

July 25, 2016

Governor Rick Snyder  
Romney Building  
111 S. Capitol Ave. 4<sup>th</sup> floor  
Lansing, MI 48909

**Re: Commutation/Parole of Karen Kantzler #192343**

Dear Governor Snyder,

I am writing to request the commutation or parole of Karen Kantzler #192343.

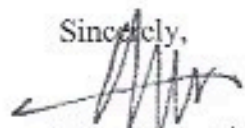
I was the Oakland County trial court judge on Karen Kantzler's case in 1988. I sentenced her to life in prison for second-degree murder for killing her husband who was a wife batterer. At that time, I expected that she would be eligible for parole in approximately 10 years (less with good time credits). What I did not know was that nobody gets released in this state, then or now, even if they have paroleable life. Rather, they are routinely turned down by the Michigan Parole Board. My sentence was a serious and tragic error on my part. Had I known that, I would have sentenced her to 10 years, and with time served and good time credits, she would have been eligible in less time than that.

In 1993, my successor judge, Judge Barry Howard, resentedenced Karen Kantzler on appeal to 3 to 10 years, making her eligible for parole at that time. Unfortunately, that sentence was overturned on the prosecutor's appeal.

Karen Kantzler was a battered woman. Her husband had a long history of both physical and mental abuse directed toward her. He also had lawsuits against him for beating up others. She has now served 29 years. She has had no misconducts and is not a danger to anyone. She is semi-blind, frail and unwell, but has a large community of friends who support her. I testified for her at her public hearing last year. The Michigan Department of Corrections classified her as High Probability for Parole. Despite the Department's own recommendation, she was denied.

I know you have the power to assist this poor woman now. I would hope and trust that my letter will be of some assistance to you in making the decision to commute her sentence. By law, she has had the requisite public hearing. In the alternative, I would hope you would request your parole board to reconsider her parole. Karen Kantzler is most deserving of the exercise of your unique power to correct this injustice.

Sincerely,



Norman L. Lippitt

cc: Beth Clement, Chief Legal Counsel to Governor Snyder  
Cheri Arwood, Executive Administrator

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