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The Honorable Ellen Segal Huvelle
United States District Court for the District of Columbia
333 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001

Re: United States v. Ney, No. 06-cr-272 (ESH)

Dear Judge Huvelle:

My name is Trita Parsi, I am friend of former Congressman Bob Ney since 1991 when I lived with him and his family as an exchange student in Barnesville Ohio. I am writing to provide you with a more complete picture of Mr. Ney; a picture that I fear that the public and the court may not have been given access to.

To briefly introduce myself, I am the President of the largest Iranian-American grassroots organization in the US (the National Iranian American Council), author of the forthcoming book “Traacherous Triangle – The Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran and the United States” (Yale University Press, 2007), and a Professorial Lecturer in International Relations at Johns Hopkins University SAIS in Washington DC. I have known Mr. Ney since 1991 and have been in close contact with him ever since. During the period of November 2001-2005, I served as an informal advisor to the Congressman on Middle East affairs.

Judge Huvelle, I deeply believe that Mr. Ney should be treated with compassion due to his 26 years of service to the people of Ohio and the United States. I am aware of the offenses Mr. Ney has admitted to, but I would like to request that his life-time of service to the United States be taken into consideration.

I make his request with the wisdom of King Darius the Great (549 BC– 486 BC) of Persia in mind. The ancient Achemedian King never judged a man by his offense alone, but always weighed the wrongdoing against the service and the good deeds the man had committed throughout his life. The ancient Persian King practiced this principle unwaveringly – even on those who had betrayed him. Knowing that even the strongest of men could falter, Darius recognized that their good deeds should not be for naught. Through his wisdom and mercy, many lives were spared and many lives were given new promise.

I ask you to judge Mr. Ney with King Darius’ mercy, compassion and sense of justice in mind. Mr. Ney is a man whose good deeds should not be for naught.

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I am proud to say that I have had the privilege to work with Mr. Ney and see his unselfishness and devotion to do what is right up close. In 2002, I saw him take considerably political risk to close down the activities of an Iranian terrorist group, who in spite of the War on Terror remained active in Washington and lobbied Capitol Hill. Since this group – the Mujahedin-e Khalq – committed most of its acts of terror against Iran (though they are also responsible for the deaths of several Americans as well), appetite for harsh action against them in Washington was limited. In fact, some elements tacitly supported the organization and undermined the US’s credibility.

But Mr. Ney strongly believed that there was no such thing as a “good terrorist” or “our terrorist.” He organized a one-man campaign and personally spoke to more than 200 lawmakers to educate them on the background of the organization. Thanks to his effort, the Mujahedin’s efforts on Capitol Hill were virtually put to a halt. Mr. Ney did this for no other reason than to ensure that America would be consistent in its efforts to defeat terror worldwide.

I must admit that I do not write this letter without bias. I am myself a subject of Mr. Ney’s unselfish enthusiasm to help those in need.

When I came to the US from Sweden in 1991 as a high-school exchange student, I was fortunate enough to get acquainted with Mr. Ney, who at the time served as a State Senator. I later ended up in a disagreement with my host-family and risked being sent back to Sweden without having completed my studies in the US. As the host-family and the organization who had arranged for my stay in the US were preparing to send me back to Sweden, Mr. Ney stepped in and took me in with his own family. It was nothing less than a random act of kindness.

Thanks to Mr. Ney – with no benefit to himself – my year in the US was a success and I was given enough time to fall in love with America. Today, I am proud to call America my home and contribute to it with my expertise in international relations and on the Middle East.

Judge Huvelle, these are but just a few examples of the many good deeds of Mr. Ney. I ask you to make sure that they will not be for naught – that as you decide your judgment, you weigh Mr. Ney’s wrongdoings against the service and the good deeds that he has committed throughout these past 26 years.

I, for one, would not be here had it not been for Mr. Ney.

Sincerely,



Trita Parsi, PhD