



Families to Amend California's Three Strikes

FACTS

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July 20, 2005

Judge Hobbs
251 So. Lawrence St.
Montgomery, Alabama 36104

To the Honorable Judge Hobbs,

This letter is in reference to the recent arrest of Roberta Franklin. Firstly, I'd like to thank you for your decision in releasing Roberta to go home to her family, mainly her little girl Pooh. This traumatic experience will certainly be remembered by her child, but it's good for her to know that her mother was judged fairly, by her own merit and not based upon over zealous prosecution. Roberta is not some dangerous criminal roaming the streets looking to find ways to beat the system. She is a caring, loving mother that would not dream of putting herself or her family in harm's way.

Secondly, from what I've heard from Roberta is that you are one of the fairest judges in Alabama and I highly respect you for your moral judgments and your ability to not succumb to political pressures and bad laws. The criminal justice system in America has run amok locking up people for petty offenses, rather than looking at alternative sentencing. It's quite ironic that as Roberta is being instrumental in bringing hundreds of people together to protest the horrors of America's Nightmare – The Prison Industrial Complex, she is arrested for "*overpayment of food stamps*".

Here in California, we have thousands of men and women serving 25 to life sentences for nonviolent crimes under the draconian Three Strikes law. No other state, *not even Alabama*, locks up people with life sentences for **nonviolent offenses**. This is a travesty of justice and we see the criminal justice system as out-of-control. Taxpayers money is being used to warehouse productive men and women at \$31,000 per prisoner for simple drug possession, writing bad checks, petty theft, and the lists goes on and on. As I'm sure you know, many of these people are drug addicted and the best way to help them is through an **effective drug program**, treatment rather than incarceration.

So again, I say "thank you" and hope you consider this letter as you decide Roberta's fate.

Sincerely,

Gail Blackwell, Director of Operations
Families to Amend California's Three Strikes