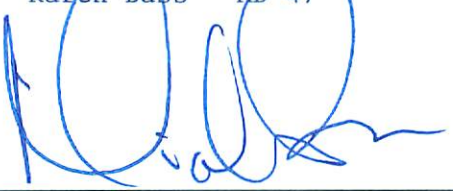
Fiona Ma - AD 12



Noreen Evans - AD 7



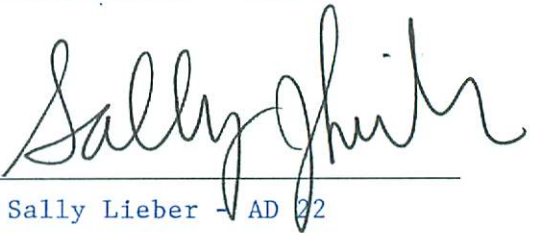
Karen Bass - AD 47



Nicole Parra - AD 30



Loni Hancock - AD 14



Sally Lieber - AD 22
