May xx, 2018

VIA EMAIL AND US MAIL

The Honorable J.B. Pritzker, Governor

The Honorable Juliana Stratton, Lt. Governor

Office of the Governor
James R. Thompson Center
100 W. Randolph, 16-100
Chicago, IL 60601

Re: Clemency for Deon Strawberry Hampton

Dear Governor Pritzker and Lt. Governor Stratton:

 The undersigned write to urge you to immediately grant clemency to Strawberry Hampton, a Black transwoman in the custody of the Illinois Department of Corrections (“IDOC”). On numerous occasions, Ms. Hampton endured sexual violence and harassment both at the hands of corrections officers and as a result of correctional officers allowing (and sometimes encouraging) people incarcerated with Ms. Hampton to assault her. When Ms. Hampton reported this abuse officers retaliated against her by writing her false disciplinary tickets that resulted in her placement in prolonged solitary confinement. During this time, Ms. Hampton was unable to earn good time. Additionally, throughout her incarceration, IDOC officials prevented her from engaging in programming and work opportunities because they claimed she would be a distraction to the men imprisoned with her. If correctional officers had not imposed false disciplinary tickets on Ms. Hampton, she would have been at home with her family in February 2019. If she had been allowed to earn good time through programming and job opportunities, she could have been released from custody much sooner. Her current release date is November 27, 2019.

 In December 2018, Ms. Hampton won an important victory for trans-rights when a federal judge recognized that the harassment and abuse she experience in IDOC custody constituted a form of discrimination and that the IDOC’s practices related the housing transwomen were also unlawful. As a result of this decision, IDOC appears to making some progress in matters related to the housing of transwomen. This happened as a result of Ms. Hampton’s courage and her steadfast determination to reveal the truth about her life inside IDOC facilities. Yet, she still remains behind bars directly as a result of the IDOC’s discriminatory policies and practices.

 As further explained in the attached Petition for Clemency, Ms. Hampton’s sentence has been extended an additional nine months because she is transwoman who spoke out about the abuse and violence she suffered on a daily basis during her incarceration. Because she spoke out—officers attempted to silence her and in doing so extended her imprisonment. Please take immediate action to correct this grave injustice and allow Ms. Hampton to be home with her community so she can continue her leadership for the rights of trans people and survivors everywhere. You campaigned on a promise to bring justice and equity to Illinois. Please make good on that promise by granting clemency to Strawberry Hampton.

Sincerely,

Cc: Deputy Governor Sol Flores, Deputy Governor Dan Hynes, Deputy Governor Deputy Governor Christian Mitchell, Deputy Governor Jesse Ruiz, Deputy Governor John Kim