

Greetings Governor N. Haley,

I pray that this letter reaches you in good spirits. I'm sure by now it has been read a few times by your subordinates. The intent of this letter serves a few purposes:

Firstly, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Daydrion Rouse. To the state of SC, I am documented by SCDC # 342518. I am currently serving a 15 suspended to 10 years sentence for leaving the scene of an accident and two counts of assault and battery. In 2010, while attending my friends fraternity probate, I was involved in an accident at the conclusion with two pedestrians. One of the individuals suffered a scratch on the elbow and the other had severe injuries, but has since made at least a 90 percent recovery. At the time I was a junior at the University of South Carolina in Columbia. I was a computer science major with a minor in graphic design. I was also preparing to begin basic with the US Air Force. If you can't tell by the name, I am African American. I note this because I do believe the justice system is full of imbalances. Through my case, I have been afforded plenty of insight on how things work against me.

Even during sentencing, the judge said he would reduce my sentence from a suspended 15 to a straight ten years, IF I would pay twenty thousand restitution by the month of December. I was sentenced in September. At the time, I was 21 years old and in college. Where he suspected I could get that type of money from, I have no idea. It is sad though that these injustices still live today. I recieved more time than most recieve with a felony DUI. The county furthermore stacked my charges with the assault and batteries saying my car was a weapon. How often do they do that? I wish to file for a pardon upon my relief. I wish there was a more serious taking in SC's criminal justice system; being that I'm serving as a violent offender (85%) for a crime labeled as an accident.

Since my incarceration, I have ~~take~~<sup>taken</sup> upon myself to better myself to the best of my ability. I currently still have two years and nine months left, unless of course that prison reform act bill is passed. I pray it is more than a rumor. My work assignment is to Operation Get Smart. It's in terms of a sophisticated "Scared Straight". No yelling or intrusive behavior, but speaking to the community with sense about good choices and decisions. Many times our youth make decisions based off of emotions too quickly to think about the consequences. These consequences can be detrimental to one's goals and dreams. I had a

promising future only to be railroaded by an imbalanced justice system. No longer can I travel to certain countries. I can't obtain certain licenses. Even more damning, the challenges that await me when I'm released will be an everlasting condemnation trying to provide for my family as well as myself. Even paying to finish school without any grants will be a challenge. My hope is to get the youth to understand these results await them as well if they fail to stay focused and have plans. I get so much joy to have a highschool student tell me how my story has impacted their life. Or to go into a PTI or rehab session and see tears fall from the participants eyes knowing that they must begin to take their lives more serious, because they are one step away from being where I am. I mean, no one plans to come to prison, but actions speak louder than words. Operation Get Smart is such an educational and inspirational crime prevention program. It's implementation should spread to every county and <sup>be</sup> sponsored by police departments to bridge the gap between law enforcement, the community, and those incarcerated. There is currently only four of us on the team. And for some reason, I am not permitted to go out in Richland County. Go figure.

Lastly, Governor, I want to take the time to thank you! When you first came into office, I wasn't sure how

you would do. I hope my honesty is not taken the wrong way. The way you stepped up and handled adversity was amazing. From handling the floods, the Emanuel 12, and even the relocation of the confederate flag. You handled each situation with delicacy and precision. I hope you have a presidency campaign in the near future. I listened to you speak on numerous broadcasts and your composure and emotions were real. Your actions let it be known that it's okay to be in a place of authority and be human. You see Wanza (Tywonza Sondors) was one of my best friends. I spent more time at Mrs. Felicia's house than I spent my own. Everytime someone mentions his name the joy is overwhelming, because our childhood dreams was to be famous. We pledged that we would make history. Despite Roof's intent, he gave my friend the legacy he dreamed of. A legacy of union, peace, love, and forgiveness. Though all I have left of him ~~is~~ is letters, pictures, and memories, I know his legacy will remain forever. I thank you governor for handling that situation as you did. A story of forgiveness.

In all, I hope it is something that I said which will motivate you to continue being a voice for those who have been silenced unrighteously. For myself, for Wanza, and for my teammates of Operation Get Smart. I wish I could spend a day enlightening you on the actual occurrences within SCDC as well. Why the prison system here in

South Carolina is an injustice to the society as a whole. If you could please respond with some advice on one day obtaining my pardon, the importance of programs such as Operation Get Smart, or even some steps I could possibly take to further better my existence once I am released it would be greatly appreciated. Until then, I will continue to P.U.S.H (pray until something happens) and fight to save lives in the communities in which I speak. Again, thank you for your service as Governor and instilling hope in our communities. I look forward to a response of some sort. As Wanza ended all of his letters, Ambition over Adversity!

Respectfully,  
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