

**James & Grace Lee Boggs Center to Nurture Community Leadership**

**www.boggscenter.org**

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**February 16, 2015**

**Honorable Judge Gershwin Drain,**

I am writing to request leniency from you in the March 12 sentencing of Rasmea Odeh, who I know to be an outstanding community leader. My name is Richard Feldman and I am a board member of the James and Grace Lee Boggs Center to Nurture Community Leadership. The Boggs Center's mission is to nurture the transformational leadership capacities of individuals and organizations committed to creating productive, sustainable, ecologically responsible, and just communities.

In addition, the Boggs Center is committed to supporting the work of aging activists, including our co-founder Grace Lee Boggs, who is a 99 year old philosopher and writer. Similarly, Rasmea has spent the majority of her life working to uplift communities, in particular through her recent decade of work with immigrant women in Chicago. She founded the Arab Women's Committee which does important work that embodies Martin Luther King Jr's definition of the "Beloved community". It is imperative that she is able to continue to contribute in a multitude of ways that transform hundreds of women's lives in Chicago and beyond.

I am writing to ask for empathy in your sentencing of Rasmea as a 67-year old woman who has given so much throughout her long life. It will be a huge detriment to her health if she is incarcerated again, considering that almost all prison facilities will be lacking medical services and accommodations to provide care for senior citizens. It will also be a huge loss to her communities in Chicago, Detroit, and beyond who are positively impacted by her collective approach to addressing the needs of the most vulnerable community members.

Thank you for your careful and compassionate consideration of leniency for Rasmea Odeh.

Richard Feldman, Sharon Howell

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