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Jess Ghannam, PhD
Clinical Professor
Department of Psychiatry &
Global Health Sciences

415 921 8096 (T)
415 921 8095 (F)
jess.ghannam@ucsf.edu

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The Honorable Gershwin Drain
Eastern District of Michigan Court
Theodore Levin U.S. Courthouse
231 W. Lafayette Blvd., Room 123
Detroit MI 48226

RE: Rasmieh Odeh

Your Honor:

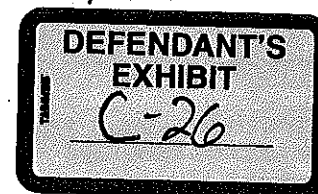
My name is Dr. Jess Ghannam and I am a Professor of Psychiatry at the University of California San Francisco where I have been on the faculty for some 25 years. I am writing you today, hoping for leniency in the sentencing of Ms. Rasmieh Odeh.

As you know, Ms. Odeh is a 67-year-old woman. She is the Deputy Director of the Chicago-Based Arab-American Action Network and has been in this country since 1994. This case has garnered national as well as international attention and more recently she was convicted of lying on her naturalization application in 2004. At that time she answered questions as to whether or not she was arrested, convicted or imprisoned in the negative.

I am sure, as you know, Rasmieh is considered a community leader and is well-respected and since coming to the United States she has consistently worked as an advocate for disenfranchised individuals in Chicago. She is seen by the Chicago community as an individual with the highest moral integrity and has worked to further the wellbeing of her community since she has been in the United States.

Her conviction of unlawful procurement of naturalization in November 2014 sent a ripple effect throughout the entire Arab-American community as well as communities of color throughout the United States. She was detained for a month immediately following the verdict including approximately three weeks in solitary confinement.

I am writing to you today in my capacity as a mental health expert who has worked with torture survivors from all over the world and especially survivors of torture from the Middle East, Africa and the Gulf regions. It is well-known within the community that Rasmieh has severe and significant posttraumatic stress disorder. This disorder, which



she has had even since she was in her 20s, has been a lifelong chronic illness, which she has endured and suffered throughout the bulk of her adult life.

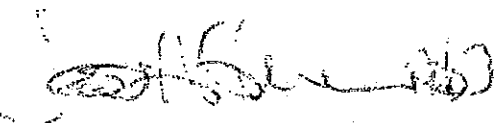
The court proceedings as well as her recent time in jail have exacerbated her posttraumatic stress disorder, causing her to re-experience these symptoms including ongoing nightmares, severe anxiety, depression and a decline in her psychological and behavioral health. Being in the United States and being a citizen that is contributing to the well-being of her community, has been taken from her at this time. While in isolation she continued to decline in her physical and mental health and re-experience severe symptoms of PTSD.

Since there is a possibility of her conviction being overturned on appeal, I am asking you to please consider keeping her out of prison and allow her to be a contributing and productive member of her community and of our society. Having dedicated her life for the last 20 years to serving these communities and the United States, this is a loss for the communities of the Greater Chicago area and beyond. In addition, for Rasmieh to be held pending appeal most certainly will exacerbate her very severe symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder, causing significant and severe decompensation in her already-fragile psychological state.

Given your history of compassion at rulings over your lifetime on the bench, Your Honor, I am asking you to take into consideration the fact of her age, being 67, and the fact of her significant suffering from posttraumatic stress disorder, which is having and exerting a great negative impact on her already-fragile condition. In my experience, having worked with individuals in this position over the last 25 years, I can tell you that Rasmieh's condition will only deteriorate further unless you allow her to stay free pending her appeal.

We are asking for your consideration in this matter.

Very respectfully,



Jess Ghannam, PhD.
Professor of Psychiatry
University of California San Francisco

