**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Incarcerated Man Seeks Justice After Decades of Unjust Imprisonment

Auburn, CA – July 28, 2023 – The case of Shawn Rodriguez, who has been behind bars for over two decades, has drawn renewed attention as new evidence and changes in California law shed light on a grave miscarriage of justice. Mr. Rodriguez, convicted in 2003 for robbery and auto theft, was also handed multiple life sentences for crimes he neither participated in nor intended to commit.

The convoluted events leading to his wrongful conviction involve the tragic kidnapping of an individual named Nick, orchestrated by a woman named Anna. Despite Shawn Rodriguez's absence during the actual act of kidnapping, he was still found guilty under the "natural and probable consequences doctrine," which held him responsible for actions he had no control over or intent to commit.

Recent changes in California law have invalidated the "natural and probable consequences doctrine," acknowledging that each person should be held accountable solely for their actions and intentions. This significant legal development paves the way for a fair and unbiased reevaluation of Shawn Rodriguez's case.

"We firmly believe that Shawn Rodriguez is a victim of an outdated legal doctrine that has long been discredited," said Dr. Angela Cotellessa, spokesperson for the “Help Free Shawn Rodriguez” campaign. “It is time for the courts to recognize their past errors and rectify the injustice done to him."

A crucial aspect of the case involves evidence showing that Nick, the victim of the kidnapping, later confessed repeatedly, in writing, to perjury during the trial. Despite his confession and repeated attempts to right the wrong, his letters were mostly disregarded by authorities at the time.

"We are urging the Superior Court of California to reconsider Shawn Rodriguez's sentencing and focus solely on his actions, not those of others," Dr. Cotellessa continued. "Our appeal seeks to ensure that the principles of justice are upheld, and that no person should be punished for someone else's crimes."

The family and supporters of Shawn Rodriguez are calling on the local media and concerned citizens to closely monitor the court proceedings to ensure that justice is served. They believe that the public's scrutiny will bring attention to the flaws in the initial conviction and put pressure on the Placer County courts to rectify the situation.

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**About Shawn Rodriguez:**

Shawn Rodriguez has been in the state’s care almost his entire life since he first entered the foster care system at eight years old. Despite a difficult life filled with many traumatic experiences - many of which were done under the guise of government - he has turned himself into a resilient, intelligent, highly capable man. Now nearly 40 years old, and having cost California taxpayers an estimated $3 million dollars to entrap for most of his life, he has managed to maintain his dignity and humanity despite the obstacles that long-term incarceration can do to a person.

He has read over 1,000 books in prison, taken countless courses and programs, and recently competed his certification to be an electrician, making him readily employable upon his release from prison. He has family waiting to welcome him home after his unjust prison term of over two decades.

Shawn was sent to prison for conspiracy to commit murder, even though he had no intent to kill and actively sabotaged Anna’s efforts to murder Nick. Shawn received a sentence the same that murderers receive even though the victim was not even physically harmed and confessed to perjury (for which Placer County has never brought him to justice).

Despite the setbacks, he maintains hope that the justice system will finally right this wrong and release him from prison immediately.

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A person and person hugging

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