



PROMOTING HEALING AND JUSTICE

Office of Governor Jay Nixon
P.O. Box 720
Jefferson City, MO 65102

December 6, 2016

Dear Governor Nixon,

I write you as citizen concerned with peace and justice in our community to petition you to use your authority to release Ricky Kidd from prison because he is innocent of the crime for which he was convicted, and because the person responsible for the murder continues to walk the streets. I hope you know me well enough to know that I would not be asking you to act if there were any chance that Mr. Kidd committed this crime.

I have followed this case from the very beginning. I knew about the crime before the police did. On the day that George Bryant and Oscar Bridges were murdered, February 6, 1996, Richard Harris called me and told me that he had seen the crime. He lived down the street. He gave me a description of the car, but he did not mention or describe Ricky Kidd to me at that time. I met with Ricky Kidd in the Jackson County Jail before his trial, and I personally know Monica Gray, who very believably says that Ricky Kidd was in her company for the entire day that the crime was committed. I have met with lawyers on every side of this case. I have talked to Jackson County Prosecuting Attorneys Jim Kanatzar and Jean Peters Baker to urge them to release Mr. Kidd, or at least let him present his evidence to a judge. I appeared at hearings, I have gone to meetings, and I have reviewed transcripts and evidence. I am as certain as any human can possibly be that Ricky Kidd is innocent, and that the real criminal, Gary Goodspeed, Jr., is free, living in Kansas City, and will never be brought to justice as long as Ricky Kidd is in prison doing Goodspeed's time.

There are a lot of things that convince me that Ricky Kidd is innocent. I have talked to Ricky Kidd and Monica Gray, and their account of Ricky's actions on February 6, 1996, is

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credible and supported by an application to purchase a gun that was filed with the Jackson County Sheriff's Lake Jacomo office that very day. Richard Harris, on the other hand, is not consistent or reliable. On the day of the murders, he was dealing drugs with George Bryant, but admits he lied to the police about it. He lied about knowing Ricky Kidd. His story doesn't match what any of the law-abiding neighbors saw. He described the assailant as having long curly hair, but Mr. Kidd always shaved his head. No physical evidence puts Mr. Kidd at the scene of the crime; a bloody footprint on the victim's kitchen floor does not match Ricky Kidd's shoes. Although Bryant's four-year-old daughter is supposed to have identified Mr. Kidd from a lineup, she did not pick him out of a photo array, and she could not identify him at trial.

Another thing that troubles me about this case is that all the evidence has always pointed to three men, Gary Goodspeed, Sr., Gary Goodspeed, Jr., and Marcus Merrill, as the perpetrators of these crimes. Airline records prove that they flew to Kansas City from Atlanta a few days before the crime, and on the night before the crime they stayed at the Adam's Mark Hotel in rooms paid for by Marcus Merrill. A car rented by Gary Goodspeed, Sr., at KCI matched Bryant's neighbors' description of the get-away car. Kayla Bryant said the men who killed her father had been to her house a few days before the crime, and Gary Goodspeed, Jr., admitted to the police that this was him and Merrill. When questioned by police, Merrill and the Goodspeeds all said the three of them were together at the Adams' Mark when the crime occurred, but never mentioned Ricky Kidd. If Mr. Kidd were involved, he would have been included in their phony alibi. Richard Harris picked Gary Goodspeed, Jr., out of a lineup, and said he was the guy who

tackled Bryant so his accomplice could shoot him, but the prosecution has never charged Goodspeed with this crime. I find this hard to explain.

I already had substantial doubts that Ricky Kidd was guilty when Marcus Merrill came forward and admitted that he committed the crime with the Goodspeeds, and that Ricky was not involved. There are good reasons to believe Merrill. First, coming forward as he did was very damaging to his own appeals. It is unlikely he would have admitted his role in this crime if it were not true. Second, it is consistent with the physical evidence that three men committed this crime, and his explanation of how it happened matches the bullet wounds on George Bryant's body and the bullet hole in the kitchen wall. Third, Merrill's story is backed up by two independent witnesses, Kayla Bryant and Eugene Williams.

Marcus Merrill told police that he was at Eugene Williams' house the morning before Bryant and Bridges were killed, but no one ever interviewed Williams before Kidd's trial. Williams testified later at a federal hearing under oath that Merrill and the Goodspeeds met at his house just before the crime. They talked about their intention to rob a drug house, and even borrowed a gun from Williams—a .38 caliber revolver that did not function. Williams testified that Goodspeed, Sr., was armed with a gold-plated .45, and Merrill had a 9mm Glock—consistent with .45 caliber bullets recovered from the bodies of the deceased, .45 caliber shell casings found near Bridge's body, and 9mm shell casings found in the garage.

George Bryant's four-year-old daughter, Kayla Bryant, also backs up Merrill's confession. Kayla saw the crime, and called 911. She was still on the phone with the dispatcher when the first officer arrived on the scene. The police could not figure out what she meant when

she told that first officer that “Daddy’s brother shot daddy.” The victim’s widow, Connie Bryant, told police that George Bryant must have known his attackers or he would not have let them in the house. Merrill testified that Bryant’s nickname for Gary Goodspeed, Jr., was “Little Brother” because they looked like they were related to each other. When Bryant raised the garage door with the remote control, Merrill and the Goodspeeds entered the kitchen, and Bryant greeted Goodspeed, Jr., saying, “Hello, Little Brother.” Kayla Bryant also told police that one of the men told her that everything would be alright, which seemed like an odd thing for a robber to say until Merrill explained that just before they fled, Goodspeed, Sr., ordered him to go back and take care of the little girl. Instead of killing her as Goodspeed wanted him to do, Merrill told Kayla that she would be okay, and then fired a shot that made the hole that the police found in the kitchen wall.

The evidence shows that Ricky Kidd did not commit this crime. It also shows that two of the perpetrators of this crime, Gary Goodspeed, Sr., and Gary Goodspeed, Jr., have not been brought to justice. It is too late for Goodspeed, Sr., because he recently passed, but Gary Goodspeed, Jr., has been seen on the streets of Kansas City.

I am writing to you now because the Missouri Court of Appeals recently ruled in Lincoln v. Cassady, WD79854, that innocence is not a legally adequate reason to release a prisoner through habeas corpus. With the recent passing of Judge Richard Teitelman, I am concerned that Missouri courts will not be as ready to correct miscarriages of justice like Mr. Kidd’s. I am turning to you because you are the best hope for justice for Mr. Kidd, his family, and the Kansas City community.

In the pages that follow you will find a summary of the evidence that proves that Mr. Kidd is innocent. I am asking Governor Nixon to please review the evidence in Mr. Kidd's case, and to issue a pardon, commute his sentence, or take whatever other action within your power to set Mr. Kidd free from his unjust conviction before your term is up. Thank you for your consideration of this petition.

Sincerely,



Alvin Brooks