

Douglas Lucas
PO Box 75656
Seattle WA 98175

February 4, 2020

President of The United States of America
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington DC 20500

Re: Reality Winner Clemency Petition

Dear Mr. President,

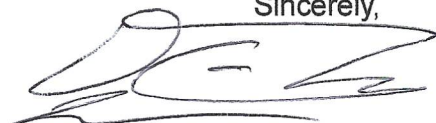
I write in support of the clemency petition of Reality Leigh Winner, a Bureau of Prisons inmate, register number 22056-021. For *The Public*, a news outlet in Buffalo, New York, I reported in person from Ms. Winner's August 23, 2018 hearing in Augusta, Georgia where Chief District Judge J. Randal Hall imposed a 63-month prison term on Ms. Winner. Department of Justice attorney Bobby L. Christine described the punishment as the longest sentence ever imposed on a federal defendant for a disclosure of national defense information to the media. This unduly severe punishment resulted from Ms. Winner, an Air Force veteran and intelligence contractor with no prior criminal record, sending to the media classified intelligence describing cyberattacks by Russian military hackers against over 100 local election officials in the United States and at least one U.S. supplier of software used to manage voter rolls in multiple counties. The cyberattacks took place just days before the 2016 U.S. elections. With great idealism, Ms. Winner gave everyone information required for self-governance, gave everyone necessary knowledge otherwise unavailable. That includes any voting vendor staff who, without clearances, would not have been able to access such protective classified information unless it appeared in the public discourse. Computer security expert Bruce Schneier, a fellow at Harvard Law School's Berkman Center for Internet & Society, wrote in a June 9, 2017 post on his personal website that the cyberattacks disclosed by Ms. Winner "illustrate the real threats and vulnerabilities facing our elections, and they point to solutions."

Ms. Winner's unduly severe sentence and unfair treatment behind bars is unjust to her and indeed, to all. She has a long, admirable history of public service: donating to poor families, volunteering for Athletes Serving Athletes, and more. Her ongoing confinement blocks her from continuing this service to the wider world. She is unjustly denied broad communication with the public by Carswell Federal Medical Center staff, including Warden Michael Carr. The staff has forbidden journalists, such as CNN and me, from interviewing her in person. They have provided no meaningful explanation for her isolation from the mass media. For months, my requests for meaningful details, and my requests for negotiations to meet any Carswell Federal Medical Center concerns, were ignored or subjected to run-around. In her allocution, Ms. Winner demonstrated her intelligence and perceptiveness. Caging her incommunicado harms her and deprives the public of her gifts. Everyone globally, in prisons or whatever other cages, must have the right to communicate, including to appeal for help from the world, as directly as possible.

Ms. Winner took responsibility for her action's criminality at her final hearing. While sentencing her, Judge Hall indicated he saw no evidence she will become a repeat offender: "the Court has no sense [...] that there is a need to protect the public from any further crimes of the defendant." As an inmate, Ms. Winner has pursued studies toward her college degree and has worked several jobs within the Carswell Federal Medical Center system. She has served roughly half of her 63-month sentence already, and she has not had a single infraction.

I firmly believe a commutation of Ms. Winner's sentence is in the best interest of the United States, U.S. residents, and justice. She and her loved ones suffer each day she is kept locked up. I ask you to grant Reality Leigh Winner's clemency petition and her immediate release from prison.

Sincerely,



Douglas Lucas
Seattle, King County, Washington state