Date:

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger,

I am writing to urge you to uphold the Board of Parole Hearing's parole suitability finding for Mary Shields, #W40409.   Mary Shields has spent nineteen years in prison on a seven-to-life sentence for attempted murder. During her time in prison, she has had an exemplary record, without a single disciplinary infraction. This was her first arrest and she has no other juvenile or adult convictions or arrests. Mary has used her time in prison to participate in a wide variety of rehabilitative programs. She is widely respected by her peers and has the support of many CDCR staff for her release on parole.

During her time in prison, Mary has gone through a major personal transformation and a process of deep self-reflection. She has participated in the prison's AA program from the time she was first incarcerated and recently was unanimously elected as chair of CCWF's AA chapter. She has participated in all the self-help classes available at the prison, including domestic violence, anger management, grief and loss, and childhood abuse. She is a deeply religious person who has not only take Bible study classes but now teaches them. She is a certified HIV peer counselor and she acts as an informal mentor to many other women prisoners. The significant growth in her insight and self-awareness was recognized in her most recent psychiatric report.

Mary has maintained close bonds with her children, her brother and other family members throughout the years of separation. Her devoted family is ready to offer whatever assistance she needs to help her transition back to the community. Mary has a solid parole release plan which includes acceptance by Crossroads, Inc. residential program in Los Angeles.

The Board of Parole Hearings concluded that Mary poses no threat to public safety and is ready to resume life as a productive member of the community. Please honor their decision and uphold Mary Shields' release on parole.

Sincerely,

_____
Name/Signature

_____
Address