



September 22, 2020

**National Police
Accountability Project**

*A Project of the National
Lawyers Guild*

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Dear Governor Newsom,

I am writing on behalf of the National Police Accountability Project to request your immediate approval of Keiana Aldrich's Commutation of Sentence request, which was submitted on July 24, 2020.

While I'm sure you are aware by now of the facts of Keiana's case, I urge you to stop and fully consider the implications of this personal history and the kind of unspeakable trauma and harm it carries. In a moment in which we all feel daily under siege by terrible headlines and revelations, it is all the more urgent that we challenge the normalization of this kind of violence and cruelty. Governor Newsom, I am asking you to genuinely consider what it would mean to have endured what Keiana has endured up to this point; to imagine yourself for a moment in her position, with her history.

Keiana was sexually abused by her own father at age 4 and was repeatedly sexually exploited throughout her adolescence. At 16, when she was arrested with a female pimp, she agreed to testify against the woman in the hope that in return she might be provided counseling and secure housing. None of this materialized, and, abandoned by any form of state support, she returned to the street following the trial.

Keiana was then taken in by a family who began sexually trafficking her. When Keiana was 17 the woman in the family who was trafficking her set up a meeting with two men who were seeking to buy Keiana for pornography. When Keiana was brought to the meeting, however, the woman pulled a gun on the two men and robbed them. The incident was caught on surveillance camera, and Keiana and her trafficker were arrested.

Although Keiana was only 17, she was charged as an adult. Neither of the men who had attempted to purchase her body were charged. Threatened with decades of potential prison time, Keiana accepted a plea deal for a sentence of 9 years and 8 months, of which less than a year remains.

Too often in moments of acute injustice the path forward remains tangled or unclear. Legislation must be drafted, or policy enacted or just many, many minds must be changed and individuals persuaded. In this case that is not so. The power to remedy, if only slightly, the horrific injustice that has been experienced by Keiana lies in your hands alone.

Granting Keiana clemency will not undo the brutal trauma she has endured, but it will curtail the injustice that continues to unfold with each day that she remains caged, cut off from communicating with her loved ones, and unable to receive the mental health care and support that she requires, especially in the midst of this deadly global pandemic.

I am asking you on behalf of the National Police Accountability Project to grant Keiana clemency. This injustice cannot go on.

Sincerely,

Rachel A. Pickens
Executive Director
National Police Accountability Project