

Via e-mail: Justice4rasmea@uspcn.org

February 2, 2015

Dear Judge Gershwin Drain:

I am writing to request leniency for Rasmea Odeh when she is sentenced in your court on March 10.

Rasmea is an award-winning leader of Chicago's immigrant community. She has dedicated most of her life to serving refugees. In Chicago she built the Arab Women's Committee that now has over 600 members. Because of her work, immigrant and refugee women from Iraq, Palestine, Yemin and beyond, now have a place to seek support, find community and become productive members of our society. As a survivor of torture, engagement for the betterment of her community in Chicago is critical to her emotional health; the isolation she endured while incarcerated was a great hardship and may have triggered her Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

As a 67-year old woman, her health suffered under the damp and uncomfortable conditions in the St. Clair County Jail, which also lacked medical services and accommodations for senior citizens.

In November of last year, Rasmea was convicted of Unlawful Procurement of Naturalization. I am asking for compassion in her sentencing. Rasmea has much more to offer her community. Since there is a possibility of her conviction being overturned on appeal, keeping her out of prison would allow her to continue as a contributing and productive person, doing the work that is so critical to hundreds of refugee women.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Bishop Thomas J. Gumbleton
1616 Bagley
Detroit, MI 48216

