

October 1, 2007

Dear Client:

We are writing to bring you up to date on some recent events at the law firm of Bennett & Bair since the tragic death of Fred Bennett on July 1 of this year. As in the past, the firm has continued its tradition of aggressive, creative, and successful representation of its hundreds of clients in the state and federal courts. We are currently handling grand jury matters, trials, direct appeals, motions for reconsideration of sentence, motions to correct illegal sentences, post-conviction petitions, motions to reopen post conviction, petitions for coram nobis relief, parole hearings, and commutation petitions throughout the State of Maryland.

In the past three months alone, four of our clients have been granted relief and released from incarceration. In July, a Prince George's County judge lowered Calvin Edmondson's total sentence of 40 years for second-degree murder and use of a handgun to 20 years, which led to his immediate release from prison. In August, Eric Miller, who was serving a 15-year sentence for armed robbery, had his sentence suspended by a Howard County judge, and was given drug treatment under the Health-General Article. In September, Joseph Williams, who was serving a life sentence for first-degree rape in Harford County, was granted post conviction relief in the form of a reduced sentence, which resulted in his immediate release after roughly 36 years in prison. Also in September, Harold Mootoo was freed after his sentence of life, suspend all but 25 years was reduced to time served in a Prince George's County murder case. Mr. Miller was represented by Gary Bair; Mr. Edmondson, Mr. Williams, and Mr. Mootoo were represented by Daniel Ginsburg.

To name but a few other recent victories, Mr. Bair obtained a new sentencing in Prince George's County for Terron Williams; in an Anne Arundel County case, Brian Tate was granted the right to file a belated application for leave to appeal from his 1993 guilty plea following a post-conviction hearing handled by Mr. Bair. In a Charles County case, the sentence of Earmitt Jones was reduced from 30 to 15 years because of a sentencing guidelines miscalculation. In that case, the judge agreed to bind himself to a "guidelines sentence," but until Mr. Ginsburg reviewed the case, no one had noticed that the guidelines had been improperly calculated.

In addition to these recent post-conviction wins, the firm has obtained direct appeal reversals in no fewer than six cases in the Court of Appeals and Court of Special Appeals in the past 13 months. Mr. Bair successfully argued before the Court of Appeals on behalf of James Logan in a second-degree murder and use of handgun case, and on behalf of Reginald Longshore in a possession with intent to distribute cocaine case. *See State v. Logan*, 394 Md. 378, 906 A.2d 374 (2006); *Longshore v. State*, 399 Md. 486, 924 A.2d 1129 (2007). Mr. Bair also obtained reversals in the Court of Special Appeals on direct review of convictions for Robert Metcalf in a third-degree sexual offense case, for Sherman Melvin in a distribution of cocaine case, and for Abere Karibi-Ikiriko in a second-degree murder case. Rachel Kamins worked with Mr. Bennett in obtaining relief in Sergei Lebedev's case, whose conviction for first-degree murder was overturned on post conviction and upheld on appeal.

In the past three months in the federal arena, Mr. Ginsburg has aggressively argued on behalf of clients in their sentencings, obtaining significant reductions. William Payton's guidelines range was 360 months to life, but the Court granted the defense's motion for a variance and imposed a lower sentence of 292 months. Chika Mokwunye faced a guidelines range of 63 to 78 months, but received a reduced sentence of 51 months following the successful arguments of Mr. Ginsburg.

Finally, we want to inform everyone that Michael Pearson, who joined the firm three years ago as an associate, left the firm at the end of September to prosecute special cases at the Prince George's County State's Attorney's Office. All of the cases previously worked on by Mr. Pearson will now be handled by Mr. Bair personally or by one of the three associates working under Mr. Bair's direct supervision. Under the rules of professional responsibility governing lawyers and prosecutors, Mr. Pearson will not be working on and cannot even discuss any of his prior cases, or cases being handled by other lawyers in the firm, with persons in the State's Attorney's Office.

Catherine Woolley will be taking Mr. Pearson's place and joining the firm as an associate on October 16, 2007. Ms. Woolley, a graduate of Georgetown University (B.A., 1995) and the University of Maryland School of Law (J.D., 2002), comes to us from the Montgomery County Office of the Public Defender, where she has been doing trial work for the past two years. From 2002 to 2003, Ms. Woolley was a Staff Attorney to the Appellate Advocacy Project and the Prisoner's Rights Project at the Public Justice Center in Baltimore. From 2003 to 2005, Ms. Woolley handled post-conviction cases for the Public Defender's Office. During that time, she obtained a new sentencing and time served for Lewis Smith in the Circuit Court for Carroll County, a new trial and significant sentence reduction for Eric Jeanette in the Circuit Court for Charles County, and a new trial and dismissal for Jeffrey Dean LeCates in the Circuit Court for Worcester County. Ms. Woolley truly brings to the firm a wealth of experience and a solid commitment to criminal defense work.

In closing, we are looking forward to many more years of vigorous representation of criminal defendants in all types of cases. As you may know, Gary Bair was selected as a 2007 Maryland Super Lawyer and honored as a 2007 Washington, D.C. Area Super Lawyer in the field of criminal defense. This places him in the top five percent of lawyers both in the State of Maryland and in the D.C. metropolitan area. With Mr. Bair at the helm, and three outstanding associates working with him, the work of Bennett & Bair will continue to exceed the needs and expectations of our clients and their families.

Sincerely,

THE LAW FIRM OF BENNETT & BAIR