

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

January 3, 2004

President George W. Bush
c/o Mr. Roger Adams
Office of the U.S. Pardon Attorney
U.S. Department of Justice
500 First Street, N.W.
Fourth floor
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001

Dear President Bush:

I have recently become aware that a Commutation of Sentence Petition has been filed regarding **Michael Santos, #16377-004**, who has served more than fifteen years in federal prison after being convicted for a drug offense as 23-year-old first offender. I am not personally acquainted with Mr. Santos. However, like so many other professors who teach and write about criminal justice throughout the United States, I have become familiar with—and extremely impressed by—Mr. Santos through his writings. It is clear to me that Mr. Santos has been extraordinarily successful in devoting his prison years toward both self-improvement and highly-beneficial public service through his publications that are used to educate students throughout the country about imprisonment and criminal justice system. I am not aware of any prisoner who has been more impressive in confronting his misdeeds and then undertaking a single-minded, successful effort at self-improvement over a period of many years beginning with his very first days in the federal prison system. Based on what I know of Mr. Santos—as well as what I know about other prisoners—I believe that Mr. Santos is most deserving of your serious consideration for commutation of his sentence.

As you know from materials already submitted to you, Mr. Santos has been absolutely remarkable in his dedication to pursuing a college degree, a graduate degree, and additional graduate education. I see many college students who are blessed with advantages and resources, yet they lack the intellect, self-discipline, and perseverance that are so evident in the accomplishments of Mr. Santos, who gained his education while overcoming many obstacles in the difficult environment of prison. More importantly, Mr. Santos has used his education to make significant contributions to society through his writings about imprisonment and the criminal justice system. Of particular importance is his recent book, *About Prison* (2004) published by Thomson Wadsworth Publishing, the most prominent textbook publisher in the field of criminal justice. The insights and descriptions presented by Mr. Santos in this book are extremely valuable for criminal justice students at colleges and universities throughout the country. Mr. Santos is already well-known



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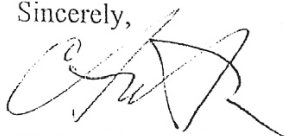
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to many criminal justice students because his descriptions of the criminal justice system have been included in other books, including my own best-selling introductory textbooks, *The American System of Criminal Justice* and *Criminal Justice in America* written with Prof. George Cole. By willingly looking honestly at himself and sharing his insights with young people, Mr. Santos has provided an especially valuable and selfless public service.

Those of us who spend our professional lives studying issues in criminal justice often analyze the nature and purposes of punishment. There is no question that criminal offenders require punishment under our system of law and justice. However, scholars also recognize that there are differences among offenses and offenders that invite consideration of whether society's interests are well served by expending significant resources for the long-term incapacitation and punishment of specific offenders who have re-made themselves into productive individuals who can and will make positive contributions to society. Mr. Santos has paid a heavy price for his misdeeds. Indeed, he has served more years in prison than many offenders throughout the country who have committed more numerous, more serious, and more violent offenses. As I look at the self-improvement, public service, and professional achievements presented by Mr. Santos, I believe that there is every reason to predict that society will gain its greatest benefits through the release of an individual who clearly has much to contribute and poses little risk of future criminality. I urge you to give the Petition for Commutation your most consideration. Mr. Santos is most deserving of the exercise of this important aspect your presidential authority.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. E. Smith', written in a cursive style.

Christopher E. Smith, J.D., Ph.D.
Professor of Criminal Justice

