

California Governor Gavin Newsom's Presidential Achilles Heel, Donald "C-Note" Hooker

Newsom's refusal to release a nonviolent prisoner mirrors then CA AG Harris' refusal to free an innocent man a mistake that cost her the Presidential nomination

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- A new blog post,

["From Prop 57 to Prop Broken: Newsom's Prison Problem with Black Voters,"](#) authored by activist and

historian Anita L. Wills shines a

powerful light on what could become

California Governor Gavin Newsom's greatest political vulnerability as he

navigates national aspirations: his

refusal to act on the case of Donald "C-Note" Hooker, a nonviolent prisoner whose continued incarceration exposes contradictions in Newsom's record on criminal justice reform.



Left: Christina Aguayo | Right: Chris Godley for People

The article, published on Parole Elder Abuse Concerns Everyone (PEACE), argues that Governor Newsom's handling of Hooker's parole eligibility under Proposition 57 reveals troubling similarities to then-Attorney General Kamala Harris' refusal to release an innocent man during her tenure—a decision that resurfaced during the 2020 presidential primaries and damaged her credibility with Black voters.

"Newsom cannot afford to repeat Harris' mistake," writes Wills. "At the heart of this is not just a man's freedom, but a broader question of trust between Black voters and those who claim to represent progressive criminal justice reform."

"Why would Governor Newsom do this to me," says C-Note. "Why would he personally disqualify me from participating in the Prop 57, nonviolent parole process, when I hooked him up?" Referencing his 2018 painttoem (painting + poem) "Today We Are Sisters," a visual work of a California woman prisoner on a gurney waiting to be forcibly sterilized, while leaders of Pro-Life

and Pro-Choice protesters enter into a handshake truce to stop it. The accompanying poem explicitly uses the word "reparations" for this new alliance of Pro-Life and Pro-Choice women to be advocating for, on behalf of forcibly sterilized California women prisoners.

In 2021, as a result of C-Note's advocacy, and the advocacy of others, Newsom was able to boost his criminal and social justice bona fides by signing into law, a \$7.5M forced sterilization reparations fund. "It's the first to pay reparations to survivors who were forcibly sterilized by doctors working in California prisons," says Governor Gavin Newsom.

"Oh my goodness. I can't even explain the overjoyed feeling that I have. But also the feeling of relief," said Kelli Dillon, one of hundreds of known survivors of forced or involuntary sterilization while in prison. Part of her story is featured in the 2020 documentary, "Belly of the Beast." "The advocacy, the journey of justice we've been on has been 20 years for me, but for some survivors has been for over 40 years," Dillon said. "Today We Are Sisters"

was the first work of art anywhere to raise awareness of the forced sterilization issue going on in the California women's prison system, and C-Note was shocked that Newsom's letter head was used to deny him access to a nonviolent parole hearing.

"From Prop 57 to Prop Broken: Newsom's Prison Problem with Black Voters," connects the dots between California's justice system and national politics, arguing that failure to release Hooker, an acclaimed prison artist and poet known globally as the "King of Prison Hip Hop," could alienate a key Democratic voting bloc and derail Newsom's presidential ambitions.

The article also cites publicly available parole documents and directs readers to the full record published at:

□ <https://paroleelderabuse.org/free-c%e2%80%91note-by-black-august-the-paper-trail-that-proves-california-is-dodging-prop-57/>,

ABOUT ANITA L. WILLS

Anita L. Wills is Afro-Indigenous. She is a member of the Monacan Indian Nation, a federally recognized tribe in Amherst County, Virginia; a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR); author, historian, criminal justice and social justice activist, whose writings focus on race, justice, and accountability in American society. With a history of amplifying voices too often silenced by systemic inequities. Her first book "Notes and Documents of Free Persons of Color" is archived in the library of the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian,



Book Cover of Anita Will's A Nation of Flaws Just Us in the Homeland

in the nation's capital. She is the author of 7 books, including "[A Nation of Flaws: Just Us in the Homeland](#)." Wills' latest work examines the political risks of ignoring Black voters in an era where accountability and reform remain central to the national dialogue.

ABOUT P.E.A.C.E.

P.E.A.C.E. – Parole Elder Abuse Concerns Everyone – is a national initiative dedicated to addressing issues related to elderly incarceration. The organization focuses on raising awareness, supporting clemency efforts, and engaging with policymakers to advocate for systemic changes in parole and prison policies for aging individuals.

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