

Rachi Siders
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Randallstown, MD 21133

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MAR 21 2025

SC Court of Appeals

Judges of the South Carolina Court of Appeals
Calhoun Building
1220 Senate Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

To the judges of the South Carolina Court of Appeals deciding on the recently remanded case of Albert Siders V State of South Carolina:

This is the power of attorney and advocate for Albert Siders, but most importantly I'm his son first. I'm writing to you on his behalf on my own and not directed by him. I know it has been a little time now and not sure where the judges are in the decision-making process but this is just a letter to give another piece of consideration in the meantime. As you know he has been in a legal battle for quite some time now leading up to this point. His case is one of many twists and turns which is overcast by a series of legal violations, evidence tampering and outright perjury to obtain a conviction. At the very least David Matthews should have objected the original case and asked to have all evidence thrown out due to the lack of authenticity through the chain of custody that is needed to keep account of evidence. From arrest to trial, the process was over a year. More than 365 days. Could you imagine the standard of evidence admissible in court being reduced to simply showing up with evidence and presenting it as fact? The legal system would lose all credibility if that were the case. Yet this was allowed to happen after Albert Siders' 6th amendment right to a fair and speedy trial had long been violated. Still the trial was allowed to go on. State Solicitor Steve Knight lead the witness Jurnell Washington about what took place during the robbery knowing full well that the video evidence was fabricated and not have a date and time stamp on it. According to the closing statement by Solicitor Steve Knight the minimum degree of whether the video that we have and sent out matches what was shown at the original trial is a gun being stuck in the face of store clerk Mrs. Washington while asking for the money. I encourage all judges to look for yourselves and see if this is true or not. This includes a jury that never got to hear Mr. Siders' defense through a collaborated suppression of testimony which is on court records that we have. Approaching a decade later, the State has failed to produce any claimed evidence used during the trial nor have they provided a chain of custody or produced the original records as court ordered by two separate judges.

The purpose of my writing to you is not to rehash the facts of the case. All the details can be found in the writ of centiorari that Albert Siders recently sent out absent from the knowledge of the South Carolina Supreme Court's decision to send the case back to the lower courts. The purpose is to add what I believe has been missing from the beginning which is context. Albert Siders is guilty of two things: being in the

wrong place at the wrong time and pissing off the authorities by exposing misconduct in the 20-page letter that he wrote. Anything beyond that my father is not guilty of. My father has had a history with imprisonment. This is a result of the side effects of drug addiction which started to change his life and ours as a family. When I first heard the news that my father had got locked up again, I figured that would ever he got locked up for he was guilty of. There was a time in my life when my view of my father changed from being a superhero to just a man. Vulnerable, prone to make mistakes, and capable of failing. I became frustrated and disappointed with the reality of who my father had become. For a few years in that span, we had no meaningful communication. Our relationship as father and son at the time was not what it is today. Over the years we worked on rebuilding our relationship and through conversation I was able to hear his story and his heart. I remember it like it was yesterday when he kept telling me about all the different times he was going to court. Finally, I asked him why the State kept asking for all these continuances and then he told me that it was his own lawyer who was asking for the continuances. It was at that moment that I knew that my father was telling the truth. Throughout the course of time there are many life events that have happened. The only time my two kids, now 12 and 11, met my father was at my grandfather's funeral. My father forced to only be allowed to say a brief goodbye to the man who raised him and not even get to stay for the funeral service. These moments have been taken away from Albert Siders. Not to mention other family members that have passed away during his time served. And more recently my mother has gone through severe health challenges for the first time in her life and she still struggles today mentally from her own battles and the ongoing injustice that has happened to my father. She too has experienced the ups and downs of the legal system that has failed to be objective and fair. Even personally I have gone through a painful divorce and still finding my way as a single father and young man entering his forties. We're talking about real life. Real people. Real emotions. Real hurt and love. Even one day being locked away for a crime in a manner you did not commit is enough, but Albert Siders has been in prison for over 4,018 days for a wrongful conviction. Put yourselves in his shoes and ask yourself what you would do to clear your name. We have done everything legally possible to show proof and evidence only to be turned away and ignored by the entities with the power to right a very blatant series of wrongs. I'm sure all of you have families, friends, and memories that you hold on to. How would you feel to be separated from the people that you love and the things you love to do for that long knowing that you have all the evidence to prove your innocence? My father's request to ask for an immediate release as well within reason and relatable to everyone making the decision whether or not to overturn his case. My mother's 61st birthday is next month, April 2 to be exact, and we are hoping that within the month of March my father will be released from jail. He deserves this. My family deserves this. The inescapable hope of an impartial justice system deserves this. After all, this is an innocent man's life we are talking about.

After the supposed evidentiary hearing in 2023 there was no way that Albert Siders should have gone back to prison. We have the state of South Carolina that showed up with no evidence, continued to lie, and further relive the events that have already taken place in which they committed a number of trial infractions. I reiterate that all "evidence" brought before the jury in April of 2015 was submitted after over a year of arrest without a chain of custody without or any level of accountability and more importantly without truth. These things were done to put my father away for the rest of his life. Again, this happened as a result of my father exposing the corruption that took place in the drug task force team. That does not give the State the right to lie to the jury, fabricate evidence, and make a conscious decision to ruin an innocent man's life. My father is not requesting any favors. He's simply asking the justice system to do what is right. Now I am asking as his son who has lived through this with him not to

delay any longer. Given the circumstances and evidence (and absence of evidence on the State's part) that we ourselves have presented and the fact that the South Carolina Supreme Court remanded the case, I trust that the judges of the court of appeals will make the right ruling. All we simply ask is that the decision be made sooner rather than later. As stated, even one day in jail for a crime you did not commit is too many. Please do not make Albert Siders wonder and wait any longer for the day he receives justice. He did not ask me to write to you. This is being done as an advocate of my childhood hero and as his son. We have been waiting, and we are tired, but we will never give up.

Let me state that this is in no way an attempt to make this decision for you but to ask, if possible, not to allow this decision to drag out. That's what was done with the judge's order following the evidentiary hearing in which the decision came down to outright word of mouth and the somehow credibility of the state officials rather than the circumstances of the case as a whole or the facts of the video surveillance.(no verification about what actually happened in the video versus the statements from the trial transcript) With the evidence we have provided and explanation in the last brief, the picture could not be any clearer as to what actually took place. I thank you for your consideration in making a decision this month as we look to finally put this chapter of life behind us for good.

With great concern and care,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rachi S.", written in dark ink.

Rachi Siders

From: RACHA SIDERS
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BALTIMORE MD 212

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