

May 23, 2005

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor of California
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, Ca. 95814

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger,

We have learned that you have reversed the decisions of the Board of Prison Terms and denied parole for two women who are survivors of domestic violence, namely, Linda Smith and Karen Narita.

Your decision to deny Ms. Smith is just so hard to understand since the Board, in their deliberations and wisdom, has found her suitable for parole on six occasions. SIX!

When you were campaigning for governor, you declared that you would let the various boards and commissions "do their work" and this is not proving to be true in the case of the state corrections system.

True, you inherited a mess from your predecessor and you are facing the most powerful union in California. They are deeply entrenched and no doubt use powerful lobbying to keep inmates from gaining parole.

It almost appears that some kind of quota system is being used to let a few approved inmates free, but decline the majority to keep the "tough on crime" crowd appeased.

There are many like Ms. Smith who deserve their freedom, so we implore you to let the parole decisions of the BPT stand and get on with the important business which your pending reforms address. We fully support you in each of those, just as we supported your candidacy and will again if you decide to seek re-election. You are bringing about positive change. Please do not give in to special interests, prosecutors and others who seek to unduly influence you in the area of inmate releases.

Very truly yours,

Robert and Moira Fitch
Thousand Oaks, Ca. 91360