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**LOCAL AND NATIONAL SUPPORT
FOR BRENDAN DASSEY'S
EXECUTIVE CLEMENCY PETITION**

MILWAUKEE – The following statements were issued today supporting the petition for executive clemency that has been filed with the Office of Governor Tony Evers on behalf of Brendan Dassey. The statements are made by individuals representing a wide range of perspectives, including disability experts, law enforcement authorities, victim advocates and teacher associations. Quoted individuals are available for interview upon request.

BRENDAN'S ATTORNEYS

LAURA NIRIDER,

Brendan Dassey's Attorney, Center on Wrongful Convictions:

“Governor Evers has said that freeing people who don't need incarceration is a moral issue. Brendan Dassey is the living embodiment of that moral issue. Brendan has served more than thirteen years in prison for a crime he did not commit. We look forward to helping Governor Evers understand that there is no one more deserving of clemency than Brendan Dassey.”

STEVEN DRIZIN,

Brendan Dassey's Attorney, Center on Wrongful Convictions:

“Brendan's confession is an example of what happens when you use police tactics designed for seasoned adult criminals on disabled children – you get false confessions. Brendan's confession looks just like the hundreds of other confessions that have been proven false. It bears all the red flags of false confessions, including a lack of corroborating evidence and an inability for the individual to accurately describe the alleged crime, unless spoon-fed facts by the interrogator. We invite Governor Evers to carefully review Brendan's case and use his power to bring Brendan home.”

SETH WAXMAN,

Brendan Dassey's Attorney, WilmerHale, and former United States Solicitor General

BACKGROUND: As former Solicitor General of the United States, Mr. Waxman provides perspective on the justice system gained through decades of experience at the federal, state and appellate levels.

“Our judicial system too often fails to prevent wrongful convictions based on false confessions – particularly when, as here, the federal habeas statute limits the federal courts' ability to enforce the protections that should apply in the interrogation room. Where the courts fail, we look to the Governor to deliver justice. Today, we call on Governor Evers to deliver justice for Brendan Dassey.”

LAW ENFORCEMENT EXPERT

DAVE THOMPSON,

National Police Trainer, Vice President of Operations at Wicklander Zulauski

BACKGROUND: An experienced instructor at a leading police training firm, Thompson and his colleagues have used videos of Brendan's interrogation to train officers how not to interrogate disabled children and can explain the do's and don'ts of interrogation.

"Our firm uses Brendan Dassey's interrogation videotape to train police nationwide how not to interrogate kids with disabilities. To be blunt, Brendan's interrogation created an unacceptable risk of false confession. I've heard from so many law enforcement officers around the world who were shocked when they saw this interrogation video. Brendan's confession should give no one any comfort that he actually participated in this crime."

LEGAL SYSTEM EXPERTS

MARK OSLER,
Clemency Expert, Professor of Law, University of St. Thomas School of Law

BACKGROUND: Osler, a professor of law at the University of St. Thomas School of Law, is an expert on clemency and can provide context to the process and the precedent for it.

"At its best, clemency has always been used for cases where our good but imperfect criminal justice system does not bring justice or locks out mercy. This is one of those cases."

JASON FLOM,
Founding Board Member of the Innocence Project; Host of *Wrongful Conviction with Jason Flom* Podcast

BACKGROUND: Jason Flom conducted the first-ever interview with Brendan Dassey.

"Brendan is still the gentle, childlike person that the world saw in Making a Murderer. He talked to me about everything from his love of Pokémon to his spotless prison record to how he stays hopeful. Brendan's an incredible young man who deserves his freedom. There is a staggering number of innocent people who remain incarcerated. In this case, Governor Evers has the perfect opportunity to bring reform to the system responsible for Brendan's unjust imprisonment"

VICTIMS ADVOCATES

JEANNE BISHOP,
Nationally renowned victims' rights advocate

BACKGROUND: Following the killing of her sister Nancy, along with Nancy's husband and their unborn child, in 1990, Bishop became an advocate for victims' rights and can speak to the importance of true justice.

"This case began with tragedy, the murder of an innocent person, Teresa Halbach. I know the pain of losing a loved one to murder, and my heart is with the Halbach family and everyone who loved her. They deserve true justice – and that cannot be achieved by a conviction so rife with doubt as Brendan Dassey's. Granting clemency would move this case toward justice for all."

EDUCATION EXPERTS

AMY MIZIALKO,
President, Milwaukee Teachers Education Association

BACKGROUND: Educators like Mizialko understand the vulnerability of children, especially children with special educational needs, and can provide context on how this vulnerability could be exploited.

“As a special education teacher for 27 years, I wouldn’t dream of allowing one of my students to be subjected to questioning without representation. Students should never be interrogated by police in our schools without family and/or advocates present to protect their interests – especially students with disabilities like Brendan.”

**DR. SALLY MILES,
Madison-Based Speech Language Pathologist**

BACKGROUND: A speech-language pathologist, Dr. Miles can explain how Brendan's intellectual barriers could have led to a false confession.

“Brendan’s interrogation included more than 1,500 questions, or approximately six to seven questions per minute for more than three hours. For someone with Brendan’s inability to process speech, this avalanche of questions would have quickly overwhelmed him. He would have said just about anything to bring an end to the interrogation, and that’s exactly what he did.”

**LISA PUGH,
State Director, The Arc Wisconsin**

BACKGROUND: Pugh has worked for many years on behalf of the disability community and served on the President’s Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities under President Obama. She can speak to the risk of procuring a false confession when interrogating a person with disabilities who has not been allowed appropriate accommodations.

“People with intellectual and developmental disabilities make up 4 – 10 percent of the prison population, but only 1.5 percent in the general population. Some are incarcerated because, like Brendan Dassey, they were coerced into giving confessions and many do not receive the accommodations to which they are entitled, putting them at greater risk.”

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