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To: Prisoners and their Supporters  
From: Keith Wattlely, Managing Attorney  
Re: Representation We Provide

The attorneys and advocates at UnCommon Law have represented roughly 15,000 California prisoners in their various challenges to unlawful prison conditions. This letter explains the type of assistance we can provide. We provide more information about what we do, as well as important self-help guides, on our website, at [www.theuncommonlaw.com](http://www.theuncommonlaw.com). If you are interested in retaining us for the type of assistance described below, please write back to us.

### **California Lifers**

We represent lifers in their parole hearings and in petitions for writ of habeas corpus (writs) and civil rights litigation in state and federal courts. This includes challenges to the implementation of Proposition 9 (Marsy's Law) since November 2009. We also represent the class of prisoners in the *In re Rutherford/Lugo* case in the Marin County Superior Court (No. SC135399A), which involves overdue parole hearings. In addition, we provide training and advice to prisoners' families, advocates and other attorneys in order to improve the chances of prisoners gaining their release from prison – whether or not we are their attorneys of record.

### **Other California Prisoners**

Since 1998, we have advocated for prisoners in cases involving mental health care; gang validation; credit restoration; religious freedom; standards for licensing California's prison infirmaries; excessive use of force by correctional officers; and visiting restrictions. With our vast experience with California prisons, we can often resolve our clients' cases through informal means without having to go to court.

### **California Parolees**

We represent parolees challenging unlawful conditions of their parole, and in parole revocation proceedings. In addition, we assist parolees in being discharged from parole when they have served their minimum parole terms without violations. This includes former lifers who have been released on parole and have served their minimum parole periods.

### **Prisoners Outside of California**

We provide representation to California prisoners housed in other states in many of the same areas described above. However, for prisoners sentenced and housed in other states or in the federal bureau of prisons, we may only assist them in challenging violations of federal law (civil rights), but not violations of state laws or administrative regulations of the jurisdiction in which they are housed.

### **WHAT WE CANNOT DO**

Since we have limited staff and resources, we usually cannot provide free representation in the areas described above. However, we are often appointed by state and federal courts to represent indigent prisoners who have already begun legal proceedings. We do not generally represent prisoners challenging their original convictions or sentences. We also cannot represent out-of-state prisoners raising challenges based solely on the laws of other states.