

Jon Ivy

Director, Voter Access Project
Republican Candidate for U.S. House of Representatives (CA-7)
140 B St, # 5-179, Davis, CA 95616

February 10, 2010

US Department of Justice
Office of the Pardon Attorney
Washington, D.C. 20530
Re: Petition for Commutation for Reality Leigh Winner

Hello,

My name is Jon Ivy. I'm writing to you about Reality Winner and her request for commutation. I served with Reality when we were both in the Air Force doing intelligence work at Ft. Meade. While I didn't know her well personally, professionally I knew of her accomplishments as a language analyst – she was considered to be the best her unit had. Since leaving the Air Force, I've become a voting rights advocate, studied law at UC Davis Law School here in California, and am currently running for Congress in California's 7th Congressional District.

There is a difference between a spy who is selling or giving secrets to our enemies or adversaries and a person who chooses to release information to the press in order to alert the public of what they believe to be injustice within our government. The criminal law here treats both with the same harshness. However, I think we should look to the purpose of those laws in determining the proper punishment for someone like Reality.

Reality Winner needs no further rehabilitation. Her crime was one of specific circumstances that she will never meet again. She is not a "criminal" in need of reform. If she did wrong, it was not a reflection of her moral character or of her propensity to commit crimes. Reality does not need to be removed from our society to prevent further criminal activity. She will have no more opportunities in her lifetime to leak classified material. She is not a danger to society in any sense.

Reality's continued incarceration does not act as a deterrent to others facing similar choices. She was fully aware of the potential and likely punishment for her crime. She was trained, as we all are, to put the greater good above our own safety. If someone trained in that way is facing a choice between doing what they believe is right and facing a possible death sentence – I don't think they'll shy away from the braver (albeit criminal) path. The best deterrence for this kind of behavior is to improve the paths for whistleblowers within the Intelligence Community – a task that our current national security components have taken up with great efforts. Paths for whistleblowers exist now that didn't exist before. That is the best deterrence we can get... not a continued incarceration of a young veteran.

And to round out the criminology theory, there is no justice in continuing to incarcerate Reality Winner as revenge on her for her crimes. Reality is someone who has raised her right hand and promised to go and die for her country – not just risk her life, but to give it if asked – and there is no moral justice in punishing her further than necessary. Please consider well her petition for commutation.

Thank you,



Jon Ivy