

Karen Cosden-Harris
755 Magellan Ct.
Fayetteville, NC 28311

November 14, 1995

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my extreme concern about the possibility that William E. Cosden, Jr. may possibly be released from the Washington State Penal System by the Indeterminate Sentence Review Board. I urge you not to release this dangerous individual into the community.

I am this inmate's sister. I am also one of his many victims. Bill Cosden sexually molested me from the time I was a small child until the time he was incarcerated to serve his present sentence.

Being raised with a brother like Bill was a nightmare. I was the first sister born when Bill was approximately thirteen years of age. I can clearly recall the disgusting acts of molestation occurring when I was as young as four, but believe that they actually began when I was much younger. He would tell me that I couldn't tell our mom and dad because I would get into trouble, and I didn't tell for a very long time. I did not realize that this kind of thing did not happen to all little girls. Surprisingly, I carried that basic belief into my teens. Bill systematically trained my other brother, who was six years older than myself to molest me, as well. A very clear early memory recalls a "team effort" from the two of them. Bill was teaching my brother all of his tricks and techniques. I can remember them laughing throughout the session, and again instructing me not to tell our parents. This brother also went on to molest me on a regular basis. He became my incessant molester for many years, ending some time after he married. His record also includes an arrest for rape. This brother is now the only advocate within our family working for Bill's release.

Bill was always a bully who garnered satisfaction through his ability to manipulate and control. He terrorized my pets, laughing when I would become frightened and start to cry. I recall him telling stories of putting cats in bags, suspending them from freeway overpasses, and waiting for semi trucks to hit them. Upon his return from Viet Nam, I can recall him showing me photos of Vietnamese children, inviting me to comment about how cute they were. He would then tell me that they (he and other Marines) had killed them. He laughed when I, as a five or six year old child, cried upon hearing this. Whether

his tales of killing children are true or untrue, it is undeniable that he took pleasure in communicating this story.

Bill's sexual abuse of my younger sister and myself continued for many years. It continued through his marriage and the after the birth of his daughter. I often baby-sat for Bill's young daughter, **101B** I would dread any time that I would be forced to be alone with Bill--at his house, in his car or truck, etc. I knew that he would probably pull off of the road in order to assault me. He did in fact assault me in the very locations from which he abducted his rape victim and in the area where the actual rape occurred. I was forced to go on errands alone with Bill, and inevitably the same sort of thing would happen. If I was visiting his family home, he would often send his wife on needless errands so that he would have the opportunity to be alone with me and abuse me. I would usually struggle, but was no match for his strength and attitude. . Other times, I would just stare blankly or cry. He took obvious pleasure in being able to restrain me so that I would become immobile. I often accompanied Bill and his wife on trips to the beach and other places, ostensibly to take photographs. Once there, he would make me carry his camera gear as we would supposedly go off to look for a perfect photography site. Once away from his wife, however, he would force himself on me. Bill was so brazen, in fact, that on the trips home he would make his wife drive the car while he sat in the back seat with me and molested me, threatening me to stay silent.

A remarkable fact that I note is that Bill's manner and attitude during the times he would molest me, he was always mean and abusive. He ridiculed me constantly. His acts were never done under the guise of loving and caring.

In addition to the sexual abuse, life with Bill was emotionally abusive and very scarring for other reasons. Bill was, and is, a controlling bully. He reaped much satisfaction by asserting his control over my sister and me in all situations throughout our lives--until he was sent to prison.

Bill gleaned great pleasure from driving at extremely high speeds, in a reckless fashion, in order to terrify his passengers. He would laugh, ridicule, and ultimately become verbally abusive to us if we expressed fear about his driving. This is just one more example of Bill's pattern of exerting his power and control over others--a pattern that I'm sure would be repeated if he were to be released. Throughout the years of abuse, Bill always exhibited immature and violent patterns. He would threaten and cajole constantly. He would warn, "If you tell Rita (his wife) about this, I won't let you be around **██████** (his baby daughter) again..." Even as a grown man, he would say such things as "I might as well go ahead and do it all to you because you're going to tell Mom anyway." He has always enjoyed humiliating and asserting control over others. If anyone dared question one of his decisions, statements, or insignificant comments, he would explode into a tirade, storming out of the house, grabbing his wife and daughter

and making a ceremonious and heated exit. He would often watch me through cracks in bathroom or bedroom doors that were slightly ajar, and then ridicule me for what he observed--humiliating me to the point of tears. As usual, he would laugh and take pleasure in the power of his control. Even in simple family discussions he would take an opposing, if not ludicrous, tact, in order to ridicule my viewpoint in an effort to bring me to tears. When he would succeed in doing just that, he would laugh and call me names for crying or becoming upset.

Bill's transgressions have definitely influenced the person I have become. I have dealt with the memories and burdens of this through my entire life. It has permeated every facet of my being. I have gone through periods of denial and acceptance, and now, as a married woman and mother, I continue to struggle through the painful rigors of counseling to deal with the hurt and self-worthlessness he has injected into my life. Instead of "growing out of the pain", it is now becoming more intense. It affects my marriage in many ways. Physical and emotional intimacy are very difficult for me. Being with my husband often brings flashbacks of my brother's abuse so real that I often replay exact dialogue in my head and recall specific sounds and smells. It is agonizing. I dread the possibility of Bill having this traumatic effect on any other individual, which I feel is highly likely if he is indeed released.

Bill prides himself on what he considers to be his "superior intellect" and manipulative skills, and lets it be known that he considers himself able to outwit anyone. I believe that he would say that he subscribes to any belief system in an effort to benefit himself. I cannot envision him sincerely admitting any personal wrongs or shortcomings. He will say or do anything in order to benefit himself. I expect that the "above it all" attitude that he maintains makes him likely to reoffend, because he literally feels that he can get away with murder. He considers himself to be invincible.

I understand that Bill has completed a course of therapy for sexual offenders. I question whether this therapy has "cured" him or at all made him ready for release into the community. I wonder if he has even disclosed his history with his sisters or the multitudes of other children. I feel that the proclivity for him to reoffend is very great.

Viet Nam certainly did not help Bill's emotional and mental difficulties, but they did not begin there, either. His meanness and sexual deviancy were deep-seated and active long before he joined the Marine Corps. I do not believe that any of his post-Viet Nam crimes are caused by any type of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or any like syndrome. While Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is certainly a real disability for some, I firmly believe that in Bill's case it is no more than a manipulative tool--an excuse, that, like many others, has been employed by my brother for far too long. His horrendous actions began long

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before any affiliation with the United States Marine Corps.

As I previously stated, Bill molested me from the time I was a very small child. The abuse stopped when he went to Viet Nam. It began again when he returned. After his arrest for murder, the abuse stopped again. The sentence that Bill received for a young mother's murder included confinement and therapy at Perkins Institute. I assume that he completed the obligatory programs there and was deemed ready to be released into society. That was hardly the case. On the very evening that my father picked-up Bill from Sea-Tac Airport, not more than four hours later, he began assaulting me again. The abuse inflicted on me, as well as my young sister continued until he was arrested for rape and sent to prison for his current sentence. It becomes clear that the only deterrent to Bill's sexual deviancy and violence has been to take him away from the situation--incarcerate him. *That*, not therapy has proven to be the key.

I was a sophomore in high school when my brother was sent to prison. I was told little about what was going on in the courtroom; my sister and I were "protected" from hearing the details. I gathered what I could from the newspaper and from my family's version of how "Poor Billy" was being maligned and treated unfairly. How I wish that I had been allowed to attend his trial. Perhaps it could have enlightened those involved as to Bill's true character and started the healing process that I needed so desperately. More importantly, however, it would have alerted authorities and the court to Bill's incessant pattern of sexual abuse with myself, my young sister, and numerous underage girls, including other relatives.

I am now a teacher of young children, and am 36 years of age. I am married and am the mother of two daughters. I am expecting the birth of another daughter at Christmastime. I worry for their safety as well as my own. Bill has time and time again proven himself to be a vindictive and wicked individual. It is certainly quite imaginable to me that he would seek to harm one or all of us. Because he believes himself to be highly intelligent, (by far smarter and more clever than anyone else he encounters), I feel that he would act maliciously, without reservation, thinking he was justified and incapable of being proved responsible. I live in fear that he will burn my house and family. I'm sure that investigative reports would reveal his history of experiences with "suspicious fires", dating back to his childhood (including an incident during his childhood in which a neighbor's house was burned), and the destruction of his family's own home shortly before his last arrest. His place of work and at least one of his vehicles were also burned. I feel that he would attempt to make us suffer, whether through violent actions or by terrorizing myself and family. My husband is an Air Force Officer, and we are subject to move when and where the Government sends us. If Bill is released, I will live in fear that we might reside in the same vicinity. Although we currently live in The State of North Carolina,

we do anticipate moving back to The Pacific Northwest. Knowing that Bill Cosden is in our midst would be a frightening thought. My family will only feel secure knowing that Bill is safely locked away.

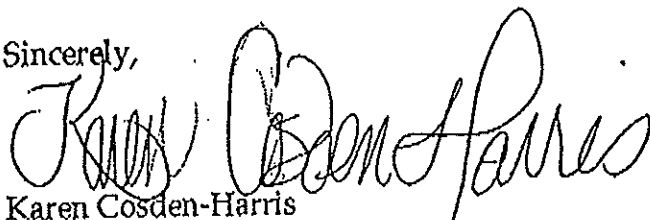
I also worry about the safety of my sister and her family; Bill's former wife, daughter, and their new families; and especially, my mother, who is widowed and now in her seventies. I feel that Bill may seek to hurt them, as well. I can imagine Bill physically and emotionally harassing my mother. I feel that it is likely that he would try to extort money from her, which is present in his history with my parents..

I worry for the safety of any woman if Bill is released. He has time and time again made his opinion of women known. He regards them as stupid, and certainly in a lower standing than men, especially himself. His violent and generally abusive nature toward women should be a signal that it is not safe to integrate Bill into society.

Bill's entire history, combined with his blatant anger toward and disregard for all women, his need for control, and his sense of invincibility are factors that must be examined when determining this inmate's suitability for release into the community. Please do not be fooled by this inmate. I sincerely urge you to not release Bill Cosden, Jr. into the community to reoffend and ruin countless other lives.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Karen Cosden-Harris". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Karen Cosden-Harris