

June 16, 2020

Governor Phil Murphy
The State House
225 State Street
Trenton, NJ 08625

Regarding: Clark E. Squire (Sundiata Acoli), #39794-066

Dear Governor Murphy:

We are writing to you as the concerned daughters of Sundiata Acoli, to passionately urge you to grant immediate clemency to our father.

Upon his release, we want him to live with me, Sunni, his youngest daughter and 2 grandchildren, who can tend to his medical care and help him acclimate. We live in Brooklyn, NY. I am currently working from home as an Executive Director, Internal Auditor for JP Morgan Chase. We have ample space for him in our home. His grandchildren would be delighted to have him home and can also assist with his care. My son is a college junior at Rutgers University and he attributes much of his thirst for education to his grandfather who mentored him from prison all of his young life. He also has a huge amount of support from his community network to assist with his transition back into the community and society.

I, Sunni, and my family have an excellent reputation with our neighbors, local leaders, educators, politicians and law enforcement. We are more than capable of providing a suitable environment for my dad. Prior to his incarceration, my father worked as a computer analyst in the 60s and 70s. In recent months I have wondered if he would be able to help with your COBOL based unemployment systems. My dad is such a great teacher.

We are very concerned about his age and deteriorating health, especially during this high-risk period due to Covid-19. He has emphysema, hypertension and atherosclerosis affected coronary and carotid arteries. As an elder, at 83 years old, he is very much at risk and the most vulnerable to this Covid-19 pandemic. When he tested positive for the Covid 19 virus and was hospitalized for it we were completely distraught and feared that he wouldn't survive, because, as we know, the survival rate for people at his age is very low. The side effects can be permanent and particularly damaging to his lungs and other organs. We are aware that the recovery rate for someone with his medical history and age is very long.

I, Rita, his oldest daughter, am a Registered Nurse, and health advocate for the city of Garland Texas, and I am fully committed to providing my father support and care as needed. I viewed your Coronavirus New Jersey press conference on 4/15/20. You noted 71,030 total cases and confirmed 351 additional deaths. Thank you for your commitment to beat this virus. I know that you are aware that numerous doctors and public experts have concluded that the only way to manage this high risk to incarcerated people is to release those who are elderly the most vulnerable. Our father's

age and existing health conditions put him in the category of people who should be a priority for release.

Despite his spending 47 years of our lives incarcerated, our father has been an exemplary dad and doting grandfather. He has always made us feel loved, cherished and special. Until this past year, he has never missed sending us or his grandchildren a card, gift or some type of recognition for birthdays, Valentine's days, Mothers days or Kwanzaa. Given that he now occasionally forgets, we are concerned about the state of his memory. He's always been very thoughtful and giving. All of his close family and friends have received handmade gifts from him e.g., paintings, drawings, string art, cards, wood art etc. His grandchildren adore him. They enjoy talking with him, learning from him, playing cards with him and listening to his funny stories.

When I, Sunni, was in college, at Howard University, he sent me money from his meager wages as an orderly. Knowing how little he made, I felt truly blessed and very fortunate. He also helped pay for my wedding. My father has a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics from Prairie View University, and during my freshman year in college when I struggled with calculus, he researched, wrote and sent me a handwritten calculus primer.

He has always accepted us as we were and he never pressured us to be anyone other than ourselves. We know that if he could go back in time and undo, eliminate or otherwise influence the awful events that led to his incarceration, he would.

We know that our father poses no threat to public safety. The low rates of recidivism for his age group speak to the fact that people can transform their lives while incarcerated and have; in fact, play a major role in helping others transform their lives. Our father has completed over 100 different programs for self-improvement and has taught mediation and conflict resolution classes to modify the behaviors of other incarcerated people. Although he has appeared before the New Jersey State Parole Board on several occasions, each time they have denied release, notwithstanding his exemplary prison record since 1996. There are no words that can adequately describe the pain those denials have meant to us.

We know that the families of the victims of the crimes for which our father was convicted have suffered unspeakable pain as well - a pain that will never go away. Our hearts go out to them and we pray for healing - for everyone.

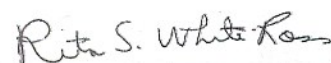
Please hear our concerns for our father who has been incarcerated for more than four decades and denied parole several times despite 27 years of an exemplary prison record and a loving family to care for him.

Thank you for your time and consideration as you weigh our request and the fate of our elderly father.

Sincerely,



Sunni Middleton



Rita Squire White-Ross