



July 19, 2005

Judge Truman Hobbs
251 South Lawrence Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36102

Re: Roberta Franklin's case regarding food stamps

Honorable Judge Hobbs,

I wish to thank you very much for being fair with Ms. Roberta Franklin in the case where she was charged with stealing food stamps based on testimony that the DHR was not told about her former drug conviction.

Of course, we all know that DHR was indeed informed long ago about the drug conviction as a matter of course and that DHR reduced the amount of food stamp monies for Ms. Franklin's daughter by a substantial amount precisely because of that former drug conviction.

Thank you so much for seeing through this ridiculous charge against Ms. Franklin. She is a pillar of strength and good for her community and for some reason that I cannot fathom, some folks would rather see her in jail than outside doing good things for her community and her family. Roberta is the lead coordinator for the Journey for Justice march on Washington DC scheduled for August 12-13th 2005 www.journeyforjustice.org and I suspect that some people want to stop her from being at the march. This would not stop the march at all, but it would be a terrible blow for Alabama because the thousands of people who are already committed to the march from across the country will know what happened and why. They will see this as malicious persecution for political reasons, I'm sure.

Judge Hobbs, I have worked with Ms. Franklin for several years on the issue of prison reform. Every time we put an event together, she gets arrested! And each time she gets arrested for a bogus charge. Even that drug conviction was bogus but she was forced into pleading guilty because they threatened to take her daughter, Pooh, away from her at that time. Had she not been so scared, she would have never pleaded to something she did not do. Ms. Franklin has been openly critical of the Attorney General's office and as a concerned citizen, she has the right to do that without persecution whether the AG's office agrees with her statements or not. What a world we live in if citizens are afraid or intimidated by government offices when they speak their minds. This is not right.

I also know Ms. Franklin and her daughter, Pooh, personally. I'm privy to the loving environment in Ms. Franklin's home and the wonderful care she gives to her daughter. She's done everything a good mother would do to protect her daughter and to see that she is well cared for. If Ms. Franklin is taken from her daughter that would not only be a crime against Ms. Franklin who has done no wrong, but also to an innocent 9 year old little girl who needs her mother.

I think it is a real waste of tax payer funds to spend thousands of dollars to prosecute a woman for being inadvertently overpaid by DHR when that was not by her doing but rather by their error. We do not see such prosecutions for other citizens who illegally make claims for food stamps and are grossly overpaid by intent rather than by DHR error.

You are indeed honorable and we so appreciate such unbiased fairness toward Ms. Franklin. This is something we have not seen in a long time. Indeed you make Alabama proud.

Respectfully,

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