

November 11, 2017

Dear Administrative Law Judge,

My name is Joan Petersilia, and I am currently the Adelbert Sweet Professor of Law at Stanford Law School. I also co-direct Stanford University's Criminal Justice Center. I have over 30 years researching and teaching about the criminal justice system, specializing in prisoner reentry and recidivism prediction. I am also the former Director of RAND's Criminal Justice Program, and in 2014 was awarded the Stockholm Prize in Criminology, known as criminology's Nobel prize. I am also the former President of the American Society of Criminology, the largest international association of professional criminologists, and the author of the book, *When Prisoners Come Home: Parole and Prisoner Reentry*.

I am aware that Michael Santos is striving to obtain a clearance from the Department of Health and Human Services so that he may join his wife, Carole Santos, to build Pacific Vista Senior Living, a business they have recently launched. That is the matter before you, and I want to assure you that Mr. Santos is without a doubt most deserving of this clearance. I feel I know him very well—both personally and professionally. I believe this personal connection, combined with my professional experience, qualifies me to write this character reference letter on his behalf.

Over the past ten years, I have become friends with (and a great admirer of) Michael. I began corresponding with him when he was a federal prisoner, and have met personally with him on many occasions since his release from prison in 2012. After his release, he lived in a federal halfway house in San Francisco and then settled in the Bay Area before moving to Orange County. I have watched Michael's transition over the last 5 years since his release, and to put it mildly, he is an inspiration not only to thousands of former inmates but to all of us who struggle to live a life with purpose, compassion and integrity.

You no doubt have seen Michael's record of accomplishments while in prison. He attracted the attention of academic criminologists nationwide as he struggled to prepare for reentry while still behind bars. He became a well-known scholar to prison activists--earning degrees, writing several books (e.g., *About Prison*, *Adjusting to Prison*, *Earning*

*Freedom*), and emotionally preparing for a time when he would return to the free world.

Michael and his lovely wife, Carole, are an incredibly inspiring couple—both are smart as a whip but also concerned with how best to give back to society. I watched their relationship and marriage grow as she stood by him throughout his prison term.

As I mentioned in my introductory paragraph to this letter, one of my areas of expertise is recidivism prediction. Because of that background and my personal knowledge of Michael, I wrote a letter supporting his petition for parole release. I had never before written a letter supporting release action for *any* prisoner. But Michael's case was so compelling that I had to write. I felt he was the safest possible candidate for release. Not only did he enjoy an existing support network from his family and the wider community, but he also had a great future awaiting him in productive work. In fact, since his release, he has several important jobs and become quite successful. His honesty with everyone he meets has in fact let to many professional opportunities, each of which he has taken advantage of and excelled.

In addition to his entrepreneurial pursuits, he has also gone above-and-beyond in terms of his volunteer and community service activities. He has spoken to my Stanford Law School class on several occasions—and to universities throughout the nation. He even taught his own college class since release! He also developed a video series for adult and juvenile prisoners, trying to educate them on the process of successfully reentering free society. And he writes a popular blog about his personal journey of returning to society after prison. He has also recently begun a new venture to assist families and individuals who are facing incarceration. I also serve with him on the Advisory Board of the Robina Institute at University of Minnesota, a philanthropic venture devoted to national parole issues. In all these activities, Michael has been completely forthright about his criminal background.

Michael is a model citizen. He figures out what needs to be done, meets collaboratively with those who are germane to implementation, and goes about the hard work of making it happen. I have seen this time and time again. For much of the work he does, he is a volunteer. Just trying to do what he can, wherever he can.

He is honest, hard-working, acts with integrity, and inspires all those around him. If I did not believe that, I would not allow him to teach in

my course or collaborate on my research projects. I believe he is of the highest moral character. His life has not been easy nor fair, but he is motivated to teach others how to live a decent, honest, and productive life even when faced with daunting life experiences.

I know both Michael and Carole Santos very well, and they are an awe-inspiring team. The highest compliment I can give them is to say that I would have *no* hesitation placing my own elderly parents in any assisted living facility Carole and Michael were associated with!

I understand that Michael now needs an exemption for his criminal background in order to work in Pacific Vista Senior Living. He should be given this exception without any hesitation or reservation. Like everything else he has devoted his attention to, he will contribute positively to this business and the aging population served at Pacific Vista Senior Living.

I ask that you grant Michael Santos the exemption he is seeking so that he can work in the healthcare industry.

I sign this letter under the penalty of perjury.

Sincerely,

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

Joan Petersilia