Your Honor,

My name is Zachary Ikey and I am one of (Jacob) Hayden’s older brothers. I will admit I never thought that I would have to be writing a letter like this for any of my family, especially Hayden. He was an innocent kid for as long as I can think back to, most of the time he just was looking to have fun or a good joke. He was a fierce friend to have, and he had a heart for serving in the kid’s ministry at our church. He was a star baseball player with many potential options for colleges.

I was really close to Hayden for as long as I can remember, probably my closest bother. Then I did get married we did drift slightly apart and, when he had turned eighteen he seemed to have started acting extremely different. I tried helping him for a while then he stopped listening, and I was not sure what to do for him. I wanted to help him so badly but he would not listen to any advice I gave him. Then before I knew it I heard that he was picked up by the police, and put in jail. I was thunderstruck by this and as a family we came together to figure out how we could work together to help Hayden. We were just hoping that Hayden would be willing to listen to us, and after being in jail it seemed to have woke him up from his stupor. This was the first time I had seen the real Hayden in a long time. He was helping people again, he was rebuilding relationships with us, he was in church again, he was away from the bad influences that were his “friends”, and he was taking care of himself again.

Now he is on a good track to recovery; he is working on obtaining his GED, he is going to rehab willingly, he wants to be better and most importantly he has his family to help him along the way. I hope that you will take all of what I have written here into consideration when coming to a verdict.