



NEW JERSEY SENATE

SENATE CHAMBERS

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TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625-0000

July 24, 2008

Honorable John H. Adler, Chairman
New Jersey Senate Judiciary Committee
1916 Route 70 East, Suite 3
Cherry Hill, New Jersey 08003

Dear Senator Adler:

We are writing to ask that you convene the Judiciary Committee to explore options to remove Parole Board member Charlie Jones from his position of public trust. His continued service on the Parole Board will likely result in unwarranted parole approvals and is offensive to every prosecutor, law enforcement officer, and every citizen who has ever served on a jury or is interested in justice.

Mr. Jones wrote a rambling 7 page letter (attached) to Judge Martini claiming that the federal indictment and recent jury conviction of former Senator/Mayor Sharpe James on numerous counts of abusing his office were nothing more than political acts. The letter expresses a shocking level of contempt for law enforcement and the jury system. In his letter, Mr. Jones begins with rhetoric bordering on delusional:

"I wish to add my letter in support of one of America's greatest mayors [Sharpe James] whose political enemies are trying to use the federal courts to do what they could not do, defeat the people's mayor."

"...I am writing because he is totally innocent of the political charges in Counts 1-5, and the charge to the jury by the government to 'send a message' that led to an unwarranted, unfair, totally divorced of court testimony and evidence and lacking a 'beyond reasonable doubt' guilt verdict by a jury that did not even know what from of government Newark operated under?" [sic]

Mr. Jones' letter goes on to apply an analysis of redevelopment laws and his understanding of Sharpe James's activities, and presents his completely unqualified conclusion that no crime was committed.

He concludes his letter with more inflammatory rhetoric:

"Mayor James is an innocent man being politically charged of wrongdoings that legally, by law, that he simply could not commit. By law he was prohibited from doing what the government 'rushed' to charge him with. The government did not prove their case beyond 'any reasonable doubt' standards. [sic]

Aside from his disparaging assessment of prosecutors who worked so hard on this matter and his harsh assessment of the jury which convicted Sharpe James, Mr. Jones' letter is cause for

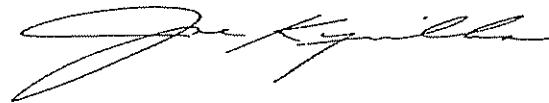
concern for another reason. In his letter, he claims to base his opinion on viewing the trial over the internet. Aside from the sheer amount of time that may or may not have taken from his primary responsibilities as a member of the Parole Board, it is shocking that someone so involved in the judicial process believes it is appropriate, by virtue of watching a trial on the internet, to substitute their own judgment for the judgment of a jury.

It is frightening to think that Mr. Jones is in a position to determine whether convicted felons should be released from prison. This appointment was an obvious mistake as Mr. Jones' basic understanding and commitment to our criminal justice system was not properly vetted. Allowing his continued service in so sensitive a capacity would constitute an abandonment of our responsibilities as elected officials. We are offering to work with you to correct this difficult situation and ask that you convene the Senate Judiciary Committee to determine how we may remove Mr. Jones from his position of public trust.

Sincerely,



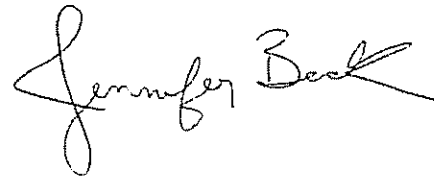
Senator Gerald Cardinale



Senator Joseph M. Kyrillos



Senator William B. Baroni



Senator Jennifer Beck

Charles Jones
235 North 9th Street
Kenilworth, NJ 07033

June 22, 2008

The Honorable William J. Martini
Federal District Judge
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Federal
Courthouse & Office Building
50 Walnut Street
Newark, New Jersey 07102

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Re: Former Mayor Sharpe James is an innocent man

Dear Honorable Judge Martini:

As a former aide to Mayor Sharpe James and knowing of your exemplary background as a former councilman, freeholder, port authority commissioner and congressman, I wish to add my letter in support of one of America's greatest mayors whose political enemies are trying to use the federal courts to do what they could not do, defeat the people's mayor. The mayor who saved New Jersey's largest city, Newark.

I am witness to the fact that twenty years ago Mayor James inherited a ghost city, a dying city called Newark, and with unmatched honesty, integrity, energy and creativity he revitalized it. Thereafter, and fighting a recalcitrant city council improved its bond ratings, image and brought back movie theaters, family restaurants, a roller skating rink, New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), Bears/Eagles Ball Stadium, Ironbound and Shahbaz community athletics/recreational facilities, downtown to airport rail link, new Rutgers and Seton Hall Law Schools, this beautiful Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Courthouse and Office Building which he negotiated with Mr. Diamonds, built new schools, ten new hotels with occupancy taxes and of course, he recently added the much needed and talked about the Prudential Center, home for the New Jersey Devils and Seton Hall University basketball team.

Interestingly enough, when four governors had failed to find financing for the Newark Arena, Mayor James used \$165 million of his victorious Port Authority law suit monies to make the Prudential Center a reality. He also reduced crime in the city by 50% and cut auto theft 60% by hiring then Newark native and Police Director, Joseph Santiago. Mayor James has never been accused of stealing one penny from anyone and is a national role model for urban cities revitalization.

He was elected President of the National League of Cities (NLC), presiding over 17,000 elected officials, served as a Trustee and Officer for the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM), Vice President of the New Jersey Conference of Mayors and selected Mayor of the Year by the New Jersey Conference of Mayors, who stated that he had moved Newark from "urban blight to urban bright."

Nevertheless, and notwithstanding his many contributions, I am writing because he is totally innocent of the political charges in Counts 1-5, and the charge to the jury by the government to "send a message" that led to an unwarranted, unfair, totally divorced of court testimony and evidence and lacking a "beyond reasonable doubt" guilt verdict by a jury that did not even know what form of government Newark operated under?

That's my opinion now here are the indisputable facts in this political oriented trial against a most successful urban mayor, one that the government found fault with for simply having served twenty years as mayor, nine years as a state senator, controlled the Department of Economic Development and Housing ("suppose too") and was a dual office holder they chided the jury (where is the crime?).

If we are a law abiding state and court, not being political or business as usual, or not to simply side with the government for career and convenience sake, Mayor James is an innocent man. The law did not allow him to commit the crimes the government rushed ("he was retiring from public office/last chance to nail him") to indict him on and they too were surprised and shocked (but then quickly celebrated in resume building) at the jury's unwarranted/unfair verdict.

Therefore, let's honestly, fairly, objectively and impartially review the Faulkner Act and the New Jersey Local Redevelopment Laws (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq., as amended), as they relate to said bogus politically motivated charges against Mayor James:

Counts 1-3:

- **The Charge**

James/Riley created a "Scheme" to defraud the City of Newark, called the "South Ward Redevelopment Plan, or "SWRP"

The Law/court testimony/body of evidence

1. Under the Faulkner Act & NJ Redevelopment Laws, only the City Council can call upon the Central Planning Board to conduct a study to determine if an area is in need of redevelopment, not the mayor. There is constant communication and hearings between the Council and Central Planning Board totally absent any involvement by the mayor **by law**.
2. In retrospect, Councilman-at-Large Donald Tucker on August 5, 1998 sponsored a council resolution authorizing the Central Planning Board to make investigation and hold public hearings.....to determine the need for a "SWRP," not the mayor (please see enclosed exhibit 1).
3. **On August 5, 1998, Mayor James did not know, had never heard of, or met a Tamika Riley, so how could the "SWRP" be a scheme between the two?**
4. Notwithstanding these irrefutable facts, every government DEHD witness including Newark Corporation Counsel Joanne Watson, Basil Franklin, London Farley, Regina Bayley and members of the City Council for the defense (Dr. Mamie Bridgeforth & Gayle Chaneyfield Jenkins), all testified that the "SWRP" was a huge success and greatly benefited the City of Newark (got rid of blight, provided affordable housing, new image and tax dollars).

So the "SWRP" was not created by the mayor. The "SWRP" had absolutely nothing to do with Tamika Riley. The City of Newark greatly benefited? It was a brainstorm of the late Councilman-at-Large, Donald Tucker, a resident of the South Ward. So where is the fraud?

5. There was no court testimony/evidence to the contrary.
6. Conclusion:

"This charge is legally and factually false."

- **The Charge**

James sold property to Riley at "steeply discounted prices."

The Law/court testimony/body of evidence

1. Under the Faulkner Act only the city council is vested with the legal authority to set the price to sell municipal land, not the mayor. Ms. Riley paid the same price of \$2000 per housing unit for rehabilitated property that everyone else paid. She did not receive any steeply discounted prices. Current Mayor then Councilman Cory Booker, along with current council members Luis Quintana and Augusto Amador all voted for the price to sell land to Tamika Riley

2. Court evidence exhibiting City Council Resolutions showed that everyone including Tamika Riley paid the same price for rehabilitated properties (\$2000. per unit).

3. Government witness Basil Franklin testified that Tamika Riley did not receive any discounted prices, paid the same as everyone else and Mayor James had nothing to do with setting the price.

4. There was no court testimony/evidence to the contrary.

5. Conclusion:

"This charge is legally and factually false."

- **The Charge**

James "steered property" to Tamika Riley.

The Law/court testimony/body of evidence

1. Under the Faulkner Act all decisions on the conditions, price and who receives municipal land is under the authority of the city council. It is the city council "by council resolutions" that had the sole power under the Faulkner Act to approve of property sales, not the mayor. Again current Mayor then Councilman Cory Booker, along with current council members Luis Quintana and Augusto Amador, all voted to sell properties to Tamika Riley.

2. Government witness Basil Franklin testified that he had no knowledge of Mayor James influencing any person on behalf of Tamika Riley, nor did the Mayor attempt to "steer" property to Tamika Riley.

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Basil Franklin testified..."he (Sharpe) never instructed me to give anybody or to work with anybody directly...on the subject of getting property."

3. There was no court testimony/evidence to the contrary

4. Conclusion:

"This charge is legally and factually false"

Count 4:

• **The Charge**

James participated in the fraudulent sales of city properties

The Law/court testimony/body of evidence

1. The government never charged Mayor James with receiving any money, and no court testimony or evidence suggested that he received any money

2. No FBI statement/interviews by Tamika Riley suggested that she gave him any money.

3. Government witnesses Wendee Bailey, Shastri Persad and Alexander Alvarez all testified that Mayor James "did not participate in any way, shape or form in any sales of properties by Tamika Riley/TRI." "James did not receive one dime was the court testimony and he had no knowledge of said transactions."

4. There was no court testimony that James benefited financially (no economic benefit to him) directly or indirectly from any property sales involving Tamika Riley/TRI.

5. Conclusion:

No court testimony or evidence involving Mayor James in any real estate transactions by Tamika Riley/TRI. "He did not receive one dime." He did not receive any economic benefit.

Count 5:

- **The Charge**

A. James signed the City Contract

The Law/court testimony/body of evidence

1. As stated by the defense the mayor was not involved in a close personal relationship with Tamika Riley and under the Faulkner Act and NJ Local Redevelopment Laws, the City Council purposely acts by Council Resolutions to deny the mayor any veto power over publicly demanded redevelopment projects and his signature on the contract is not needed as testified by Corporation Counsel Joanne Watson and is in evidence when the Corporation Counsel and the Mayor refused to sign the McClellan Street Urban Renewal Proposal, however, their signature was not needed on the contract in order for it to be binding and effective.

B. Senate Bill 967 to assist Tamika Riley

The Law/court testimony/body of evidence

1. Government witness, Newark Corporation Counsel Joanne Watson, testified that Senate Bill 967 involved a long court dispute between the Mayor and the City Council over the McClellan Street commercial property, and had absolutely nothing to do with Tamika Riley. Senate Bill 967 simply clarified the powers and duties of the Mayor and City Council under the Faulkner Act. A check and balance form of government.

Government witness George LeBlanc likewise testified that it was not "special legislation," it was legitimate legislation and the bill had to be approved in both houses (Senate & Assembly) and signed into law by Governor Corzine. Again Senate Bill 967 was routine state legislative action and had nothing to do with Tamika Riley.

C. Senate \$25,000 TRI Grant Letter to assist Tamika Riley

The Law/court testimony/body of evidence

1. Here again government witness George LeBlanc testified that there was nothing improper about the inquiry or letter. TRI was not a non profit organization and thereby no request for any grant monies was ever forwarded to Trenton? No grant application. No monies received. No issue.

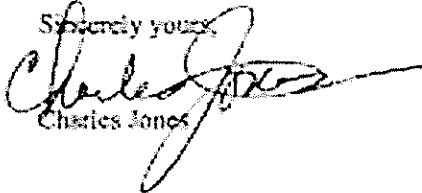
Honorable Judge Martini, I felt compelled to write this letter having witness and heard court room testimony, viewed the trial over the internet and from my knowledge having worked in city government under the mayor. I offer this letter for your valued consideration and evaluation. I, like others want only fairness. We are not seeking charity but parity, the law interpreted fairly for all.

Mayor James is an innocent man being politically charged of wrongdoings that legally, by law, that he simply could not commit. By law he was prohibited from doing what the government "rushed" to charge him with. The government did not prove their case beyond any "reasonable doubt" standards.

Just think, 33 Government witnesses were recruited, interviewed, lectured, rehearsed and still not one accused Mayor James of any wrongdoing? Why? Because he did not commit any crime and even more importantly the case was "legally deficient."

Thank you for allowing me to comment and with all due respect, I remain

Sincerely yours,



Charles Jones