



Equal Justice Initiative

122 Commerce Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36104
334.269.1803

August 8, 2011

Eric H. Holder, Jr., Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Mr. Holder,

We are writing to seek the immediate filing of federal charges against Alabama prison officials responsible for the beating death of Rocrast Mack, who died in an Alabama state prison one year ago this week. On August 4, 2010, Mr. Mack was beaten to death by Alabama correctional officers at Ventress Correctional Facility in Clayton, Alabama. Dozens of prisoners at Ventress witnessed the murder. Rocrast Mack was 24 years old and serving a sentence for a non-violent charge when he was killed. Despite complaints being filed with your office, the Alabama Attorney General and the local District Attorney, no charges have yet been filed for this murder or the extensive violations of civil rights this crime creates.

The Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) has interviewed several witnesses to this murder and provided information to your office that we believe amply supports federal criminal charges and violations of Mr. Mack's civil rights. The lack of response from law enforcement to Mr. Mack's death has compromised security in Alabama's prisons and created serious concerns about enforcing laws against criminal misconduct by correctional officers.

The abuse of power that Mr. Mack's murder reveals is deeply disturbing as is the absence of any criminal accountability for the extraordinary misconduct by state officials evident in this case. The fact that Mr. Mack's murder occurred in full view of dozens of prisoners also indicates that those who participated in the attack on Mr. Mack did not expect to be punished, which makes the intervening year that has gone by with no criminal prosecution all the more troubling.

We would greatly appreciate a formal response to this letter. We stand ready to assist your office in any way to ensure that charges are brought against these officers who have engaged in serious criminal misconduct and, along with family members of Mr. Mack, sincerely hope that action can be taken immediately.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B.A. Stevenson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bryan" and last name "Stevenson" clearly distinguishable.

Bryan A. Stevenson
Executive Director