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Honorable Truman Hobbs  
251 South Lawrence Street  
Montgomery, Alabama  
36104

Re; Roberta Franklin

Your Honor,

I would like to personally thank you for upholding the law on Roberta Franklin's pending case by not revoking her probation. Ms. Franklin has indicated to me that she is repeatedly being harassed by officials in response to her activism. As she has reported, these incidents generally take place prior to some event she has planned or directly after she has spoken out against some official or work that she does in regards to candidates for upcoming elections. In this particular event, Roberta has upon her own sweat and tears organized a national march to stand up against corrupted criminal justice issues.

Ms. Franklin is a law abiding citizen. She should not be punished for exercising her rights under the first amendment. I am the former Interim Executive Director of the NY Civil Liberties Union, in Syracuse, NY. It is quite clear to me that this is an incident of retaliation. Ms. Franklin has exercised her right to free speech by speaking out against corrupted politicians and policies that trample the down trodden.

Your state has a rich history of issues such as these. Ms. Franklin is the equivalent of the Civil Rights Era, "Fannie Lou Hamer". Fannie Lou experienced similar harassment as she fought back against the corrupt voting policies infringing upon African-American rights. Officials got away with this at that time in history.

It is now 2005, the segregation has ended. Ms. Franklin should not have to endure the harassment that she has. These officials should not be permitted to abuse the power of their offices to attempt to shut Ms. Franklin up.

It sickens me that attorneys would even participate in such a cruel abuse of governmental authority. If the Department of Human Resources overpaid Ms. Franklin monies by their own error Ms. Franklin should not be prosecuted for their oversight. I would hope that given the circumstances this matter could be settled without a criminal prosecution as this is what would seem just.

As in the past examples of obtaining civil rights and justice, apparently there is a lesson that has been yet to be learned by these officials, justice is blind. They can try to stop justice from happening by trying to use their influence to create problems for advocates such as Roberta but it will not stop the movement in which she stands for. They can lock Roberta up but it is only a temporary solution. Intellectual freedom is a right that we all inherited from our founding fathers in the US Constitution. They can imprison her body but they'll never imprison her mind. Disabling one soldier will not stop the war. We will carry the torch for Roberta. Despite the injustices attempted, the march will happen and our voices will be heard. Thank you again for your fairness and courage to not allow Roberta's probation to be revoked.

Sincerely,

Cheryl L. Kates Esq.