

# FREE BATTERED WOMEN

Working for Justice and Freedom for Incarcerated Survivors of Domestic Violence

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## INCARCERATED BATTERED WOMAN CHRISTY CAMP RELEASED ON PAROLE

On Friday, July 11<sup>th</sup>, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger agreed to allow imprisoned battered woman Christy Camp to be released from prison.

Ms. Camp has served nearly 20 years in prison for killing her abusive husband. She was just 14 years old when she met her 25-year-old husband, and 21 years old when she stabbed him after nearly seven years of severe physical, sexual, and psychological abuse and economic control. Ms. Camp was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to 16-years-to-life.

An investigation conducted by the Board of Parole Hearings found substantial documentation of the abuse Ms. Camp endured by her husband. Ms. Camp was one of 34 domestic violence victims who submitted clemency petitions to former Governor Wilson in 1992 with the help of Free Battered Women (then the California Coalition for Battered Women in Prison). Of the original 34 clemency petitioners, Ms. Camp is the 19<sup>th</sup> to be released through parole, clemency, appeals, or reversals of their convictions. Three others died in prison, and 12 remain imprisoned.

“Ms. Camp was a young woman who was afraid for her life more than 20 years ago when she killed her husband, an act she deeply regrets. It is tragic that she took her husband’s life. Yet no purpose is served by continuing to incarcerate her,” said Andrea Bible of Free Battered Women, a statewide organization that advocates for imprisoned domestic violence victims.

“The Governor did the right thing by releasing Christy Camp from prison. She poses absolutely no risk to public safety,” said Johanna D. Hoffmann, Ms. Camp’s attorney. “In this era of the state budget crisis and severe prison overcrowding, releasing Christy Camp from prison saves the state resources that could be better used to increase safety for domestic violence victims in the community.”

The Board of Parole Hearings decided in February 2008 to grant parole to Ms. Camp for the second time. In May 2004, Governor Schwarzenegger exercised his power to reverse the parole board’s previous recommendation to release her. Twenty-two members of the Legislative Women’s Caucus sent a letter to Governor Schwarzenegger dated May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2008, urging him to approve Ms. Camp’s release.

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