

May 5, 2016

Dear Governor Nikki Haley,

I am writing this letter as somewhat of a special request and probably not a normal request. I know you don't know me, so this takes a lot of nerve to write you a letter requesting a favor. If you don't mind, I would like to explain a little about why I am writing this.

I just turned 40 years old and have three sons, ages 16, 12, and 10. I knew for many years that my father who I grew to know was not my biological father. I won't bore you with details of my childhood, as it is irrelevant anyway, but let's just say that it wasn't the greatest family life (not that any of us have a picture perfect childhood) and I will leave it at that.

About two years ago, I decided to search for my biological father. I found out he is an inmate at Broad River Correctional Institute. His name is Richard Sabatino. He did not even know that I knew anything about him. He had escaped from prison a few times and came up to Pennsylvania to try to be sure I was okay, but chose to stay away since he could not provide me with any kind of life and assumed my life was better than what he could provide. He has been at Broad River, I believe, for about 18 years. I think he is serving a 22 year sentence. We have been writing and talking on the phone on occasion for the past two years. He seems like a very intelligent and caring man (and I don't say that about anyone easily), who knows what he has done in the past was wrong and has never once blamed anyone but himself for the way his life has gone. Furthermore, he evens blames himself for the way my life has gone. I am now grown with three great boys who I love more than anything, so my life has improved so much after I got out of an abusive marriage.

I am trying to keep this short as I know you are very busy. I am from Pennsylvania, but I am aware that there are some headlines in South Carolina regarding prison and sentencing reform. I understand that there are some bills that are on the table to reduce prison sentences for non violent offenders. My father, Richard, made several really bad choices in his life and he is the first to admit it. What made it worse was that he kept complicating things by escaping or getting into some other kind of trouble. If he had just served his original sentence, when I was just a few months old, he would have been out several years ago. Eventually, he did straighten himself out and settled down in prison. He has not been in any trouble or anything for many years and is actually a working inmate. He works as much as the prison allows and when he is not working he is working out or writing letters. I am unsure of some of the specifics, but I believe he has served about 80% of his sentence. He is a non violent

criminal. I have looked up his crimes and I did not see anything that would be classified as a violent crime. I see criminals who are violent or have committed very severe crimes and serving a lot less time, only because of the time frame that he had been convicted.

I would so love to get to know my father out of prison while I am fairly young and for my boys to get to know their grandfather while they are still young also. I have not met my father, as he did not want me to meet him for the first time while in prison. I know my father deserves what he got and so does he. He has spent most of his life in prison. I am just writing in hopes to bring some of these issues to the surface if I can. I know when he gets out this time, he will never do anything to land himself in that position again. He has never had a family or anything worth living a normal, healthy lifestyle for. He does now and I would so love to have that chance with him. Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carrie Rush". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carrie Rush

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