

Representative Emily Virgin
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Administrative Rules Committee
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House of Representatives

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

Office of the House Democratic Leader

EMILY VIRGIN

House District 44

October 1, 2019

Oklahoma Pardon and Parole Board
Attn: Board Communications
2915 N Classen Blvd, Suite 405
Oklahoma City, OK 73106

Re: Tondalao Hall
DOC #542749
10/9/19 Commutation Docket

Members of the Pardon and Parole Board:

First, let me express my sincere thanks for the work that you do. Your service to our state is very important and should be commended.

I am writing today to express my support for Tondalao Hall's commutation. Ms. Hall's case has gained national attention, and for good reason. Her case is one of the most unfair and heartbreaking I've come across since being elected in 2010. You will undoubtedly see all the facts of her case, but I would like to take the opportunity to highlight a few aspects that I feel are most relevant to her commutation application.

The fact that gains the most attention is that Ms. Hall was charged with failure to protect her children from their abusive father, yet she was sentenced to a longer prison term than the actual abuser. It is exceedingly important to note that the abuser in this case, Robert Braxton, was also physically abusive to Ms. Hall. Domestic violence is a vicious and tragic cycle that we're still learning more about every day, but we already know that domestic abuse victims are often at risk of losing their lives to their abusers if they report the abuser in any way. This was the case with Ms. Hall. For anyone to posit that she did not protect her children because she did not love them is foolish. She was in an impossible situation and made the best decisions she could under the circumstances. Simply put, Ms. Hall did not in any way deserve such an extreme sentence.

If released, Ms. Hall will once again become a productive member of our community. She already has a job, housing, and access to counseling through Palomar and ReMerge. Because her case has received so much attention, there are undoubtedly many more opportunities available to Ms. Hall, and there will be countless

Oklahomans ready to help her succeed. Perhaps most importantly, Ms. Hall will be able to return to her children, who are also in support of her release.

The opportunity to correct such a glaring injustice does not come along very often. I implore you to take this opportunity, not only to give Ms. Hall a second chance, but to also send a message that in Oklahoma, we will now take steps to protect victims of domestic violence instead of punishing them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily Virgin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Representative Emily Virgin
Democratic Minority Leader
House District 44